

AN OUTLINED COMMENTARY ON

1 PETER

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**GOSPEL
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Preface and Acknowledgment

These various commentaries and other Biblical studies were developed through many years of hard and close study of the Bible. I have had an insatiable appetite to learn all of God's Word possible. I grew up in the Beans Creek Community of Coffee County Tennessee. My family started attending the Lord's church at Beans Creek in 1949, where I was privileged to have sister Ethel Croft as an outstanding Bible class teacher. All seven members of my father's family were baptized into Christ, plus my wife, Marie. Each of our five children also obeyed the gospel.

Sister Croft greatly encouraged me to study the Bible and to become a good worker for the Lord. I tried not to cause her any disappointment. In 1978, after preaching for many years, the brethren at Beans Creek invited me to conduct a gospel meeting. Sister Croft, though she was in advanced years and had to drive a good distance, did not miss any of the services.

Since first becoming acquainted with the gospel more than seventy years ago, I have had the honor to hear some of the greatest gospel preachers of the time. Some of these are well-known to most members of the Lord's church, but some of them labored in the shadows, learning and dispensing the truth of God quietly and effectively. Not so many people in the brotherhood today knew such preachers as Luke Gibbs. I have learned much and have been profited greatly from many gospel preachers and teachers through these many years. I am fully appreciative also to those many sound brethren who have published books which I have had the privilege to study. I began preaching in July of 1961 in Italy.

A debt of gratitude is owed by many to the instructors of Memphis School of Preaching for the tremendous work they did through the years, patiently teaching their students the wonderful word of life. I am especially grateful to these great men who were serving in this capacity during 1970-72, when I attended the school: Roy Hearn, Frank Young, Richard Curry, Charles Pledge, and E.L. Whitaker.

I claim no originality for all of the material presented in the material included in my books. There is no way to give proper credit to all who have contributed to the information I have learned, but in every case possible, acknowledgment is cited. I have attempted to be as accurate, clear and concise as my finite knowledge allows, but, as with all human productions, there will doubtless be imperfections.

Some have incorrectly thought that my books are merely expansions of the notes I took while studying at MSOP. But those notes were skimpy at best, and were not in my possession when I wrote my material. The material was put together in connection with Bible classes I have taught over many decades. For several years, a hundred or more hours weekly were required as I prepared to teach two different Bible books each week, Sunday morning and Wednesday evening, while at the same time, during full-time work as a gospel preacher. These notes became the "Outlined Bible Commentaries" that have been made available to countless people.

It has not been my aim to make money through these efforts—indeed, we hardly cover our expenses. Many of my books have been given away without charge. An uncounted numbers of books and compact discs were ordered and shipped out, for which no payment was ever received. A good many of these non-paying costumers were gospel preachers. I have learned from brethren who operated Bible Bookstores that they have had the same problem. One of these brethren reported that he had to secure his supply of Bibles, in locked cases, to prevent their being stolen by preachers.

The Bible quotations in my books are from the King James Version, unless noted otherwise. These books were intentionally put on 8.5 by 11 inch pages, to make the outline format easier to view. A normal hardback book contains about 800 words per page; my pages contain twice that number of words. The spiral-bound books are much less expensive to produce. My wife and I have done all the manual labor required to produce the books. The supplies, software and equipment are very costly. Marie still helps as much as she can despite the dementia she has had for several years— and her many surgeries and broken bones and heartaches.

Feel free to copy quotations from this material. It is designed to bring glory to God and information to souls! The same goes for the articles printed in my monthly publication: *Studies in the Old Paths*. This paper is free via e-mail.

INTRODUCTION TO I PETER

A. The Inspired Author.

1. The author is affirmed to be the apostle Peter: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" (1 Pet. 1:1). Other passages give additional information about him:
 - a. He was a fisherman by occupation.
 - b. His father was Jonah (Matt 16:17; John 1:42).
 - c. His home was Capernaum: "And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught....And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John" (Mark 1:21,29).
 - d. He spent much of his life on the sea of Galilee with his brother Andrew: "And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers" (Matt. 4:18).
 - e. He was a married man: "And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them" (Matt. 8:14-15; cf 1 Cor. 9:5).
 - f. He and Andrew owned their boat: "And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship" (Luke 5:3).
 - g. They were partners with James and John: "And so *was* also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men" (Luke 5:10).
 - h. He was an elder in the Lord's church, which means that he had a wife and believing children.
 - 1) Titus 1:5-6: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly."
 - 2) 1 Peter 5:1-3: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."
 2. Peter was accompanied by his wife on at least some of his travels.
 - a. Matthew 8:14-15: "And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 9:5: "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and *as* the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?"
 3. In the lists of the apostles, he is named first (Matt. 10:4; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16; Acts 1:13), but this does not imply that he had greater authority or position than the others: "I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong" (2 Cor. 12:11-13). Paul and the other apostles were equal in apostolic authority with Peter.
 4. He was in the inner circle of the Lord's disciples, with James and John.
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- a. Matthew 17:1-2: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light."
 - b. Matthew 26:37: "And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy."
 - c. Mark 5:35-43: "While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house certain* which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe. And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly. And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was *of the age* of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment. And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat."
5. The last mention of Peter in the historical books of the New Testament is in Acts 15. He is last referred to in Galatians 2 (outside the two books which bear his name).
 6. Being an inspired apostle, he possessed the powers bestowed upon him and the other apostles of Christ by the Holy Spirit. As an apostle of Christ, Peter was:
 - a. **An eyewitness of the resurrected Christ:**
 - 1) Acts 1:21-22: "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." Matthias had to meet the condition of having seen Christ after the resurrection before he could be appointed to the apostolic office.
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:4-5: "And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve."
 - b. **Called by the Lord:**
 - 1) Matthew 4:18-20: "And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left *their* nets, and followed him."
 - 2) Acts 2:1-4: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." To do this work, the apostles had to be empowered with heavenly authority (cf. Luke 24:49).
 - c. **Inspired:**
 - 1) John 16:13: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come."
 - 2) 2 Peter 1:16-21: "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he
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received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost."

- 3) Compare: "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:11-12). What was true of Paul, was equally true of all the apostles of Christ.

d. Able to confirm his messages:

- 1) Mark 16:17-20: "And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."
- 2) Hebrews 2:3-4: "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; God also bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?"

e. Given a universal commission:

- 1) Matthew 28:19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."
 - 2) Mark 16:15: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."
 - 3) Luke 24:47: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."
7. Tradition [which is not always reliable] says he was crucified upside down. Some claim he died in Rome, but there is no New Testament proof he was ever in Rome. Tradition reports that his death occurred in 67 A.D., when the apostle was 75 years old. The Lord gave him some information regarding his demise:
- a. John 21:18-19: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me."
 - b. 2 Peter 1:12-15: "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting *you* in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance."

B. The Purpose of the Epistle.

1. The purpose is stated in 1 Peter 5:12: "By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand."
 2. The letter was intended to confirm to them that they were following the right way.
 3. In light of the information contained in the epistle, we may see that the information was intended to urge them to be steadfast under the persecution they were facing, or which was impending.
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4. The apostle sought to give the suffering saints hope in the midst of great suffering.

C. The Recipients of the Epistle.

1. Peter wrote to Christians in general, not to some particular congregation. First Peter is part of a group of New Testament books known as the General Epistles. Included in that group are James, 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, and 3 John, and Jude. These were written to Christians in general and addressed various subjects of importance to the saints of every place (and time).
2. His first readers were from the same places represented by the crowd on Pentecost Day.
 - a. 1 Peter 1:1-2: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."
 - b. Acts 2:8-11: "And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God."
3. The recipients were Christians, from both Jewish and Gentile backgrounds.

D. The Date of the Letter.

1. The date of the epistle is put at about 65 A.D. Nero burned Rome on July 19 of the year 64 A.D., and placed the blame for the disaster on Christians. Soon afterwards, a great persecution was launched upon the Lord's church.
 2. Peter wrote to Christians who were being persecuted at the time, and warned them of an intensification in persecution in the near future.
 - a. 1 Peter 1:6-7: "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."
 - b. 1 Peter 4:17-19: "For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."
 - c. The logical date for the epistle would be late in the year 64 or early in the year 65.
 3. The apostles places himself in "Babylon" when the letter was written: "The *church that is* at Babylon, elected together with *you*, saluteth you; and *so doth* Marcus my son" (1 Pet. 5:13).
 - a. Catholics view Babylon as a reference to Rome. This is uncertain at best.
 - b. Others have speculated that some place in Egypt called Babylon is meant.
 - c. The most natural understanding is to take Babylon as the original city or country of that name. But when was Babylon destroyed? It is uncertain. Even if the city was entirely gone, the region could still bear that name. A statement is to be taken at face value (its common and usual meaning) unless there is something in the context that demands a figurative interpretation. There is nothing in the context of 1 Peter 5:13 that requires us to take Babylon as anything other than the common and usual location of Babylon.
 - d. If one is to take Babylon as a figurative representation of some other place, which we deny, then Jerusalem seems to be the logical location. Jerusalem had been the center of persecution the church
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had faced up until the time that Rome began to assault the saints. Until Jerusalem was overthrown by the Romans in 70 A.D., the strongest enemy the church had was Judaism.

E. Outline of I Peter.

1. Chapter One.
 - a. Salutation—1 Peter 1:1-2.
 - b. Our Eternal Inheritance—1 Peter 1:3-5.
 - c. The Joy of Faithful Christians—1 Peter 1:6-9.
 - d. The Old Testament Prophets—1 Peter 1:10-12.
 - e. Soberness and Obedience Enjoined—1 Peter 1:13-17.
 - f. The Precious Blood of Christ—1 Peter 1:18-21.
 - g. The Purification of Souls—1 Peter 1:22-25.
 2. Chapter Two.
 - a. Principles of Spiritual Growth—1 Peter 2:1-3.
 - b. Christian Relationships and Responsibilities—1 Peter 2:4-10
 - c. Christian Conduct Before an Unbelieving World—1 Peter 2:11-12.
 - d. Christians and Civil Authorities—1 Peter 2:13-17.
 - e. Christ is Our Example—1 Peter 2:18-25.
 3. Chapter Three.
 - a. Duties of Wives to Husbands—1 Peter 3:1-7.
 - b. Duties of Christians to Each Other—1 Peter 3:8-12.
 - c. The Christian's Security in Persecution—1 Peter 3:13-17.
 - d. The Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ—1 Peter 3:18-22.
 4. Chapter Four.
 - a. A Christian is Not to Serve the Lust of the Flesh—1 Peter 4:1-6.
 - b. Admonitions to Christian Living—1 Peter 4:7-11.
 - c. Suffering as a Christian—1 Peter 4:12-19.
 5. Chapter Five.
 - a. The Duties of Elders—1 Peter 5:1-4.
 - b. Spiritual Clothing for the Christian—1 Peter 5:5-9.
 - c. Conclusion—1 Peter 5:10-14.
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I PETER 1

A. 1 Peter 1:1-2: Salutation.

1. Verse 1: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia."
 - a. According to ancient custom, the signature was placed at the beginning of a letter.
 - b. Peter calls himself an apostle—one sent by Christ on a special mission. The meaning of “apostle” is “one sent on a mission.” This was his job description; it was not intended as a title. There was no special authority resting only on Peter; he was not greater in authority than the other apostles. He was not the rock upon which Christ erected his church: "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 16:16-19).
 - 1) The name “Peter” is from the Greek *petros* (a rock; a stone); the word “rock” is from the Greek *petra*, a bedrock; a ledge of rock: “Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock [from *petras*]: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock” (Matt. 7:24-25).
 - 2) He was a married man.
 - a) Matthew 8:14: “And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.”
 - b) 1 Corinthians 9:5: “Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?”
 - 3) Titles of distinction, such as pope (*papa*) are forbidden—Matthew 23:1-12.
 - c. He was not a “pope.” Peter, because he was an inspired apostle of Christ, had the authority to bind and loose (Matt. 16:17-19; 18:18). Both he and the other apostles shared in this authority.
 - 1) Matthew 18:18: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
 - 2) Mark 13:11: "But when they shall lead *you*, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."
 - 3) John 14:26: "But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."
 - 4) John 15:26-27: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."
 - 5) John 16:13: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come."
 - 6) John 20:23: “Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.”
 - 7) Acts 2:1-4: "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one

- place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."
- 8) 1 Corinthians 9:2: "If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord."
 - 9) 2 Corinthians 12:11-13: "I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds. For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except *it be* that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong."
- d. Their authority of apostleship gave them the power to bind and loose, but this was not in accordance with any arbitrary choice on their part; rather, they bound and loosed as the Holy Spirit directed them through miraculous control. Whatsoever thou shalt bind (or loose) shall be bound (or loosed) in heaven. The idea of binding and loosing was a rabbinic expression for requiring or forbidding or permitting. What is said to Peter in Matthew 16:18-19 is extended to all the apostles in Matthew 18:18 and John 20:23. The Lord never intended, and Peter never became, an infallible dictator over the church as the Catholic hierarchy claims.
- 1) Galatians 2:11-14: "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" [Peter was involved in sin; Paul rebuked him because of this error].
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 12:11-12: "I am become a fool in glorying; ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds." [All of the apostles were on the same level of authority; Peter was not above Paul or the others].
- e. Peter and the other apostles did not bind and loose according to their own designs; rather they were supernaturally guided in receiving and revealing the law of Christ (Mark 13:11; John 16:12-14; 15:26; Acts 2:1-4; Gal. 1:6-12; Rev. 22:18-19).
- 1) The sense of the Greek text is, "Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven." The apostles did not arbitrarily bind and loose, but God did the binding and loosing through them by directing their words. The inspired message did the binding and loosing.
 - 2) Mark 13:11: "But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."
 - 3) John 16:12-14: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."
 - 4) John 15:26: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."
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- 5) Acts 2:1-4: “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”
 - 6) Galatians 1:6-12: “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.”
 - 7) Revelation 22:18-19: “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”
- f. He addresses the epistle to the “strangers” scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia—provinces of the Roman Empire. These provinces are in and around the area we call Turkey today. They were called “strangers” because they were pilgrims in this world: "Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Pet. 2:11). Every faithful Christian is a stranger and pilgrim in this world.
2. Verse 2: “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.”
 - a. These Christians are next described as **the elect**. The Israelites were once the elect of God; God had chosen them to fulfill the role he gave them, but their hardness of heart and rebellion caused them to be removed from that special condition. Now, the elect of God are those throughout the world, in every generation, who sincerely obey the gospel of Christ.
 - 1) Romans 11:20-22: "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, *take heed* lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in *his* goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off."
 - 2) Deuteronomy 30:15-19: “See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it. But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish, and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.”
 - 3) Colossians 3:12: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering."
 - 4) 2 Thessalonians 2:13-15: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification

of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."

- 5) As the pioneer preachers used to say, our election follows this pattern: God votes for us, the devil votes against us, and we cast the deciding ballot.
- b. They became the elect through the **foreknowledge of God**. God did not foreordain certain individuals to be saved and others to be lost; that would have violated the eternal principle of his nature that he be entirely without respect of persons. He did foreordain *a certain type of person* to be saved: the one who would obey from the heart his doctrines of truth (Rom. 6:16-18; Mark 16:15-16; Rom. 1:16-17; John 8:32). "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Rom. 8:29-30). The following comments are from the author's material on Romans 8:29-30, where Paul discusses some similar subjects to that of our text.
 - 1) God can know ahead of time what a man's actions will be, but that does not mean that he has programmed that action to occur. God knew that Adam and Eve would fall into sin before the fact. He commanded them to refrain from eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:16-17). If we maintain that God programmed them to eat the fruit, but still ordered them to refuse to eat it, then God is working at cross purposes with himself. And he is guilty of requiring Adam and Eve to do the very thing he commanded them not to do; and further, he punished them severely for doing what he had scheduled them to do. Adam and Eve had full choice in eating or refusing to eat the forbidden fruit. God knew ahead of time what their choice would be, for he had already made plans to send his Son into the world to die for the sins of humanity. But he did not cause them to transgress the commandment.
 - a) Revelation 13:8: "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."
 - b) Revelation 14:6: "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."
 - c) 2 Timothy 1:9-10: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."
 - 2) He also did predestinate them to be conformed to the image of his Son. Some misapprehend this statement, and assert that God decided the eternal destiny of every human being before time began, and did so without their having any decision in the matter. That this doctrine is erroneous is made clear from many Bible statements (Rom. 2:11; Acts 10:34-35; Rev. 22:17; Matt. 11:28-30). The impartiality of God is affirmed many times in the Bible, which truth also refutes the doctrine. That God gave each man the freedom of choice in deciding his own eternal destiny is manifest in the offer of salvation to each accountable individual (Tit. 2:11-14; Matt. 23:37; John 5:40; 6:44-45; Acts 13:45-46; Mark 16:15-16). This also shows that God did not arbitrarily, or in any other way, dictate the destiny of any individual independent of the will of that individual.
 - a) Matthew 11:28-30: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."
 - b) Revelation 22:17: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life

- freely.”
- c) Romans 2:11: “For there is no respect of persons with God.”
 - d) Acts 10:34-35: “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”
 - e) Acts 13:45-46: “But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.”
- 3) The predestination indicated does not extend to the selection of individuals; but rather, God predestinated a certain *type* of person to be saved: those who would obey the gospel and be conformed to the image of Christ. The Lord knew that there were many of this kind of person in Corinth, for he said, "I have much people in this city" (Acts 18:10). The gospel of Christ is designed to restore sinful man to the image he had before the fall. What was lost in Adam, is more than made up for in Christ (cf. Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 3:18).
- a) Romans 12:1-2: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”
 - b) 2 Corinthians 3:18: “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”
- 4) It is God's desire that there be many people who will obey the gospel; he wants Christ to be the firstborn of many who are like him, who will live pure lives of obedience to God's will.
- a) Matthew 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. ”
 - b) Hebrews 5:8-9: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
 - c) 1 John 2:3-5: "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him."
 - d) Revelation 22:14: "Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."
 - e) 2 Peter 3:8-9: “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”
- 5) The nature of the gospel is such that only a certain type of person will find it palatable. These are the minority in any generation or society. Does this make God unjust to design a system that will be rejected by the majority? No. God has the right to decide the kind of person he wants around him (Ps. 15; Rev. 21:27). It is not his fault, but the individual's, when men refuse to humble
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- themselves to obey the gospel and be restored to the spiritual level God requires, to make it possible for them to enter heaven. God is our Maker—this entitles him to make conditions for his offspring; this also obligates us to obey his will.
- a) Psalms 15: "LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. *He that* backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. *He that* sweareth to *his own* hurt, and changeth not. *He that* putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these *things* shall never be moved."
 - b) Revelation 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."
- 6) Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called. The *called* are those who have responded to the call of the gospel (2 Thess. 2:13). The church (*ekklesia*: "the called out ones") is comprised of those who have been called out of the world by the gospel. The call of the gospel is designed to be extended to every accountable person (Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:47; Matt. 28:18-20; Col. 1:6,23; Rom. 10:18; Acts 8:4). "Many are called but few are chosen" (Matt. 20:16). Everyone is offered the invitation to obey the gospel, but few are so-minded to accept it. Many **choose** not to accept, thus they place themselves among the ranks of the **unchosen**.
- 7) The call of the gospel is not irresistible. Why should the gospel be preached to those who will reject it? One reason is that we do not have any way of knowing what a person's response will be. Another reason is that at least the individual will have the opportunity to obey; each person needs to have the opportunity to respond. "And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles" (Acts 13:44-46).
- 8) And whom he called, them he also justified. Those who obey the gospel are justified; they are pardoned, and considered by the Lord as if they never had been guilty of sin.
- a) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - b) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - c) Colossians 1:13-14: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."
 - d) Ephesians 1:7: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."
 - e) Ephesians 2:1-13: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up
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together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.”

- f) 2 Corinthians 6:14-18: “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”
 - g) 2 Timothy 1:9-10: “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”
- 9) And whom he justified, them he also glorified. This glorification is primarily prospective, that is, it has not been obtained in its fullness while we are here on earth; but we joyfully anticipate it when this life is over. We have eternal life now, but not in actual possession; it is ours in hope and in promise (Tit. 1:2; 3:7; 1 John 2:25; Mark 10:29-30). This glorification is certain for those who remain faithful. It was introduced in Romans 8:17, where the apostle affirmed that we are the children and heirs of God. It was addressed in Romans 8:18 where Paul showed that it would be worth all the sufferings the persecutors of this world could heap upon us. This glorification includes our being manifested as the true children of God, thus it involves vindication. It is the ultimate goal of God's eternal purpose (2 Tim. 1:9-10). God had an eternal purpose in mind when he made the world. That purpose was to save as many men and women as would be willing to obey his will (Eph. 3:1-11; Rom. 16:25). He gradually revealed that great plan, first by prophetic types and promises. After Christ completed his earthly mission, the apostles were empowered to receive, broadcast, confirm, and record that plan.
- a) God's eternal purpose included foreknowing, predestinating, calling, justifying, and glorifying certain of his offspring. Paul's statement in this passage [Rom. 8:29-30] views this plan in its broad scope, picturing it from the eternal perspective.
 - b) God's eternal purpose sought the redemption of all man; he offers salvation in Christ; he originated the plan before the world began; he brought it to completion through the gospel; it is through the gospel that the call is issued; and it will confer its ultimate benefits in heaven.
- c. Now we return to our text in 1 Peter 1:2: They became the elect through the foreknowledge of God **through the sanctification of the Spirit**. The word “sanctify” means to set apart, to dedicate to a holy purpose. “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thess. 2:13-14). God has willed that all of those who believe the truth are to be saved;
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the choice he made did not extend to picking out the individuals who were to believe, for that would cause him to show respect of persons, a practice which is manifestly denied (cf. Acts 10:34-35; Rom. 2:11).

- 1) God's great plan for the gospel was for both Jews and Gentiles to be offered access to his blessings provided in the gospel (Rom. 1:16-17). They obtained the salvation which God provides through the process of sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. These saints had examined the truth; they believed the truth; and they were saved by the truth (John 8:32; 17:17). Their salvation is ascribed to the sanctification of the Spirit *and belief of the truth*, in 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14.
- 2) Sanctification (being set apart; separated; dedicated to God's holy purposes) is attributed to the Spirit (the Holy Spirit). No reference is made to the means by which the Spirit set them apart. However, Jesus taught that sanctification is accomplished by the God's word: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17).
- 3) Our belief of the truth is involved in our salvation. One who does not love and believe the truth will be condemned (2 Thess. 1:6-9; 2:10-12). James (2:14-26) teaches clearly that a faith that does not obey is a dead faith. Faith that obeys is essential to salvation. Both God and man are active in the salvation process. On the divine side, God developed the plan by which salvation is made possible, Christ executed that plan by dying on the cross, and the Holy Spirit revealed, confirmed, and preserved the plan for all generations. These activities represent the grace (unmerited favor) of God. On the human side, man hears and believes the message of God's grace. Unless man learns and accepts the divine plan, he cannot be saved:
 - a) John 3:16-17: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."
 - b) John 6:44-45: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."
 - c) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - d) Ephesians 2:8-9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."
 - e) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - f) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
 - g) 1 Peter 1:22-25: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
- 4) The salvation which God provided (verse 13) was offered to them by the gospel of Christ. The gospel has a built-in call. It summons men and women to leave behind the ways of sin and degradation, and come to Christ.
 - a) Romans 10:13-18: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How

then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."

- b) Acts 2:36-41: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls."
- d. They became the elect through the sanctification of the Spirit **in their obedience**.
- 1) Matthew 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
 - 2) Romans 6:16-18: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
 - 3) Hebrews 5:8-9: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
 - 4) 1 Peter 1:22-23: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
 - 5) Revelation 22:14: "Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."
- e. They became the elect through the sanctification of the Spirit through their obedience with **the blood of Christ being the basis**. The sprinkling of blood is an allusion to the Old Testament practice of sprinkling blood on the altar during the Jewish religious ceremonies. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins (Heb. 9:22). But the blood of animals cannot remove the guilt of sin (Heb. 10:1-4). Only the blood of Christ has that ability (1 Pet. 1:18-19). How does one living twenty centuries after Christ died obtain the benefits of his shed blood? Not by any literal application of his blood. If the Roman soldier who pierced the side of Christ had been covered by the Lord's blood, that would not have benefitted his soul. "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water" (John 19:34).
- 1) Romans 6:16-18: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of

doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."

- 2) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - 3) Revelation 1:5: "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,"
 - 4) Baptism is essential to salvation; the blood of Christ is essential to salvation; therefore, we contact the blood of Christ when we are baptized into Christ.
- f. Grace and peace are common salutations in apostolic writings. Grace was commonly used by Greek-speaking people as a greeting; peace was similarly used by the Jews.

B. 1 Peter 1:3-5: Our Eternal Inheritance.

1. Verse 3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."
 - a. The word translated "blessed" [a different word from the term used in the beatitudes] is the word from which we get our word "eulogy" and "eulogize."
 - 1) The term Peter uses in the text is also found in other passages:
 - a) Romans 1:25: "Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen."
 - b) Romans 9:5: "Whose *are* the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came*, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."
 - c) 2 Corinthians 1:3: "Blessed *be* God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort."
 - d) Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ."
 - 2) The word means "to speak well of another, to praise." This word is used in the New Testament only in reference to God [cf. Vincent].
 - b. The apostle praises God, describing him as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is the Father of Christ in the sense that he has greater authority than the Son, sent him into the world via the Virgin Birth, and raised him from the dead; there has never been a time when Christ did not exist—God did not create Christ.
 - 1) Micah 5:2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting."
 - 2) John 1:1-3: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."
 - 3) Revelation 1:11: "Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send *it* unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea."
 - 4) Revelation 1:18: "I *am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."
 - c. The praise he offers grows out of the hope he has given to his people. The hope was produced by the abundant mercy of God—his gracious love provided our hope.

- 1) We were begotten again:
 - a) “The meaning is, that as God is the Author of our life in a natural sense, so he is the Author of our second life by regeneration. The Saviour said, (John 3:3) that ‘except a man be born again,’ or ‘begotten again,’ *gennethee* (NT:1080) *anoothen* (NT:509) ‘he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ Peter here affirms that that change had occurred in regard to himself and those whom he was addressing. The word used here as a compound *anagennaoo* (NT:313) does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament, though it corresponds entirely with the words used by the Saviour in John 3:3,5,7. Perhaps the phrase ‘begotten again’ would be better in each instance where the word occurs, the sense being rather that of being begotten again, than of being born again” [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by BibleSoft].
 - b) Some scholars [Woods, Taylor] see the reference to being begotten *again* to this living hope as a allusion to the restoration of hope in the apostles who fled from the Lord when he was arrested in Gethsemane. It seems better to view it as a reference to the new birth (John 3:3,5; 1 Pet. 1:22-23), in which we were “born from above” and became children of God—with all the attendant blessings of being saved.
 - 2) We are begotten unto this hope by the word of God.
 - a) 1 Corinthians 4:15: "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *have ye* not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel."
 - b) 1 Corinthians 15:1-4: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."
 - c) 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."
 - d) James 1:18: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."
 - e) 1 Peter 1:22-23: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
 - 3) Without this hope we would be miserable: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. 15:19-20).
 - 4) The things we hope to receive are not in our possession in this life, but are to be received in the eternal blessings of Heaven—these are “ready to be revealed in the last time” (verse 5). “For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man sees, why does he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it” (Rom. 8:24-25, NKJ).
 - d. This hope is depicted as a *living* hope. It is a living hope because it is based on the resurrection of our Lord from the dead. Our Lord, though he was crucified, has been raised to life again—never to die any more: "And the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades" (Rev. 1:18, ASV). Any faithful Christian can live his life daily with hopeful confidence—without the great anxieties that assail fearful souls—desiring and expecting to obtain the grand objects of his hope.
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2. Verses 4-5: "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."
 - a. The living hope of faithful Christians is described as an inheritance. This is a figure frequently used in the New Testament to denote the future blessings of the faithful.
 - 1) Acts 20:32: "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."
 - 2) Acts 26:18: "To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."
 - 3) Galatians 3:18: "For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise."
 - 4) Ephesians 1:14: "Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."
 - 5) Colossians 1:12: "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."
 - 6) Colossians 3:24: "Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."
 - 7) Hebrews 9:15: "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions *that were* under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."
 - b. Our inheritance is **incorruptible**.
 - 1) This word accentuates the fact that our inheritance is immortal, undying, and will not perish; it cannot be influenced by the passage of time and cannot be affected by any other force.
 - 2) It cannot be corrupted by moths and rust, or stolen by thieves:
 - a) Matthew 6:19-21: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."
 - b) Luke 12:33: "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth."
 - 3) Our inheritance partakes of the same nature as does our inward man.
 - a) 2 Corinthians 4:16: "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day."
 - b) 1 Peter 1:18: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers."
 - c) 1 Peter 3:4: "But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."
 - 4) It is eternal.
 - a) Hebrews 7:25: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."
 - b) 1 Peter 1:23: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
 - c. Our inheritance is **undefiled**.
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- 1) "The word does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. As applied to an inheritance, it means that it will be pure. It will not have been obtained by dishonesty, nor will it be held by fraud; it will not be such as will corrupt the soul, or tempt to extravagance, sensuality, and lust, as a rich inheritance often does here; it will be such that its eternal enjoyment will never tend in any manner to defile the heart. 'How many estates,' says Benson, 'have been got by fraudulent and unjust methods; by poisoning, or in some other way murdering the right heir; by cheating of helpless orphans; by ruining the fatherless and widows; by oppressing their neighbors, or grinding the faces of the poor, and taking their garments or vineyards from them! But this future inheritance of the saints is stained by none of these vices; it is neither got nor detained by any of these methods; nor shall persons polluted with vice have any share in it.' Here no one can be heir to an inheritance of gold or houses without danger of soon sinking into indolence, effeminacy, or vice; there the inheritance may be enjoyed forever, and the soul continually advance in knowledge, holiness, and the active service of God" [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by BibleSoft].
 - 2) If something is undefiled, it is unsoiled, pure, and without blemish. The same word is used to describe Christ: "For such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb. 7:26).
 - 3) Our inheritance in heaven can only be obtained through pure and holy means. Earthly inheritances are sometimes gained by fraud or murder, but ours is acquired only by obedience to God—an obedience that emanates from the heart.
 - a) Romans 6:17: "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."
 - b) James 1:21-25: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."
 - c) James 1:12: "Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."
 - d) 1 Peter 1:22-23: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."
 - 4) The nature of our inheritance makes it impossible for it to have a defiling influence on us. Inheritances of this world can promote vice, laziness, and other sinful practices and dispositions, but not so with our heavenly legacy.
 - 5) Nothing can defile it: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27). The Israelites inherited Canaan, but allowed themselves to be contaminated by it and to contaminate it: "(For all these abominations have the men of the land done, which *were* before you, and the land is defiled;) That the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that *were* before you" (Lev. 18:27-28).
- d. Our inheritance **fades not away**.
- 1) "The words, 'that fadeth not away' are translated from the beautiful word *amarantos*, that which does not fade, or wither. The amaranth was a fabled flower whose bloom was perpetual, and whose loveliness never faded. The inheritance which awaits the children of God will not deteriorate, nor

- will passing ages render it less desirable or attractive” (Woods, pp.26f).
- 2) Our heavenly reward will be just as refreshing and desirable after millions of years as it will be at the very first. "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband....And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely" (Rev. 21:2, 6).
 - 3) “This word occurs nowhere else in the New Testament, though the word *amarantinos* (NT:262) occurs in 1 Peter 5:4, applied to a crown or garland. The word is properly applied to that which does not fade or wither, in contradistinction from a flower that fades. It may then denote anything that is enduring, and is applied to the future inheritance of the saints to describe its perpetuity in all its brilliance and splendor, in contrast with the fading nature of all that is earthly. The idea here, therefore, is not precisely the same as is expressed by the word ‘incorruptible.’ Both words indeed denote perpetuity, but that refers to perpetuity in contrast with decay; this denotes perpetuity in the sense that everything there will be kept in its original brightness and beauty. The crown of glory, though worn for millions of ages, will not be dimmed; the golden streets will lose none of their luster; the flowers that bloom on the banks of the river of life will always be as rich in color, and as fragrant, as when we first beheld them” [Barnes' Notes, *ibid.*].
- e. Our inheritance **is reserved in heaven.**
- 1) Our inheritance is not found on earth, but in Heaven, the place which Jesus went to prepare when he ascended: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know" (John 14:1-4).
 - 2) The inheritance is not to be given in Palestine as the Premillennialists claim, or on earth as the Watchtower Witnesses allege.
 - 3) It is not given in the here and now, but is reserved in Heaven.
 - a) Mark 10:30: "But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."
 - b) 2 Timothy 4:8: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
 - c) Titus 1:2: "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began."
 - d) 1 John 2:25: "And this is the promise that he hath promised us, *even* eternal life."
 - 4) It is kept in watchful custody by him who is Almighty. There is no need for any faithful saint to worry about God giving our inheritance to someone else or that someone else will deprive us of it—against our will. Our present salvation and our future reward are just as sure as our faith and obedience.
 - a) John 10:27-29: "My sheep **hear my voice**, and **I know them**, and **they follow me**: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand."
 - (1) The Lord’s sheep hear the voice (the instructions) of Christ; they follow him in all that he directs them to do. He knows (and approves of them) because they heed his word. It is not the case that his sheep merely listen to his voice; they hear what he says and accept it.
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Believing his words, they follow what he says.

- (2) They hear and they follow. They continue to follow; they remain in companionship with Christ. The blessing of eternal life pertains only to those Christians who continue to hear and follow the will of Heaven. If they cease to hear and follow, they cut themselves loose from the promise of the passage.
 - (3) Hear: To attend to and understand what is taught. One fails to understand, believe and follow the gospel only if he makes the choice to do so. Christ taught some things in John six which many who heard him would not accept: "Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" (John 6:60). Anyone who had ears could hear what he said; their problem was that they refused to learn and believe it.
 - (4) Eternal Life: The expression "occurs forty-four times in the New Testament, and of these occurrences seventeen are in the Fourth Gospel and six in the First Epistle of John, making twenty-three instances of its use by this single author. It never means simply endless existence, but always implies a blessed immortality. In Matt. 25: 46, it is opposed to everlasting punishment, which is endless existence in a state of punishment, while eternal life is endless existence in a state of bliss. The word rendered life (*zoe*) means, in its primary sense, 'existence' as opposed to non-existence or annihilation" (Johnson, p.165).
- b) 2 Peter 1:3-11: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."
- f. Our inheritance is promised to those who are **kept by the power of God through faith**.
- 1) "'Guarded' is from *phroumenous*, present participle of *phrouoreo*, to protect with a garrison, or military guard. The term thus has a military connotation, and as used here, metaphorically suggests a band of soldiers thrown about the faithful to protect and to guarantee their safety so long as they remain within the stockade of faith! The present tense indicates action in progress, and the guarding is, therefore, continuous and unfailing" (Woods, p.27). "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7, ASV).
 - 2) We are kept by God's power which is exercised through (in and by) our faith.
 - a) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
 - b) Hebrews 4:12: "For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
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- c) James 1:21-25: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."
 - d) 1 Peter 1:21-25: "Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
- 3) Our being kept by the power of God does not mean that we are kept in salvation unconditionally as sectarian preachers have claimed; this would oppose many plain passages (Jas. 5:19-20), and would make the many warnings against falling to be nonsensical (1 Cor. 10:12; Heb. 3:12-13); it also violates the immediate context which makes our salvation dependent on our active faith.
- a) 1 Corinthians 10:12: "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."
 - b) Hebrews 3:12-13: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."
 - c) James 5:19-20: "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."
- 4) Our salvation is assured, and our inheritance is insured by the power of God on the condition of our faith. If our faith fails, then our salvation and inheritance are lost.
- a) Matthew 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
 - b) Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
 - c) Luke 22:31-32: "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."
 - d) 1 Corinthians 15:1-4: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."
 - e) Hebrews 5:9: "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
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- f) James 1:21-25: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."
 - g) Revelation 2:10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
 - h) James 2:20-26: "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."
 - g. Our inheritance [our eternal salvation] is ready **to be revealed in the last time**.
 - 1) Two salvations are offered by the gospel: salvation from the guilt of past sin (Luke 24:47; Mark 16:15-16) and salvation in heaven (Heb. 5:9; Matt. 10:22; Rev. 2:10).
 - a) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - b) Luke 24:47: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."
 - c) Hebrews 5:9: "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
 - d) Revelation 2:10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (cf. Matt. 10:22).
 - 2) The salvation of the text is eternal salvation given to the redeemed in heaven. It is offered to all, but received only by those who obey the gospel and remain faithful to the Lord—in this life.
 - a) Romans 5:8-9: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."
 - b) Romans 8:16-18: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
 - c) 2 Timothy 4:6-8: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
 - 3) The salvation of the text is not obtained in fact in this life, but is ready to be revealed in the last time—in eternity following the Judgment of the last day.
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- a) Mark 10:30: "But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."
 - b) Ephesians 5:25-27: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."
 - c) 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10: "Seeing *it is* a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."
 - d) Hebrews 9:28: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."
- h. Verse 5 contains both a promise and a warning: the promise of eternal life in heaven to those who remain faithful, and an implied warning that it will be lost if we cease to believe.
- C. 1 Peter 1:6-9: The Faithful Have Reason to Rejoice Even in Persecution.
1. Verse 6: "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations."
 - a. "Though 'wherein' seems most naturally in our translation, to refer to the 'salvation' of verse 5, actually the text will not bear this interpretation, for the word...is neuter gender, and thus requires a neuter antecedent. The word 'salvation' is feminine. That which was in the apostle's mind was the whole of the blessings earlier enumerated—sonship, forgiveness of sins, the divine inheritance and the providential care of the Father" (Woods, p.28).
 - b. The brethren are told to greatly rejoice, even in the very throes of persecution. This is in keeping with the Lord's earlier counsel: "Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matt. 5:10-12).
 - 1) Compare: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).
 - 2) Faithful saints can logically and scripturally rejoice greatly in persecution on account of the fact that this indicates they are acceptable to God; if one is in good standing with the Father, then the eternal welfare of the soul is on solid ground.
 - c. At the worst, earthly persecutions are limited in duration—for a season. Even if the span of time involved were to encompass the rest of our lives here, that period of time is insignificant in view of the unending eternity before us. "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal" (2 Cor. 4:16-18).
 - d. "'If need be' does not signify, as many commentators assert, that there is in these words an implication that the suffering of the saints was divinely sent; a view which seriously reflects on the goodness of God. The meaning is that if it should become necessary (*ei deon estin*), because of the circumstances
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characteristic of their time to be exposed to trials and hardships from without, they were not to despair, but to see in these difficulties an occasion for rejoicing in the test of their faith which such trials afforded" (Woods, p.29).

- e. According to Paul in 2 Timothy 3:12, the usual case is that the saints will meet with persecutions: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Tribulations may take various forms and come in a variety of degrees, from imprisonment and martyrdom, to evil reports charged against us. Our Lord told the apostles that they would have tribulations in this world, but to be of good cheer, in view of the fact that he had overcome the world (John 16:33).
 - f. The trials would be *manifold* [from the same Greek term used in James 1:2: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations"]. This statement sums up all the various kinds of persecutions, difficulties, and privations they were suffering for the Lord's cause.
2. Verse 7: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."
- a. These "temptations" are here shown to be tests of their faith, and not enticements to commit sin. This is parallel to Abraham's experience: "And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, *here I am*" (Gen. 22:1). The American Standard rendition of the passage is more clearly worded: "And it came to pass after these things, that God did prove Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham. And he said, Here am I."
 - b. "This does not mean that their faith was much more precious than gold, but that the testing of it, *dokimion* (NT:1383), the process of showing whether it was or was not genuine, was a much more important and valuable process than that of testing gold in the fire. More important results were to be arrived at by it, and it was more desirable that it should be done" [Barnes' Notes, *ibid.*].
 - c. The design of these trials of our faith is to be found approved by the Lord at his return. "The *praise* will consist of the benedictions of approval which shall come to those who have been good and faithful servants; the *glory* will be the tokens of triumph which shall then be bestowed; the crown and the robe and the palm; and the *honor* will be that which Jesus possessed before the world was, and which he will at length share with those who have followed him faithfully here" (Woods, p.30).
 - 1) Matthew 25:34: "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."
 - 2) John 17:24: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."
 - 3) 2 Timothy 4:6-8: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
 - d. "The earth, and universal nature, shall be dissolved; but he who doeth the will of God shall abide forever, and his faith shall then be found to the praise of God's grace, the honour of Christ, and the glory or glorification of his own soul throughout eternity. God himself will praise such faith, angels and men will hold it in honour, and Christ will crown it with glory" [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1996 by Biblesoft].
3. Verse 8: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."
- a. The saints Peter addressed had never seen the Lord. No one living on earth today has seen the Lord. It is unimportant to our faith for us to see him with our physical eyes. Although those people had not seen Christ, yet their love for him was no less strong. Love for the Lord does not depend on literally

seeing him. A blind mother who has never seen her baby, loves that baby; her love does not depend of beholding the infant's physical features. A blind baby also develops an undying love for his mother without having ever seen her face.

- b. Our Lord made no effort to leave behind any representation of his physical appearance; those who knew him best while he lived on earth, did not do so. Isaiah predicted that his physical form may not have been as pleasing to the human eye as many others were:
 - 1) "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him" (Isa. 53:2).
 - 2) But David is described: "And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he" (1 Sam. 16:12).
- c. Christ pronounced a blessing on those who never would see him in the flesh, but yet would believe on him and love him: "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed" (John 20:29).
- d. Compare: "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more" (2 Cor. 5:16).
 - 1) To *know* someone is to have a special relationship with that person. A husband *knows* his wife, and his wife *knows* him.
 - a) Genesis 4:1: "And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD."
 - b) Matthew 1:24-25: "Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS."
 - 2) A Christian *knows* his God and Christ. "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Titus 1:16; cf. 2 Thess. 1:8-9; John 17:3). *We know* God and Christ in the sense that we believe in them, love them, and follow them.
 - 3) Therefore, we *know* no man after the flesh; we do not follow any fleshly being or obey any fleshly source of authority. We follow the will of God and Christ. These are the ones we *know*. This is a blow against the Judaizers who sought to convince the Gentile saints to follow the Law of Moses. These Jewish teachers claimed that the Law was still in effect and that the Gentile Christians must be circumcised and keep the Law in order to be saved.
 - 4) The Jewish people believed that there were certain blessings which undeniably belonged to them because of their fleshly kinship to Abraham. Physical kinship has no benefit for the soul, but obedience to the Master does.
 - a) Matthew 3:8-10: "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."
 - b) Romans 2:28-29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."
 - c) Luke 11:27-28: "And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of

God, and keep it.”

- d) Matthew 12:47-50: “Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.”
- 5) For about thirty-three years, Christ abode on earth in a fleshly body. He no longer is on earth and does not now live in a fleshly body. We will never see him in a fleshly body. Premillennialism claims that Christ must return to earth, live again on earth, and set up an earthly kingdom over which he will reign for a thousand years. For this to take place, it appears that he would have to have a fleshly body again. But Paul says that "henceforth know we him no more" (that is, he will not inhabit a mortal body any more). There is no passage of Scripture which says that Christ will ever so much as set foot upon the earth again!
- e. “Ye have unutterable happiness through believing; and ye have the fullest, clearest, strongest evidence of eternal glory. Though they did not see him on earth, and men could not see him in glory, yet by that faith which is the evidence of things not seen, and the subsistence of things hoped for, they had the very highest persuasion of their acceptance with God, their relation to him as their Father, and their sonship with Christ Jesus” [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1996 by Biblesoft].
4. Verse 9: “Receiving the end of your faith, *even* the salvation of *your* souls.”
- a. The term here translated “receiving” is used in 2 Corinthians 5:10 and Ephesians 6:8 to indicate the reward to be received by the saints in the last day; it is used in the same way here.
- 1) 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad."
 - 2) Ephesians 6:8: "Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free."
- b. The term “end” [*telos*] means the fulfillment of their faith at the Judgment when eternal salvation will be given. Salvation in heaven is the goal of our faith. This is the reason Christ came into the world.
- 1) Matthew 1:21: "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."
 - 2) Luke 19:10: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."
 - 3) John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
 - 4) 1 Timothy 1:13-15: "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."
- c. Our Lord did not come to give a social “gospel,” political freedom, worldly riches, or earthly rewards. This is where the doctrines of Armstrong, the Watchtower Witnesses, the Adventists, and the premillennialists have greatly erred. Moreover, it has become unpopular to speak of *Gehenna*, and Heaven is not much emphasized by today’s religious world. Modernistic and liberal churches are so much interested in social affairs and getting voters registered, along with other mundane interests, that eternal salvation is often ignored. But eternal salvation in Heaven was a point of major emphasis by the inspired preachers and teachers of the first century.

D. 1 Peter 1:10-12: The Work of the Prophets.

1. Verse 10: “Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the

grace *that should come* unto you.”

- a. The Old Testament prophets spoke beforehand of the grace which we now have. It was not their lot during this lifetime to enjoy the blessings this grace would offer.
 - 1) Matthew 11:11: "Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." [John never had the privilege of being a citizen in God's kingdom, the church].
 - 2) Matthew 13:17: "For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them*."
 - 3) Peter's mention of this fact was intended to make the brethren appreciate their blessings more, so as to remain faithful in the persecutions they faced. It has the same effect on us.
 - b. The nature of inspired prophecies was such that the prophet was not always privy to the meaning of the predictions. Daniel was a case in point; in some cases, he was told; in other cases, he was left in the dark: "Then I Daniel looked, and, behold, there stood other two, the one on this side of the bank of the river, and the other on that side of the bank of the river. And *one* said to the man clothed in linen, which *was* upon the waters of the river, How long *shall it be* to the end of these wonders? And I heard the man clothed in linen, which *was* upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that *it shall be* for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these *things* shall be finished. And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things*? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for **the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end**" (Dan. 12:5-9).
 - c. According to Peter, the prophets sought diligently to understand the prophecies they delivered. The subject he specifically identifies were their predictions regarding the "grace that should come unto you"—the gospel system. There were some things they were not permitted to know. Think how Isaiah must have pondered concerning the suffering Savior described ahead of time in Isaiah 53. They were given only what they needed, as was the case throughout the ages.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 29:29: "The secret *things belong* unto the LORD our God: but those *things which are revealed belong* unto us and to our children for ever, that *we may do* all the words of this law."
 - 2) Even the apostles of Christ were not allowed to know certain things until the time was right: "When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:6-8).
 - d. "Here is indisputable evidence of the verbal inspiration of the prophetic writings. These prophecies, far from being the productions of the prophets, unaided by inspiration, were so far above and beyond them, that they were dependent on others for instruction enabling them to grasp the significance of their own writings. A remarkable example of this will be seen in the instance of Daniel inquiring of the angel the meaning of the matters revealed to him" (Woods, pp.32f).
 - 1) Daniel 7:16: "I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know the interpretation of the things."
 - 2) Daniel 9:2-3: "In the first year of his reign I Daniel understood by books the number of the years, whereof the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah the prophet, that he would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. And I set my face unto the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes."
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2. Verse 11: "Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."
 - a. The prophets of the Old Testament searched diligently to learn the details of when these great events and blessings would come. It was not their lot to experience these, or to know the details thereof. They could not learn the details in the Old Testament writings, just as we cannot learn from the New Testament when the end of time will be. Jesus knew the Old and New Testaments perfectly, but still did not know when the Second Coming would be: "But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is" (Mark 13:32-33). Neither the Old Testament nor the New Testament revealed the time of the Second Coming. Christ had perfect knowledge of both Testaments, but he did know when.
 - b. The Old Testament prophets predicted future events by the Spirit of Christ.
 - 1) 2 Samuel 23:2: "The spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word *was* in my tongue."
 - 2) Acts 1:16: "Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus."
 - 3) 2 Peter 1:20-21: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost."
 - c. The Holy Spirit is called the "Spirit of Christ" because Christ is superior in authority to the Holy Spirit. The Father is greater in authority than Christ, and Christ is greater in authority than the Spirit. God sent Christ and Christ sent the Spirit—which evidences a divine "chain of command."
 - 1) John 13:16: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him."
 - 2) John 14:28: "Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come *again* unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I."
 - 3) John 15:26: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."
 - d. The prophets searched what time and what manner of time [*chronos* and *kairos*]; these are expressions indicating duration of time and periods of time. Both of these terms are used in Acts 1:6-8: "It is not for you to know the *chromos* or the *kairos*." Undoubtedly, Daniel 9:25-27 was one such prophecy: "Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince *shall be* seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."
 - e. They bore witness beforehand of the sufferings Christ was to endure and the glory that would follow. These truths were revealed to them by the Spirit of Christ, who was in them. Among the truths we may deduce from these facts, are these:
 - 1) The Old Testament prophets spoke by inspiration.
 - a) 2 Samuel 23:2: "The spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word *was* in my tongue."
 - b) Acts 1:16: "Men *and* brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that

- took Jesus."
- c) Acts 3:22-23: "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."
- 2) The same Spirit that inspired the Old Testament prophets also worked through the apostles of Christ and other inspired people of the first century.
 - a) Luke 24:49: "And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."
 - b) John 16:12-14: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show *it* unto you."
 - c) Acts 1:5, 8: "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence....But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."
 - 3) Since it was the Spirit of Christ who influenced the Old Testament prophets, it is obvious that Christ existed back then, and did not begin his existence when he was born of a virgin.
 - a) Micah 5:2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting."
 - b) John 1:1-3: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."
 - 4) The sufferings Christ underwent were planned and intended from the beginning [they were not last-minute substitutions when the Jews rejected the Lord, as the millennialists assert]. The Old Testament clearly revealed the fact that the Messiah would suffer (Isa. 53). The Jews still cannot see how Christ could be both a suffering savior and a reigning Monarch.
 - a) Daniel 9:25-27: "Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince *shall be* seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."
 - b) Luke 24:25-27: "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."
 - c) Luke 24:44-46: "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding,
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- that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day."
- d) Acts 3:18: "But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."
 - e) Acts 26:23: "That Christ should suffer, *and* that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."
 - f. On earth, our Lord faced many hardships and privations. He did not have a certain place to sleep and eat during his public ministry; he had many enemies; the people placed great demands on his time in their quest for miraculous aid. He was ignominiously arrested, tried, and crucified; he was buried in a borrowed tomb. But he arose from the dead on the third day; at the proper time, forty days later, he ascended to Heaven, where he re-gained the glory he possessed in eternity.
 - 1) Daniel 7:13-14: "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed."
 - 2) John 17:5: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."
 - 3) Acts 2:29-36: "Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."
 - 4) Ephesians 1:19-23: "And what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."
 3. Verse 12: "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."
 - a. The things revealed to the Old Testament prophets they predicted, but it was not their good fortune to enjoy these blessings themselves while on earth. They served God under an inferior system and during a dark, superstitious, ungodly, and unenlightened time.
 - b. These prophets were willing servants in the great plan of God; they suffered and died for the great Cause to come. Therefore, those who are recipients of the great blessings of the gospel are to be willing to suffer for the Cause, remain faithful, and be thankful for those prophets for our present blessings and honor.
 - c. We have far greater light revealed in the gospel than was ever known by people living previous to its
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revelation. We know what is required to be saved and to be faithful, and we know what lies beyond this life: the Hadean world, the Resurrection, the Judgment, and the final destiny of both the righteous and the unrighteous. We may not know what will transpire tomorrow; we may have sorrow, pain, and loss; but we have every reason (and all the information we need) to have full confidence about the future. We can know whether we are right with God, and therefore have the greatest hope that is possible in this life. We bemoan the darkness too much: actually we have a tremendous amount of light, especially in contrast to what was known before the coming of Christ.

- 1) John 1:6-18: "There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe. He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light. *That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. I John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*."
 - 2) John 3:18-21: "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."
 - 3) Acts 26:18: "To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."
 - 4) 2 Corinthians 4:3-4: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."
- d. The Old Testament prophets did not know these things in detail, but the Spirit has fully revealed them in the New Testament.
- 1) Romans 16:25-26: "Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 2:9-14: "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*,
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- because they are spiritually discerned."
- 3) Ephesians 1:9-10: "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him."
 - 4) Ephesians 3:1-11: "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."
 - 5) 2 Timothy 1:9-10: "Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."
 - 6) Titus 2:11-14: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."
- e. The Spirit predicted (through the Old Testament prophets) the coming of this New Testament system, and Christ preached (through the apostles and other inspired men of the first century) the fulfillment of it. The Jews had great respect for the Old Testament prophets; Peter's information here, together with the fact that the apostles and New Testament prophets could produce miracles, was a strong case for the unbelieving Jews to accept the truth.
 - f. Peter states that the angels desired to peer into the great mysteries of God's eternal plan. It was not for them to know until such time that the strategy was to be unfolded. No provision for salvation was given to the angels. The word "desire" is a strong word, indicating "to set the heart on, to want passionately"). To "look into" means to "stoop to look." This is the word used to describe what Peter did when he reached the Lord's empty tomb: "Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass" (Luke 24:12).
 - g. "In emphasizing the greatness of the salvation that has come to Christians, Peter in this affirms that even the angels of heaven are deeply concerned and interested in this salvation; and why not? For their own number who had sinned, there was no day of grace, no offer of pardon, no opportunity to seek a remedy. The same verse of the word of God which relates their sin also relates their being cast out of heaven! No wonder they were interested in this new thing wherein God would forgive sinful and rebellious men! No greater wonder ever appeared, either in heaven or upon earth!" (Coffman, p.176).
 - h. 2 Peter 2:4: "For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment" (ASV).
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E. 1 Peter 1:13-21: Be Sober, Obedient and Godly.

1. Verse 13: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."
 - a. The people in Palestine of that ancient day wore long, flowing robes. While these garments may have been cool in hot weather and handsome in appearance, they would not make activity easy. Hence, they would "gird-up" the loose folds of their robes with a girdle (a belt), making movement, work, travel, and other actions easier.
 - 1) Peter uses this common practice as a figure, to depict gathering up all ideas, motives, and other mental activities. Anything that would diminish or hinder spiritual activity and progress must be controlled if we are to be prepared to discharge our spiritual duties. Compare: "Let your loins be girded about, and *your* lights burning" (Luke 12:35).
 - 2) The Israelites in captivity, at the first Passover, were to eat the Passover meal, with their garments girded, ready to begin their journey immediately: "And thus shall ye eat it; *with* your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: *it is* the LORD'S passover" (Ex. 12:11).
 - 3) An allusion may also be intended to what the Lord did when he gathered his apostles together for the last Passover he ate with them: "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head" (John 13:3-9).
 - b. We are told to **be sober**. To be sober-minded is to maintain self-control. If we have sobriety, we will obtain calmness of mind, a highly-distinctive feature of mature Christianity. The more sobriety we possess, the less we will be upset by the minor aggravations of life. We will gradually subdue these provocations.
 - 1) "It is a grace which tempers enthusiasm and keeps it in proper bounds. When Paul was charged with fanaticism for preaching the gospel so fervently, he could reply: 'I am not mad, most excellent Festus; but speak forth words of truth and soberness.'" (Acts 26:25)" (Woods, p.39).
 - 2) 1 Thessalonians 5:6-8: "Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation."
 - 3) 1 Peter 4:7: "But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer."
 - 4) 1 Peter 5:8-9: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."
 - c. We are told to **set our hope** on the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Christ. The ASV renders the verse in these words: "Wherefore girding up the loins of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:13). Hope is comprised of desire and expectation; we desire the object of our hope and we have a reasonable expectation of obtaining it. Our hope is to be firmly and properly focused on our eternal reward.

- d. Brother Woods thought the “revelation of Jesus Christ” was a reference to the grace being given to the saints even at the present: “The phrase, ‘that is to be brought,’ is translated from an article and a participle, (*ten pheromenen*) in the present tense, indicative of the fact that the grace referred to is being brought now in a present revelation of Christ. Every gift of grace which the Christian receives is a further and additional revelation to him of Christ and what he means to the human soul” (p.39). Christians are certainly blessed in this life; it is likewise certain that we will be blessed in eternity. Our current blessings are but a foretaste of the greater glories that shall be ours in Heaven. The more natural understanding of Peter’s statement seems to be in reference to the Second Coming of Christ, when all earthly affairs will be brought to a conclusion and all spiritual rewards will be given.
- 1) Mark 10:30: "But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."
 - 2) 2 Timothy 4:6-8: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
 - 3) 1 John 3:1-3: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."
 - 4) Colossians 3:1-4: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."
- e. How then are we to understand the use of the present tense in the phrase? We have a measure of grace in our present lives as faithful saints—and we are to receive the full measure when our Lord returns.
2. Verse 14: “As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance.”
- a. As part of the present long sentence (covering four verses), the apostle depicts the saints as obedient children of God. A son partakes of his father in certain features. He might be like him in physical appearance, in strength, in disposition, in voice, etc. The Lord connected sinful Jews to their father—Satan: "Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). Other usages of the figure include the following:
 - 1) Ephesians 2:3: "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."
 - 2) Ephesians 5:8: "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light."
 - 3) 2 Thessalonians 2:3: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."
 - 4) 2 Peter 2:14: "Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children."
 - 5) Luke 16:8: "And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the
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- children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."
- 6) One of the reasons Christ is spoken of as the Son of God is because he partakes of the nature and characteristics of his Father. [Some have foolishly thought that since Christ is God's Son, then there was a point in time when our Lord had a beginning; but he is eternal in being: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:1-3; cf. Micah 5:2).
- b. One becomes a child of God through obedience, and remains a loyal child of God by obedience.
 - 1) Romans 6:16-18: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
 - 2) Hebrews 5:8-9: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."
 - 3) Revelation 22:14: "Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."
 - c. The first recipients of this epistle included Gentile saints. This is indicated by his admonition for them not to fashion themselves "according to the former lusts in your ignorance." They were ignorant of the Mosaic Law, they lived in darkness, superstition, idolatry, and sin of all kinds (cf. Rom. 1:18-32). God overlooked some things at one time, but now requires all men everywhere to repent (Acts 17:30). Peter urges the brethren against returning to their old manner of life. The Jews of the first century were not known for lasciviousness, but the Gentiles were.
 - 1) Of course, the Jewish Christians had also been involved in sin; their lives were not always characterized by holiness and obedience to God. The Jews had God's law but did not keep it; the Gentiles did not have God's law, and went deeply into sin; every alien sinner today is guilty of sin and needs to obey the gospel.
 - 2) What the apostle says here applies to all Christians, of every generation, for we all have a background of sin from which we must ever turn away.
 - d. We are not to "fashion" ourselves again to become what we once were. The instruction is for them (and us) not to be conformed to the manner of life, speech, and dress of the world, out of which we have been called.
 - 1) Romans 12:1-2: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."
 - 2) 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 7:1: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."
 - 4) 1 John 3:1-3: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this
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- hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”
- 5) Matthew 5:8: “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”
 - 6) Hebrews 12:14-15: “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.”
 - 7) The whole world might be in sin, but that does not give us the right to be like them: “You shall not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shall you testify in a dispute to follow after a crowd to pervert judgment“ (Ex. 23:2, NKJ).
3. Verses 15-16: “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”
- a. The fact is simply stated that we have been called by a holy God. The statement itself does not define the process, but other passages tell us clearly how the call was issued and what the proper response was.
 - 1) Mark 16:15-16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - 2) Acts 2:36-41: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls."
 - 3) 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - b. God is holy and we must be holy. The word holy is from the Greek *hagios*, which denotes a life that is separated from the practice and guilt of sin. “This holiness to which all are called is, essentially, separation from a life of habitual sin and all worldly defilement. Such is the meaning of the word translated ‘holiness’ (*hagios*). The words sanctify, sanctification, saint, holy and holiness all derive from this same word and thus bear related meanings” (Woods, p.42). We cannot become as pure in character as God is, but we can become like him; we tend to become like the object of our worship.
 - 1) Matthew 5:48: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." [The context shows that God loves his enemies and his friends; we are to love our enemies and our friends; in this manner our love is perfect (complete)].
 - 2) Psalms 135:15-18: "The idols of the heathen *are* silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there *any* breath in their mouths. They that make them are like unto them: *so is* every one that trusteth in them."
 - c. “The verb ‘be’ is not the ordinary word for simple being, but one which means, literally, ‘to become.’ The tense of the verb (ingressive aorist) suggests the ushering in of one into a new state. This reveals that the holiness enjoined for the Christian is not such as is a necessary consequence of having obeyed the gospel, but a manner of life attained through a positive renunciation of the world by the individual
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himself. Sanctification is thus not some mysterious change wrought in the soul by an incomprehensible operation of the Holy Spirit, but a manner of life affected through godly conduct” (Woods, p.42).

- 1) Matthew 5:8: "Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God."
 - 2) 1 Thessalonians 5:23: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and *I pray God* your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - 3) Hebrews 12:14: "Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."
 - 4) 1 John 3:1-3: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."
- d. We are to be holy in all our activities of life. Self-indulgence must be put aside if we want to have God's blessings.
- 1) Ephesians 4:24: "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."
 - 2) Philippians 1:27: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."
 - 3) Colossians 3:10: "And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."
 - 4) 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7: "For this is the will of God, *even* your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: That no *man* go beyond and defraud his brother in *any* matter: because that the Lord *is* the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."
 - 5) 2 Corinthians 7:1: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."
- e. The basis of the admonition of the passage is "it is written." The perfect tense of the Greek phrase means "it was written and now remains as a record" (Woods, p.43).
4. Verse 17: "And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning *here* in fear."
- a. The word "if" carries the meaning of "since" in this passage; it does not express doubt about our calling on God. His point is this: since it is the case that you call on the Father, pass the time of your earthly life in fear.
 - b. What does it mean to "call on the Father?" Paul included in the salutation to the Corinthians [1 Cor. 1:2] a reference to *all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ their Lord and ours*. This includes all other Christians in every place and time. To call on the Lord's name is to invoke his help. The phrase, "call on the name of the Lord," is used in the Scriptures as an equivalent to "obey the gospel." This statement is misunderstood by many. The usual interpretation forced on the thought says that if an alien wants to be saved, all he must do is call out to Christ [or to God], and ask him for salvation. But to call upon the name of the Lord and to pray are two different things. The Bible does not say "call" but to "call upon." That he does not mean aliens may pray for salvation is seen in other passages.
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- 1) God will not hear the prayer of a sinner (John 9:31; Ps. 66:18; Pr. 28:9). In the case of Cornelius, the Lord did not save that man by prayer; rather he was instructed to send for Peter who would tell him "words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (Acts 11:13-14). The words Peter delivered to Cornelius were the words of the gospel, which led those Gentiles to be baptized (Acts 10:47-48).
 - 2) By merely calling out to the Lord, nothing is gained. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21). When one cries out to the Lord for salvation, by means of prayer, he has no reason to expect to be saved thereby. As Christ said, those who are acceptable to him are those who obey the will of God (i.e., who obey the gospel).
 - 3) The expression as given in Romans 10:13 has a universal application: "Whosoever shall call...." This included Gentiles and Jews, all races and nationalities. The gospel is for all (Rom. 1:16). In every nation, those who fear God and work righteousness are acceptable to him (Acts 10:34-35). There is no separate plan of salvation for the different nations or races (Mark 16:15-16; John 14:6; 6:44-45; Matt. 28:18-20; Luke 24:47). The offer of salvation is extended to everyone (Heb. 2:9) because all accountable persons need it (Rom. 3:23; 5:12; Isa. 56:6).
 - 4) The statement gives a condition to salvation: One must call on the Lord's name to be saved. The human response to this requirement is an act of obedience. If one denies the essentiality of baptism for salvation on the basis of it being an act the individual enters into, the same argument could be directed against this calling on the Lord's name. One who denies the purpose of baptism (because it is an act of obedience), but who believes in this calling, contradicts himself. Before one will call on the Lord's name, he must have a desire for the blessing proffered. Whosoever **will**, let him take of the water of life freely (see Rev. 22:17). To *call* and to *take the water of life* are equal, and each requires an action. What is the action? The act grows out of faith in Christ, for one cannot call on his name successfully if he does not believe in the Lord's ability to help (Acts 4:12; John 8:21,24; 6:68).
 - 5) How does one call on the name of the Lord? It is not done by prayer or by merely uttering words with the lips (Prov. 28:9; Matt. 7:21-23; Luke 6:46; 1 John 3:22). God hears and answers the prayers of the obedient, not the sinful. Calling on his name is explained in Acts 2. In verse 21, Peter cites the same Old Testament passage (Joel 2:32) as did Paul in Romans 10:13. In Acts 2:22-36, the apostles showed why Jesus could be called upon and why we should make that call. They preached the gospel, their message was heard by the great audience, and was believed by many of them. They asked the apostles in verse 37 what they must do, or in other words, "How can we call on the name of the Lord?" Peter answered their query in verse 38, where he told them they must **repent and be baptized for the remission of sins**. They issued their call upon the name of Christ by repenting and being baptized.
 - 6) In Romans 10:13-18, we are told that to call on the name of the Lord is simply to obey the gospel: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But **they have not all obeyed the gospel**. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."
 - 7) How to call on the Lord's name is illustrated by the conversion story of Saul of Tarsus. He spoke with Christ in a visionary scene on the way to Damascus. The discussion which ensued caused
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- Saul to believe in Christ. He entered the city, where he fasted and prayed for three days. Ananias, the gospel preacher, came to him, and commanded that Saul cease his delay, and to "arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, **calling on the name of the Lord**" (Acts 22:16). Other details of his conversion are related in Acts 9 and 26. Paul made this call on the Lord's name by being baptized. "Calling on the name of the Lord" is an Old Testament description of a New Testament process; what the Old Testament said in a figure of speech (Joel 2:32), the New Testament presents in plain language (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16). To call on the name of the Lord is simply to obey the gospel of Christ!
- 8) Faithful Christians are those who call on the Lord's name as they live the Christian life (Acts 9:14). Saul had "authority from the chief priests to bind all **that call on thy name.**" To call on his name is to make an appeal to Christ for salvation by believing and obeying his will, sincerely doing everything the Lord requires. He saves only those who do so, whether the individual is an alien sinner or a Christian. The alien is saved from the guilt of his past sins; the Christian is delivered from this world and hell into heaven.
 - c. God is here spoken of as our Father; we are also told that he judges according to each individual's work. God is our Father and God is our Judge. His judgment will be impartial and fair. We have no reason to question God's fairness in rendering justice. This bodes well for the faithful, but ill for the disobedient and unfaithful.
 - d. We must all give account of ourselves before God. Daniel Webster was asked what the most profound thought was that he had ever considered. His reply: "The prospect of standing before God to give account."
 - 1) Romans 14:10-12: "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, *As I live*, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 5:10-11: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences."
 - 3) 1 John 4:17-18: "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."
 - e. The heavenly judgment will not be on the basis of outward appearances such as wealth, cultural background, social standing, race, or nationality, but according to the individual's work. The word *work* is singular, thus "revealing the significant fact that the judgment alluded to is with reference to the life as a whole, and in its comprehensive aspect" (Woods, p.44).
 - 1) 1 Samuel 16:7: "But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."
 - 2) Matthew 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."
 - 3) John 7:24: "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."
 - 4) Acts 17:30-31: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men
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- every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by *that* man whom he hath ordained; *whereof* he hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that he hath raised him from the dead."
- f. On earth, things are not always what they appear to be. The beautiful pictures of a golden brown turkey as presented in magazine displays and television commercials are not what they appear; they have not been cooked; they are not ready to eat. Rather, they have been carefully painted and prepared to *appear* real and ready to eat. The proof of the pudding is found in the eating; the proof of a holy life is finally determined in the Judgment. "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some *men* they follow after. Likewise also the good works *of some* are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid" (1 Tim. 5:24-25).
- g. We are told to pass our sojourning here in fear (reverence, awe) toward God. "The 'fear' that is to characterize those thus sojourning is not the terror of slaves, but the worshipful awe of obedient children toward their beloved parents. It is the fear of displeasing, the fear of causing pain on the part of those we love by conduct inconsistent with their wishes. It is such a fear as God approves, and which his faithful children feel....Such fear is not the shrinking attitude of cowardice, but a courageous emotion which above all else dreads to displease God!" (Woods, p.44).
- 1) Deuteronomy 6:2: "That thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged."
 - 2) Psalms 111:10: "The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do *his commandments*: his praise endureth for ever."
 - 3) Proverbs 1:7: "The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction."
 - 4) Proverbs 14:26-27: "In the fear of the LORD *is* strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge. The fear of the LORD *is* a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."
 - 5) Luke 12:4-5: "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."
 - 6) Hebrews 12:28-29: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God *is* a consuming fire."
- h. The implication of "sojourning" is the fact that we are not to be forever on earth; rather, after our relatively short time in this life, we must pass on into eternity. God's abode is in Heaven; it is to Heaven that we aspire to go.
- 1) John 14:1-4: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: *if it were not so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 4:14-18: "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present *us* with you. For all things *are* for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal."
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 5:1: "For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we
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- have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."
- 4) Philippians 3:20-21: "For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, *that it may be* conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself" (ASV).
 - 5) 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."
5. Verses 18-19: "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."
- a. The passage emphasizes the truth that the cost of our redemption was extremely high! "Verse 16 contains an admonition to holiness—godly living—founded on the example of God himself. Verse 17 is an exhortation to godly fear, based on the fact of a judgment conducted with impartiality and without respect of persons. Here...there is an argument for holiness from the premise of the redemption which has been obtained for us from the bondage of sin at such infinite cost" (Woods, pp.44f).
 - b. To redeem is to buy back. The term was used in ancient days especially in reference to the act of buying freedom for a slave. Without the price being paid, the slave would continue in his bondage. It is used in the passage and elsewhere in the New Testament to describe the process by which one is ransomed from the bondage of sin. In the modernism of today's sophisticated religious world, little emphasis is placed on salvation from sin; rather, our modernistic folks are more interested in the so-called "social gospel" and political activism [promoting their pet programs by political pressure and intrigue]. Their interests lie in such issues as "gay rights," "gay marriage," abortion rights, and a host of other matters of concern to the "left." The inspired writers of the New Testament were properly engrossed with the spiritual matters of salvation from sin and the eternal rewards of Heaven.
 - c. Our redemption is not secured by worldly wealth, which is subject to dissolution. "The words, 'silver' and 'gold,' in the text are in the diminutive form, the little things of the species, thus indicating that the ransom under consideration did not consist of the little silver and gold coins ordinarily used in obtaining the freedom of enslaved people" (Woods, p.45). Gold and silver (and all other material items) are vain (empty; useless; powerless) to effect the removal of sin's guilt.
 - 1) "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6:19-21).
 - 2) "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28).
 - 3) "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:20).
 - 4) "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pet. 2:1).
 - 5) "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. 3:13).
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- 6) “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. 26:28).
 - 7) “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28).
 - d. “The word ‘vain,’ applied to conduct, *mataias* (NT:3152) means properly ‘empty, fruitless.’ It is a word often applied to the worship of idols, as being nothing, worthless, unable to help, (Acts 14:15; 1 Kings 16:13; 2 Kings 17:15; Jer 2:5,8,19) and is probably used in a similar sense in this place. The apostle refers to their former worship of idols, and to all the abominations connected with that service, as being vain and unprofitable; as the worship of nothing real (compare 1 Cor 8:4, ‘We know that an idol is nothing in the world’), and as resulting in a course of life that answered none of the proper ends of living. From that they had been redeemed by the blood of Christ. [Received by tradition from your fathers] The mode of worship which had been handed down from father to son. The worship of idols depends on no better reason than that it is that which has been practiced in ancient times; and it is kept up now in all lands, in a great degree, only by the fact that it has had the sanction of the venerated people of other generations” [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by BibleSoft].
 - e. Peter affirms that they [and we] were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. He gave his life in our behalf—and more especially in our stead. His death had as its chief aim our redemption from sin. God’s chief aim in giving his Son was not for our social, physical, or economic good (although these are enhanced by the gospel), but for our soul’s salvation.
 - 1) Luke 19:10: “ For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”
 - 2) 1 Timothy 1:13-15: “Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.”
 - f. Christ is here described as a lamb who is without spot or blemish. There was no moral or spiritual defect in Christ.
 - 1) John 1:29: “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”
 - 2) Leviticus 4:32: “And if he bring a lamb for a sin offering, he shall bring it a female without blemish.”
 - 3) Leviticus 22:22-24: “Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy, or scabbed, ye shall not offer these unto the LORD, nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar unto the LORD. Either a bullock or a lamb that hath any thing superfluous or lacking in his parts, that mayest thou offer for a freewill offering; but for a vow it shall not be accepted. Ye shall not offer unto the LORD that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut; neither shall ye make any offering thereof in your land.”
 - 4) Numbers 28:3, 11: “And thou shalt say unto them, This is the offering made by fire which ye shall offer unto the LORD; two lambs of the first year without spot day by day, for a continual burnt offering....And in the beginnings of your months ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the LORD; two young bullocks, and one ram, seven lambs of the first year without spot.’
 - 5) Hebrews 4:15: “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”
 - 6) 1 Peter 2:22: “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.”
 - g. The blood of animals which was prominently offered during the Patriarchal and Mosaic Ages was entirely without power to remove sin. God used animal sacrifices in those ancient days to give man
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a figurative preview of the eventual death of the Christ, the Lamb of God. His blood was perfectly able to pay the ransom for our sin, but the blood of animals was not.

- 1) Hebrews 10:1-4: “For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.”
 - 2) Hebrews 9:12-14: “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”
6. Verse 20: “Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.”
- a. The subject of this part of Peter’s long sentence is Christ, the unblemished Lamb. Christ was fore-known [foreordained—KJV] before the foundation of the world. “‘Foreknown’ means to *know before*; hence, Christ was so recognized before ‘the foundation of the world.’ ‘Foundation’ (*kataboles*, to throw down, thus, the first part of a building; the foundation) indicates here the beginning, and contextually, the beginning of the ‘world.’ The word ‘world’ is from the Greek *kosos*, an orderly system, hence age, or dispensation. Thus, Christ, as a lamb, was foreknown as such from before the beginning of the age or dispensation. What age? Creation, so some expositors affirm, thus projecting the time when Christ was ordained as a sacrifice into the period before creation of the universe” (Woods, p.47).
 - 1) Brother Woods views the “world” [*kosmos*] here as a reference to the Mosaic Age— i.e., that “Christ, before the beginning of the Mosaic age, and before the intricate and detailed system of sacrifices which characterized it was originated, was ordained by the Father to suffer as a sacrificial lamb in expiation of the sins of the world...” (pp.47f).
 - 2) The basis for this conclusion is on the notion that if God had planned for Christ’s sacrifice for sin, then man’s fall into sin was mandated by this plan. However, God can foreknow some event or fact that will occur in the history of mankind without predestining that event or fact to take place. If you were situated on the top of a high mountain, and could see two cars headed toward a fatal collision course unbeknownst to the drivers, you could know what was soon to take place, but you did not predestine that crash. God could foresee what would take place in human history without programming those facts and events of history.
 - b. The most natural understanding of the meaning of “world” [*kosmos*] as used in the passage is to see it as a reference to the beginning of the universe. God, knowing ahead of time that man would fall into sin, formulated a plan in eternity, by which his Son would be offered as a sacrifice for man’s salvation.
 - 1) Acts 2:23: “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”
 - 2) Acts 3:18: “But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.”
 - 3) Acts 4:28 : “For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.”
 - 4) Genesis 3:15: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”
 - 5) Galatians 4:4-5: “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a
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- woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”
- c. God had planned from the beginning for Christ to die for the sins of the world (Rev. 13:8; Luke 22:22; John 3:16; Isa. 53; cf. Ps. 41:9; Acts 1:16). Premillennialists assert that Christ came to set up an earthly kingdom, but when the Jews refused his reign, God decided to substitute the church in the place of the kingdom. In order for the church-system to be inaugurated, the death of Christ was required, an event not necessary for the earthly kingdom (in the premillennial view). But if the kingdom (as they view it) had been established, the plans and prophecies concerning the death of Christ would have come to nought! But the scriptures cannot be broken (John 10:35). It is plain, therefore, that God fully intended for his Son to die on the cross, and that he prepared for this, and predicted it, from the beginning of time (Gen. 3:15; Rev. 13:8; Luke 24:44-46; Acts 26:22-23). This means that the premillennial theory is false! The church (which is the kingdom) was always in God's plan.
- 1) Luke 22:22: “And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!”
 - 2) John 3:16: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (Cf. Isaiah 53).
 - 3) Psalms 41:9: “Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.” Compare: “Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus” (Acts 1:16).
 - 4) Revelation 13:8: “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”
 - 5) Luke 24:44-46: “And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.”
 - 6) Acts 26:22-23: “Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.”
- d. “[Before the foundation of the world]....The phrase *katabolees* (NT:2602) *kosmou* (NT:2889), foundation of the world, occurs often in the New Testament, and is supposed by some learned men and good critics to signify the commencement of the Jewish state. Perhaps it may have this meaning in Matt 13:35; Luke 11:50; Eph 1:4; Heb 4:3; and 9:26. But if we take it here in its common signification, the creation of universal nature, then it shows that God, foreseeing the fall and ruin of man, appointed the remedy that was to cure the disease. It may here have a reference to the opinion of the Jewish doctors, who maintain that seven things existed before the creation of the world, one of which was the Messiah” [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1996 by Biblesoft].
- e. “[Before the foundation of the world] That is, from eternity. It was before man was formed; before the earth was made; before any of the material universe was brought into being; before the angels were created” [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].
- 1) Matthew 25:34: “Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”
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- 2) John 17:24: “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.” [God loved Christ before the Mosaic Age; he loved him before the creation of the universe].
- 3) Ephesians 1:4: “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.”
- 4) Ephesians 3:9: “And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.”
- f. God’s great plan of redemption was formulated before the beginning of time but was not revealed until the first century—with the giving of the gospel.
 - 1) Romans 16:25-26: “Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.”
 - 2) Ephesians 3:3-11: “How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
 - 3) Matthew 13:15-17: “For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.”
7. Verse 21: “Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.”
 - a. Again, the subject is Christ. It is only by Christ that we become believers and followers of God.
 - 1) John 14:6: “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”
 - 2) Acts 4:11-12: “This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”
 - 3) Acts 13:38-39: “Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”
 - 4) Hebrews 7:24-28: “But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless,

undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."

- 5) Ephesians 2:12-17: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh."
- b. "In the resurrection, ascension and consequent glorification [Christ's—bw] at God's right hand we have the basis of our faith and hope in God. In Peter's speeches recorded in Acts, much emphasis is given to this theme" (Woods, p.48).
 - 1) Acts 2:32-36: "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."
 - 2) Acts 3:15: " And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses."
 - 3) Acts 4:10: "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole."

F. 1 Peter 1:22-25: Purified Souls and the Word of God.

1. Verse 22: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.*"
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) ASV: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently."
 - 2) NKJ: "Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart."
 - b. The apostle affirms here that our salvation (which he describes as *purifying the soul*) directly involves the obedience of the individual. He states that they had purified their souls in obeying the truth. Some well-meaning folks often assert that if we must meet some condition in order to be saved, we have earned salvation. But God has a part in the salvation process and the individual has a part.
 - 1) Acts 2:40: "And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation."
 - 2) John 8:24: "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."
 - 3) Luke 13:3: "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."
 - 4) Matthew 10:32: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before

- my Father which is in heaven.”
- 5) Mark 16:15-16: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
 - 6) Romans 6:16-18: “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”
 - 7) Philippians 2:12: “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”
- c. “‘Have purified,’ is, literally, ‘having purified’ from the perfect participle derived from *hagnizo*, to purify morally, to reform. The perfect tense places the action in the past, with existing results. Their souls had been, at some time in the past, purified; and they remained so. The manner in which such purification was accomplished was through obedience to the truth, and resulting from it was ‘unfeigned love of the brethren’” (Woods, p.49). The Greek word for *purify* is also used in:
- 1) Philippians 4:8: “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”
 - 2) James 4:8: “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.”
- d. Since it was their souls that were purified, then the cleansing was from the guilt of sin. The great purpose of God’s eternal plan (which focused on the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ) was to save souls.
- 1) 1 Peter 1:9: “Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.”
 - 2) Mark 16:15-16: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
 - 3) Luke 19:10: “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 15:1-4: “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”
- e. Their souls were purified (saved) when they obeyed the truth (the gospel).
- 1) John 17:17: “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.”
 - 2) 1 Peter 1:24-25: “For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”
 - 3) Romans 6:16-18: Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”
 - 4) Acts 2:36-38: “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same
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- Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”
- 5) Hebrews 5:8-9: “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”
 - 6) Revelation 22:14: “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”
- f. Their souls were saved when they obeyed the truth **through the Spirit**. The truth was given through the work of the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- 1) John 16:13: “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.”
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 2:9-13: “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”
 - 3) Titus 3:3-5: “For we also once were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Saviour, and his love toward man, appeared, not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit” (ASV).
- g. When their souls were saved in obeying the truth given through the Holy Spirit, they obtained an unfeigned love of the brethren. Their love was unpretended; it was genuine. “The love of the brethren which they thus experienced is described as ‘unfeigned’ (literally, *not hypocritical* from *a not*; and *hypocrites*, a play actor, one who exhibits the character of another, and in consequence, a hypocrite). Unfeigned love is, therefore, sincere affection, without admixture of deceit or affectation. It is love which is not in word only, but also in deed, and in truth. (1 John 3:18). The words, ‘love of the brethren,’ are translated from one word—*philadelphia*—a term well known as the name of cities both ancient and modern. (Rev. 2:7.) It is compounded from *philos*, love; and *adelphos*, a brother. The term is thus vividly descriptive of affection obtaining between brethren” (Woods, p.49).
- 1) Luke 22:44: “And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground” (ASV). The word Greek for “fervently” is used also in this passage [”earnestly”].
 - 2) 1 John 3:18: “My Little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth” (ASV).
2. Verse 23: “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”
- a. Since Christians all have the same Parent, they are brothers and sisters; they ought to have common love as is true among members of the same physical family. “Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous” (1 Peter 3:8).
 - b. In the context of verses 22-23, being born again and purifying the soul by obeying the truth are parallel
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statements: one is born again when he obeys the gospel. Peter gives an exceedingly plain definition of the new birth.

- 1) John 3:3-5: “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” [The Lord here used a figure of speech to describe the salvation process].
 - 2) Mark 16:15-16: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” [Our Lord used literal language here to identify the salvation process].
- c. The three thousand souls of Acts were born again; but this was accomplished by their obedience to the gospel: “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls” (Acts 2:36-41).
- 1) Matthew 7:21-23: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”
 - 2) Romans 4:19-21: “And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb: He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.”
 - 3) John 6:63: “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”
 - 4) Philippians 2:16: “Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.”
 - 5) Matthew 4:4: “But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”
 - 6) 1 Peter 2:1: “Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings.”
 - 7) 1 Timothy 4:6: “If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.”
 - 8) John 12:48: “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”
 - 9) Revelation 20:12: “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.”
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- d. The fleshly birth is produced by corruptible seed (seed that is subject to death). The spiritual birth is produced by the incorruptible seed, which is God's word.
- 1) 1 Corinthians 4:15: "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel."
 - 2) James 1:18: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."
 - 3) James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
 - 4) Luke 8:11: "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God."
 - 5) Matthew 13:19: "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side."
 - 6) Mark 4:14: "The sower soweth the word."
 - 7) John 3:6: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."
- e. The word of God lives and abides forever.
3. Verses 24-25: "For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away. But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."
- a. The quotation is from Isaiah 40:6-8: "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever."
 - 1) This Old Testament passage is also cited in James 1:10-11: "But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways."
 - 2) Psalms 103:15-16: "As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more." - b. "[For all flesh is as grass] That is, all human beings, all men. The connection here is this: The apostle, in the previous verse, had been contrasting that which is begotten by man with that which is begotten by God, in reference to its permanency. The former was corruptible and decaying; the latter abiding. The latter was produced by God, who lives forever; the former by the agency of man, who is himself corruptible and dying. It was not unnatural, then, to dwell upon the feeble, frail, decaying nature of man, in contrast with God; and the apostle, therefore, says that 'all flesh, every human being, is like grass. There is no stability in anything that man does or produces. He himself resembles grass that soon fades and withers; but God and his word endure forever the same.' The comparison of a human being with grass, or with flowers, is very beautiful, and is quite common in the Scriptures. The comparison turns on the fact, that the grass or the flower, however green or beautiful it may be, soon loses its freshness; is withered; is cut down, and dies" [Barnes, Biblesoft].
 - c. "All flesh, like grass (*chortos*, herbage of the field, grass, hay, flowers), which withers and ultimately fades and perishes, will eventually go the way of all the earth; and the glory of man, like the flower of the grass which shrivels and falls, shall perish and fail and be forgotten, and the pride and the beauty and accomplishments attendant thereon vanish. In contrast with all such, 'The word of the Lord abideth for ever'" (Woods, p.52). But the glory of man is short-lived.
 - 1) Matthew 24:35: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
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- 2) 2 Peter 3:8: “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”
 - d. Peter identifies the word of the Lord as the gospel of Christ. He ties the gospel to the new birth, to our purification from sin, and to our hope.
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I PETER 2

A. 1 Peter 2:1-3: Spiritual Growth.

1. Verse 1: "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings."
 - a. What the apostle affirms here is a natural outgrowth of the preceding passage. Since they had been born again by the word of God, it logically followed that they ought to put away from themselves the items he next identifies: malice, guile, hypocrisy, envy, and evil words.
 - b. To lay aside ("putting away"—ASV) is to discard something unwanted; in the original, scholars tell us the expression was used by the Greeks to denote casting away clothing. Peter used the expression to depict getting rid of spiritual characteristics which are unbecoming of godliness. As we would cast aside old, worn-out, filthy garments, never to don them again, so when we obey the gospel we cast away the evil practices of the old man of sin, never to live in them again.
 - 1) Colossians 3:9-10: "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."
 - 2) Romans 13:12-14: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."
 - 3) James 1:21: "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."
 - 4) Galatians 3:27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
 - c. They were to put away **all malice**.
 - 1) The word for malice is translated "wickedness" in the ASV. The word Peter used [*kakian*] means evil of all kinds, but here reference is to the desire to injure another.
 - 2) "The word 'malice' we commonly apply now to a particular kind of evil, denoting extreme enmity of heart, ill-will, a disposition to injure others without cause, from mere personal gratification, or from a spirit of revenge—Webster. The Greek word, however, includes evil of all kinds" [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by BibleSoft].
 - 3) Compare:
 - a) Romans 1:29: "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers."
 - b) Acts 8:22: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."
 - c) 1 Corinthians 5:8: "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."
 - d) 1 Corinthians 14:20: "Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men."
 - e) Ephesians 4:31: "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice."
 - f) Colossians 3:8: "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth."
 - g) Titus 3:3: "For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another."

- 4) Matthew Henry described malice as “anger resting in the bosom of fools, settled overgrown anger, retained till it inflames a man to design mischief, to do mischief, or delight in any mischief that befalls another” [Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1991 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].
 - 5) Malice is an active ill-will toward another; it is a malignant disposition that desires the hurt of the one toward whom it is directed. Malice can rest in the heart of an individual without being seen for a time, but if it is allowed to develop, it will ultimately be revealed in evil words or actions. In a case known to this scribe, a man was enraged when his wife and family left him, after years of vile abuse at his hand. He allowed malice to build in his heart until, in an unrepressed rage, he murdered his wife and daughter.
- d. They were to put away **all guile**.
- 1) Guile is the practice of craftiness for the purpose of hurting another or achieving some selfish end. The word carries the idea of catching with a baited trap or hook.
 - 2) The word is from a Greek term which means a bait for fish (literally); any snare, cunning contrivance for deceiving or catching; any trick or crafty scheme; wile, treachery.
 - 3) Deceitfulness is strictly forbidden as sinful, along with all half-truths and scheming. "Behind-the-scenes-maneuvering" among members of the church is odious and sinful.
 - 4) Guile is the opposite of sincerity.
 - a) 1 Peter 2:22: “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.” [This was said about Christ, our model].
 - b) 1 Peter 3:10: “For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile.”
 - c) John 1:47: “Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!”
- e. They were to put away **hypocrisies**.
- 1) This word comes from an old word for stage-player, an actor, one who is merely playing a part. An actor plays a role; he is putting on a show for the entertainment of an audience. Though his words may express great love or anger, they are not intended to be sincerely meant.
 - 2) A hypocrite assumes a role that does not present his true nature. He hides his wicked purposes under the appearance of doing right.
 - a) Mark 12:38-40: “And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces, And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts: Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.”
 - b) Matthew 6:2: “Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.”
 - c) Matthew 6:5: “And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.”
 - d) Matthew 6:16: “Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.”
 - e) Matthew 24:51: “And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
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- f) Matthew 15:7-8: “Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.”
 - g) Matthew 23:13-15: “But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.”
 - h) Matthew 23:23: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.”
 - i) Matthew 23:25: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.”
 - j) Matthew 23:27: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.”
 - k) Matthew 23:29: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous.”
- 3) A Christian must not merely appear to be following Christ, he must be sincerely following him in reality.
- f. They must put away **envies**.
- 1) Envy usually develops because of possessions or some other material situation. No one envies a poor man; neither does anyone envy one who is in ill-health, in prison, or in some other dire circumstance. Envy is directed toward one who is will blessed with material wealth or with some other desirable possession, circumstance, beauty, or advantage.
 - 2) Envy is a feeling of unhappiness because another has that which one desires for himself. This sinful attitude is the root of many evils.
 - a) Envy was one of the sins behind the killing of Christ: “For he [Pilate] knew that for envy they had delivered him” (Matt. 27:18).
 - b) Envy on the part of the ten brothers moved them to sell Joseph into slavery: “And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him” (Acts 7:9).
 - c) Envy caused certain unbelievers to oppose Paul: “But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people” (Acts 17:5).
 - d) Envy is a mark of carnality: “For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?” (1 Cor. 3:3).
 - e) Envy is identified as one of the works of the flesh: “Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal. 5:21).
- g. They must put away **all evil speakings**.
- 1) There is a difference in speaking evil and speaking of one's evil. To speak evil of another is to utter slanderous, defamatory remarks which are intended to harm the victim.
 - 2) The word is translated in 2 Corinthians 12:20 as “backbitings” and “speak against” in 1 Peter 2:12.
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- The reference is to disparaging or belittling remarks about the reputation, worth, or character of another person.
- 3) The expression “evil speakings” also includes filthy language and dirty jokes.
 - a) Ephesians 4:29: “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”
 - b) Ephesians 5:2-3: “And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints.”
 - h. “It should be observed that the sins designated in this catalog are such as operate to destroy the brotherly relationship which begets and maintains love, and to create an attitude of mind and disposition of heart where malice, bitterness and hate reign instead. These evils are closely related and develop from each other. A malicious disposition leads to deception, deceit, envy and defamation; and the effort to conceal such produces hypocrisy. All such attitudes are utterly foreign to the Spirit of Christ, and to the principles which governed and motivated his life. All such must be resolutely *put away* if we are to have his approval and commendation” (Woods, p.54). “If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?” (1 John 4:20).
2. Verse 2: “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.”
 - a. Having addressed the subject of the new birth at the close of the previous chapter, Peter here describes the saints as “newborn babes.” Despite his actual age, when one obeys the gospel, he is a spiritual infant. Some have already developed the Christian character to a considerable degree when they become Christians, but that is not generally the case.
 - b. To be depicted as a spiritual infant is not intended to be a disparagement; it is a simple statement of fact. A new Christian has not had the time and experience to have learned much about the Bible; he has not faced the many encounters with temptation and trial to have obtained the strength and wisdom that come thereby. At the same time, a babe in Christ has a teachable disposition; he is not hardened against the truth; he is not mired in sin.
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 4:15: “For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.”
 - 2) Matthew 18:3: “And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”
 - 3) Matthew 19:14: “But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”
 - 4) Mark 10:14-15: “But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.”
 - 5) 1 John 5:1: “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.”
 - 6) Isaiah 28:9: “Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.”
 - 7) 1 Corinthians 14:20: “Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men.”
 - c. The saints are told to **desire** the sincere milk of the word. To desire is to eagerly long for the word of God.
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- 1) “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled” (Matt. 5:6).
 - 2) Newborn babies do not have to be coaxed or forced to take milk (unless they are ill); so Christians must have that innate desire for the word—if they do not, something is wrong.
 - d. Saints are told to desire the **sincere** milk of the word. The word is spoken of as being *sincere* [or *spiritual*—ASV]. Its appeal is to the reason; it pertains to the intellectual and spiritual part of man; it does not feed the body, but the soul. Neither is there any insincerity or guile about God’s Word.
 - 1) Regarding the word translated sincere (or spiritual), brother Woods observes: “The word occurs only once elsewhere in the New Testament (Rom. 12:1), where it describes the character of the service we are to render to God” (p.55). “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your **reasonable** service” (Rom. 12:1).
 - 2) “Sincere—‘guileless.’ Irenaeus says, ‘Heretics mix chalk with the milk.’ ‘The’ implies that, besides the well known pure milk, there is no other unadulterated doctrine: the Gospel alone can make us guileless (1 Peter 2:1)” [Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by BibleSoft].
 - e. The way to spiritual growth is not through merely stimulating the emotions, but by filling the mind with the truth of God’s word.
 - 1) Hebrews 4:12: “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”
 - 2) Hebrews 5:12-14: “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”
 - f. It is an individual responsibility to grow in knowledge, an obligation that requires regular and hard study.
 - 1) 2 Peter 3:18: “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”
 - 2) 2 Timothy 2:15: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”
 - 3) 2 Peter 1:5-11: “And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”
 - g. The word “milk” is used instead of “meat,” for as the infant cannot partake of the latter, so the newborn saint is not ready for the deeper aspects of the word. Some new Christians have become discouraged and gave up the faith because they could not quickly grasp the hard parts of the Bible. A new saint is not ready for the Book of Revelation, for example, until he has learned much about the gospel accounts, the Book of Acts, and the epistles.
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3. Verse 3: “If so be ye have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious.”
 - a. This verse is a quotation of Psalm 34:8: “O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.”
 - b. An infant, having tasted his milk, knows that it is good, and happily imbibes time-after-time. In view of the fact that a Christian has tasted the goodness of the Lord, he will return gladly to that source of nourishment and strength. [Note: the use of “if” does not suggest doubt, but carries the idea of “since”].
 - c. For a good many years, my wife kept children for working mothers. Often she would have the old country fare of biscuits and gravy for breakfast. She would give the little ones a taste of gravy when they were old enough to partake; they instantly took a liking for it, and could hardly be filled.
 - d. We do not “taste” the Lord literally, but when we study his word, learn his will, and obey him, we quickly learn that these efforts are greatly rewarding. Growing up in the faith, experiencing many hardships and receiving many blessings, we perceive that it is truly good to serve the Lord!

B. 1 Peter 2:4-10: Spiritual Relationships of Christians.

1. Verse 4: “To whom coming, *as unto* a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious.”
 - a. NKJ: “Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by god and precious.”
 - b. Peter speaks of these Christians as coming to Christ. They had already come to Christ and had entered into his spiritual body, when they obeyed the gospel (Matt. 11:28-30; Acts 2:36-41; Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:26-27; Eph. 1:3). As they continued their obedient service to Christ, they obtained from him the needed help, information, and encouragement. Compare: “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water” (Heb. 10:22).
 - c. The apostle next uses the figure of a stone to describe our Lord, an illustration occurring frequently in the Scriptures.
 - 1) Acts 4:11-12: “This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”
 - 2) Genesis 49:24: “But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel).”
 - 3) 2 Samuel 22:2: “And he said, The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer.”
 - 4) Psalms 61:2: “From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I.”
 - 5) Isaiah 28:16: “Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.”
 - 6) Romans 9:23: “As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.”
 - 7) Ephesians 2:20: “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.”
 - 8) See also 1 Corinthians 3:1-11 and 10:1-11.
 - d. Christ is here depicted as a “living stone.” From the rock, Moses produced life-giving water for the thirst-starved Israelites in the wilderness (Num. 20).
 - 1) “The allusion in this passage is to Isa 28:16, ‘Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste’There may be also possibly an allusion to Ps 118:22, ‘The stone which the builders disallowed is become

- the headstone of the corner.’
- a) “The reference is to Christ as the foundation on which the church is reared. He occupied the same place in regard to the church which a foundation-stone does to the edifice that is reared upon it. Compare Matt 7:24-25....The phrase ‘living stone’ is however unusual, and is not found, I think, except in this place. There seems to be an incongruity in it, in attributing life to a stone, yet the meaning is not difficult to be understood. The purpose was not to speak of a temple, like that at Jerusalem, made up of gold and costly stones; but of a temple made up of living materials—of redeemed people—in which God now resides. In speaking of that, it was natural to refer to the foundation on which the whole rested, and to speak of that as corresponding to the whole edifice.
 - b) “It was all a living temple—a temple composed of living materials—from the foundation to the top. Compare the expression in John 4:10, ‘He would have given thee living water;’ that is, water which would have imparted life to the soul. So Christ imparts life to the whole spiritual temple that is reared on him as a foundation” [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by Biblesoft].
- 2) “Christ is a ‘living stone,’ (1) because, unlike the inert, lifeless stones of the earth, he is a stone of energy, vitality, and life; and (2) having been raised from the dead, he *lives* to die no more. Being alive himself, he is thus the source of life to his followers. Though Peter was himself a stone (*petros*), he was wholly unlike the stone (*lithos*) which he describes here. *Petros* is a fragment of native rock, unhewn; whereas, *lithos* is one shaped and fitted for the purpose designated” (Woods, p.57).
- e. At this point, it would be helpful to consider the Lord’s promise in Matthew 16 to build his church upon the great truth that he is the Son of God. “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18). The word “rock” (in Matt. 16:18) is from a different Greek word, *Petra* (in the same verse) which is feminine gender. *Petros* and *petra* do not refer to the same person or thing. W.E. Vine (p.302) defines *petra* as a mass of rock, as distinct from *petros* (a detached stone or boulder, a stone that might be thrown or easily moved). To see how *petra* is used in the New Testament indicates the difference between the two Greek words.
- 1) Matthew 7:24-25: "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a **rock**: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a **rock**."
 - 2) Matthew 27:51,60: "And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the **rocks** rent....And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the **rock**: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed."
 - 3) Luke 6:48: "He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a **rock**: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a **rock**."
 - 4) Luke 8:6: "And some fell upon a **rock**; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture."
 - 5) Romans 9:33: "As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and **rock** of offence: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."
 - 6) 1 Corinthians 10:4: "And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that **Rock** was Christ."
 - 7) Revelation 6:15-16: "And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief
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- captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the **rocks** of the mountains; And said to the mountains and **rocks**, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."
- 8) Having seen the distinction the Bible makes between *petros* and *petra*, it is thus very obvious that Jesus did not say that he would build his church upon Peter (*petros*), but upon *petra*, something far more substantial and reliable than a stone. Indeed, that foundation could be nothing else but the great truth which Peter had just confessed (verse 16), that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.
- f. In our text, the apostle states that this living stone (Christ) was rejected by man. The prophetic picture given in Isaiah 53 showed beforehand that the Suffering Savior would not find pleasure in the sight of the majority. Our Lord did not fit the Jewish expectations of the Messiah, thus did they reject him; the majority of Gentiles did not find him consistent with their notions, thus they also rejected him. So also does the majority today refuse to allow him into their hearts and lives.
 - 1) Isaiah 53:1-3: "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."
 - 2) Acts 4:11-12: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
 - 3) John 1:11-12: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."
 - g. But Christ was deemed precious by the Father. God regarded him as worthy of the highest honor; he found him to be precious in the fullest sense. "'Precious' in 1 Pet. 1:19, descriptive of the blood of Christ, is not the same in meaning as here. There it is translated from *timios*, that which has intrinsic value; here it is *estimos*, God's recognition of that intrinsic value. The contrast is further drawn out with reference to the manner in which God and men regarded Jesus. Though the Jews 'rejected him,' God 'chose' him; though they counted him spurious and without value, God regarded him as worthy of great honor" (Woods, p.57).
2. Verse 5: "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."
 - a. In Peter's imagery, Christians are also depicted as "living stones." Each saint is an important block in the Lord's spiritual house, which is also spoken of as a temple.
 - 1) Matthew 16:18: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
 - 2) 1 Timothy 3:14-15: "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."
 - 3) Isaiah 2:2-3: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."
 - 4) Ephesians 2:18-22: "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ
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- himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”
- b. This spiritual house (temple) has in it a holy priesthood. The figure changes somewhat. In the first picture, the followers of Christ are shown to be a house; in the second, they are shown to be active workers in the Lord’s house—serving him in the capacity of priests.
- 1) The Mosaic system had a separate priesthood, occupying a position between the worshiper and God. The Christian system has no separate priesthood; rather, each saint is a priest, able to offer his own worship to God (cf. John 4:23-24).
 - 2) These priests (Christians) are holy—they have had their sins washed away in the blood of the Lamb of God, and each walks in the light of the Gospel, being cleansed by the blood of Christ: “If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” (1 John 1:6-10).
 - 3) Various religious groups have developed their systems around the concept of a separate priesthood. Their reasons for doing so may be obscure, but the outcome is an unscriptural arrangement.
- c. As a holy priesthood, we offer up spiritual sacrifices to God. Old Testament priests offered literal sacrifices; our sacrifices are spiritual in nature.
- 1) Hebrews 13:15: “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”
 - 2) Ephesians 5:18-19: “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”
 - 3) Colossians 3:16-17: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.”
 - 4) Acts 2:42: “And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”
 - 5) 2 Corinthians 9:6-7: “But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”
 - 6) John 4:23-24: “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”
- d. These spiritual sacrifices are acceptable to God by Christ. The only means of access anyone has to the Father is through Christ: “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). As the Old Testament system had a high priest, so the New Testament system has a high priest—Christ. He is the only one!
- 1) Acts 4:12: “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”
 - 2) Hebrews 4:14-16: “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot
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- be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”
3. Verse 6: “Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.”
 - a. The quotation cited is from Isaiah 28:16, giving the sense rather than the exact statement from Isaiah. We remember that Peter was writing by inspiration; he did not misquote the passage; indeed, he had the supernatural guidance to give the real sense of the Old Testament item. His use of the passage is an inspired commentary on it. One cannot accept the New Testament and reject the Old Testament since the New Testament exalts the Old Testament as “Scripture.”
 - b. Sion (Zion) is a reference to Jerusalem, the location where the Lord’s church had its beginning; this was according to the Lord’s intentions.
 - 1) 1 Kings 8:1: “Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the chief of the fathers of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, that they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion.”
 - 2) Isaiah 2:2-3: “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD’S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.”
 - 3) Luke 24:44-49: “And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.”
 - 4) Mark 9:1: “And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.”
 - 5) Acts 1:5, 8: “For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence....But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”
 - 6) Acts 2:1-4: “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”
 - c. The chief cornerstone: “The principal stone on which the corner of the edifice rests. A stone is selected for this which is large and solid, and, usually, one which is squared, and worked with care; and as such a stone is commonly laid with solemn ceremonies, so, perhaps, in allusion to this, it is here said by God that he would lay this stone at the foundation. The solemnities attending this were those which accompanied the great work of the Redeemer” [Barnes’ Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by BibleSoft].
 - d. The cornerstone was the one which determined the alignment of the entire wall; the entire building

was aligned according to the placement of this chief cornerstone. The reference is to Christ, the chief cornerstone, who was selected to serve this purpose and was thus precious [honored]. The cornerstone tied two walls together, alluding perhaps to the joining of both Jews and Gentiles in the kingdom under Christ: “And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Eph. 2:16-22).

- e. The phrase “not be confounded” is rendered “not be put to shame” in the ASV. “Shall not make haste” is the Old Testament wording. If one followed a leader who failed, the follower would be confused [confounded]; he would be put shame; he might “make haste” [run away in fear or shame]. But this will never happen with a follower of Christ! Christ will never fail; there will never be a reason for a Christian to be ashamed of Christ. A faithful Christian can be calm in his service to Christ; he can remain serene even in the face of great adversity; he has no reason to be stampeded into taking hasty and fearful flight; he will thus not be ashamed.
4. Verses 7-8: “Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed” [KJV].
 - a. “For you therefore that believe is the preciousness: but for such as disbelieve, The stone which the builders rejected, The same was made the head of the corner; and, A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence; for they stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed” [ASV].
 - b. “Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but those who are disobedient, ‘The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone,’ and ‘A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense’” (NKJ).
 - c. The believer knows the preciousness of Christ; the unbeliever does not. “[He is precious] Margin, ‘an honor.’ That is, according to the margin, it is an honor to believe on him, and should be so regarded. This is true, but it is very doubtful whether this is the idea of Peter. The Greek is *hee* (NT:3588) *timee* (NT:5092); literally, ‘esteem, honor, respect, reverence;’ then ‘value or price.’ The noun is probably used in the place of the adjective, in the sense of honorable, valued, precious; and it is not incorrectly rendered in the text, ‘he is precious.’ The connection demands this interpretation. The apostle was not showing that it was an honor to believe on Christ, but was stating the estimate which was put on him by those who believe, as contrasted with the view taken of him by the world. The truth which is taught is, that while the Lord Jesus is rejected by the great mass of people, he is regarded by all Christians as of inestimable value” [Barnes' Notes, *ibid.*].
 - d. Notice how the terms “believe” and “obey” are used interchangeably in verse seven. Specifically, believe and disobey are put in contrast to each other. Believe [a living faith] includes obedience, as James 2 plainly demonstrates: “But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith

without works is dead also” (Jas. 2:20-26). Compare:

- 1) John 3:18: “He that **believeth on him** is not judged: he that **believeth not** hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God” (ASV).
 - 2) Hebrews 3:18: “And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that were disobedient?” (ASV).
- e. The builders in the figure being employed (especially the Jewish teachers) had examined Christ and found him wanting; they rejected him, not because of any deficiency on his part, but because of their blindness, prejudice, stubbornness, and ignorance.
- 1) Matthew 13:14-17: “And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.”
 - 2) Acts 7:51-53: “Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.”
- f. Again, we are told that Christ has been made head of the corner (the chief cornerstone): “Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Eph. 2:11-22).
- g. These two verses contrast those who believe with those who reject Christ. To believers, Christ is precious; to unbelievers, he is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. To unbelievers he becomes an obstacle in their path—a stumblingblock. If we accept the Lord on his terms, he will save us, lift us up, and assist us down the road of life and ultimately conduct us into glory. If we reject the Lord, we are caught in a trap of our making, he becomes to us a cause of stumbling—and ultimate ruin.
- 1) Matthew 12:30: “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.”
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 1:18-24: “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after
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- that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”
- h. “Whereunto they were appointed” does not uphold the Calvinistic error that God foreordained the final destinies of all men individually. This false system maintains that God and Christ had a meeting before time began, and specifically selected and foreordained where each individual would be in eternity; that they made their selections arbitrarily, despite any goodness or wickedness either would do in life. “By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated, or foreordained to eternal life through Jesus Christ, to the praise of his glorious grace; others being left to act in their sin to their just condemnation, to the praise of his glorious justice. (I Tim. 5:21; Matt. 25:34; Eph. 1:5, 6; Rom. 9:22, 23; Jude 4). These angels and men thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished” [*Philadelphia Confession of Faith*, 1742].
- 1) We know this theory is in error when we read the many statements in the Bible affirming that God is no respecter of persons, for example: “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him” (Acts 10:34-35).
 - 2) Our eternal destiny depends of our obedience or disobedience to God’s word.
 - a) Romans 2:4-11: “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God.”
 - b) Galatians 6:7-8: “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”
 - c) 2 Peter 3:9: “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”
 - d) Acts 13:44-48: “And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.”
 - e) 1 Timothy 2:4: “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”
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- f) Revelation 22:14, 17: “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city....And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”
5. Verse 9: “But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”
- a. The apostle describes these faithful Christians in glowing terms—in contrast to the unbelievers who had casually examined Christ and cast him aside as unworthy of heeding. This contrast is shown by the phrase “but ye.” The unbelievers had placed themselves under the wrath of God, but the obedient ones had become a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people.
- b. They were a **chosen generation**.
- 1) For fifteen hundred years, the Israelites had been God’s chosen people, but through their unbelief, God rejected them as such.
- a) Isaiah 43:20-21: “The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.”
- b) Romans 11:13-23: “For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again.” [If a Jew will accept Christ on his terms, he will be brought back into fellowship with God; but this can only be done in Christ; it can only be done by individuals].
- 2) Faithful Christians are God’s chosen people today.
- a) Romans 2:28-29: “For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” [The real Jew today is a faithful Christian; the name *Jew* denotes one who is “praiseworthy”).
- b) Galatians 6:16: “And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.” [Christians comprise the spiritual Israel of God].
- 3) The gospel is intended for every accountable person (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16; Rev. 22:17; Matt. 11:28-30; Acts 8:4; Col. 1:5-23). Everyone who obeys the gospel is made part of God’s chosen people.
- c. They were a **royal priesthood**.
- 1) This represents a major change from the Mosaic System, where there was a separate priesthood. In fact, the tribe of Levi was designated as the priestly tribe, meaning that all the priests had to come from that clan. The priesthood was presided over by a high priest, a descendant of Aaron.
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- a) Exodus 28:1: “And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons.”
 - b) See also Leviticus 8; Exodus 30:1-10; Leviticus 1:1-17.
 - 2) Each Christian has the right to offer scriptural worship unto God through Christ—that worship must be sincerely offered and be tendered in accordance with the truth (John 4:24).
 - a) 1 Peter 2:5: “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”
 - b) John 4:24: “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”
 - c) Hebrews 13:15: “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.”
 - d) Hebrews 4:14-16: “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”
 - e) Hebrews 10:22: “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.”
 - d. They were a **holy nation**.
 - 1) The figure of a nation suggests government. While many suppose that Christianity is a democracy, and that they have right to make or set aside laws as they see fit, in fact Christ’s arrangement is a monarchy. Christ is the King. He has reserved for himself all authority in his kingdom; no man has a right to make any law for him or to annul any law he has bound. The following passages are cited from the American Standard Version:
 - a) Galatians 1:8-9: “But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema.”
 - b) 1 Corinthians 4:6: “Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other.”
 - c) Revelation 22:18-19: “I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book.”
 - d) Zechariah 6:13: “Even he shall build the temple of Jehovah; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.”
 - e) 2 John 1:9: “Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son.”
 - 2) Our Lord is not called President or Premier, but King. When his government is depicted as a kingdom, he is depicted as King; when it is identified as the church, he is the Head. A kingdom is probably the best form of human government **if** the king were capable of making no mistakes.
 - 3) Israel was once God’s holy nation.
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- a) Deuteronomy 26:18-19: “And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments; And to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the LORD thy God, as he hath spoken.”
 - b) Exodus 19:6: “And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.”
 - c) They rebelled, and when the fullness of time came, they were replaced by the church. “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15).
- 4) Israel was intended to be a holy nation, but they corrupted themselves.
- a) Leviticus 20:24-26: “But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I am the LORD your God, which have separated you from other people. Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean: and ye shall not make your souls abominable by beast, or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that creepeth on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean. And ye shall be holy unto me: for I the LORD am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine.”
 - b) 1 Kings 8:53: “For thou didst separate them from among all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord GOD.”
- 5) Christians constitute the holy nation of God today, and as such are expected to be separate from the world; indeed, the word **church** means “the called out ones.” Christians are called out of the world by the gospel.
- a) 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14: “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - b) 2 Corinthians 6:14-18: “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”
 - c) 1 John 3:1-3: “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”
- e. They were to be a **peculiar people**.
- 1) They are intended to be a people solely belonging to God, dedicated to serving him only.
 - a) Deuteronomy 7:6: “For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.” [What was expected of the Israelites in this regard, is likewise expected of Christians].
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- b) Malachi 3:17: “And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.” [God’s people then and now were to a special treasure belonging exclusively to the Lord].
- 2) “[A peculiar people]...The margin here is purchased. The word ‘peculiar,’ in its common acceptation now, would mean that they were distinguished from others, or were singular. The reading in the margin would mean that they had been bought or redeemed. Both these things are so, but neither of them expresses the exact sense of the original. The Greek *laos* (NT:2992) *eis* (NT:1519) *peripoieesin* (NT:4047) means, ‘a people for a possession;’ that is, as pertaining to God. They are a people which he has secured as a possession, or as his own; a people, therefore, which belong to him, and to no other. In this sense they are SPECIAL as being His; and, being such, it may be inferred that they should be special in the sense of being UNLIKE others (unique) in their manner of life. But that idea is not necessarily in the text” [Barnes' Notes, *ibid.*].
- 3) Christians are the special, acquired treasure of God, precious jewels which he proposes to keep for himself. How blessed we are as the result!
- f. They were to **show forth his praises**.
- 1) The marginal alternative for “praises” is “virtues.” To “show forth” is to proclaim far and wide. We are to publish abroad the virtues (the blessings and benefits) God offers to mankind through the gospel. This is stated as our obligation—a duty which we happily discharge.
- 2) The reason behind this delightful obligation grows out of the fact that we have been called out of darkness into his marvelous light.
- a) Acts 26:18: “To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.”
- b) Ephesians 5:8: “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.”
- c) Colossians 1:12-13: “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.”
- d) Ephesians 4:17-24: “This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”
- e) 1 John 1:5-7: “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”
6. Verse 10: “Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.”
- a. This statement is from the Old Testament book of Hosea:
- 1) Hosea 2:23: “And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not
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obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.”

- 2) Paul cited this passage also: “As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God” (Rom. 9:25-26).
- b. Both Peter and Paul interpreted this Old Testament statement to have reference to the Gentiles. Before the conversion of the Gentiles, they were “no people.” They were separated from God; they lived in ignorance, superstition, and sin.
- c. But now that they had obeyed the gospel, they had obtained mercy. In their unbelief, they were the objects of God’s wrath. They now had the compassion of God directed toward them. “Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby” (Eph. 2:11-16).

C. 1 Peter 2:11-12: Christians and the World.

1. Verse 11: “Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.”
 - a. The apostles had a deep regard for their fellow-Christians. Peter expresses his loving concern for those to whom he wrote by addressing them as his “dearly beloved.” We may know that this was his genuine attitude since the Holy Spirit led him to write it. This and other expressions of warm affection appear in other places, including the following:
 - 1) Hebrews 6:9: “But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.”
 - 2) 1 Peter 4:12: “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.”
 - 3) 1 Corinthians 10:14: “Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.”
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 15:58: “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”
 - 5) 2 Corinthians 7:1: “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”
 - 6) 1 John 3:2: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”
 - b. **I** beseech you. This is not merely a personal admonition, from Peter (the man), to the saints. Rather, this expresses the will of Christ. Peter was an inspired apostle of Christ.
 - 1) John 14:26: “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”
 - 2) John 15:26-27: “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall

- bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.”
- 3) John 16:13-14: “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.”
 - 4) John 20:21-23: “Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.”
 - 5) Acts 1:5, 8: “For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence....But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”
 - 6) Acts 2:1-4: “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”
- c. **Beseech** is from a Greek term [*parakaleo*] which means *to call to one's side and tenderly admonish, to entreat, to exhort, to plead*. Being an inspired apostle of Christ, Peter could have stated his point from an authoritative point of view, but he was guided to express it as a tender appeal. Obedience to the gospel must proceed from the heart (cf. Rom. 6:16-18); living the Christian life must likewise arise from the heart. In order for Christians to follow the admonition given here by Peter, we must have a sincere desire to do so—spiritual qualities cannot be coerced, but are cultivated in the heart.
- d. The apostle bases his appeal on the fact that we are not of this world. We live in this world, but we do not partake of the sinful practices and dispositions that characterize worldly-minded people. Saints stand in strong contrast to worldlings. A beautiful red rose growing in the midst of underbrush or dead weeds stands out; it would quickly be noticed because of the contrast. So Christians are different from the sinful, and are obvious even to a casual viewer.
- 1) Romans 12:1-2: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 6:16-18: “And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”
- e. We are **strangers** in this world.
- 1) A stranger is a “sojourner.” The term denotes one who is a foreigner in a land that is not his own. We share the language and customs of the people among whom we dwell, but our citizenship is in another place—Heaven.
 - 2) The Patriarchs confessed that they did not belong to the land in which they dwelt: “By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God....These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that
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- they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country” (Heb. 11:9-10, 13-14).
- 3) Christians hold citizenship in heaven: “For our citizenship is in heaven; whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself” (Phil. 3:20-21, ASV).
 - 4) Because we are sojourners in this world, we do not imbibe the sinful practices, speech, or customs that dominate the people of this world.
 - a) 1 John 2:15-17: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”
 - b) James 4:4: “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”
 - c) Of course, we do not make ourselves obnoxious to those around us. We do not hate them, and we do not seek to incur their opposition needlessly. Living the Christian life, preaching the whole counsel of God, and exposing sin and error, will arouse sufficient resistance. We are to so-live as to encourage others to follow our example. Compare: “Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, unto all that are carried away captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem unto Babylon; Build ye houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them; Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished. And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace” (Jer. 29:4-7).
- f. We are **pilgrims**.
- 1) “A pilgrim, properly, is one who travels to a distance from his own country to visit a holy place, or to pay his devotion to some holy object; then a traveler, a wanderer. The meaning here is, that Christians have no permanent home on earth; their citizenship is not here; they are mere sojourners, and they are passing on to their eternal home in the heavens.
 - a) “They should, therefore, act as become such persons; as sojourners and travelers do. They should not: (a) regard the earth as their home. (b) They should not seek to acquire permanent possessions here, as if they were to remain here, but should act as travelers do, who merely seek a temporary lodging, without expecting permanently to reside in a place. c) They should not allow any such attachments to be formed, or arrangements to be made, as to impede their journey to their final home, as pilgrims seek only a temporary lodging, and steadily pursue their journey. (d) Even while engaged here in the necessary callings of life—their studies, their farming, their merchandise—their thoughts and affections should be on other things.
 - b) “One in a strange land thinks much of his country and home; a pilgrim, much of the land to which he goes; and even while his time and attention may be necessarily occupied by the arrangements needful for the journey, his thoughts and affections will be far away. (e) We should not encumber ourselves with much of this world's goods.
 - c) “Many professed Christians get so many worldly things around them, that it is impossible for them to make a journey to heaven. They burden themselves as no traveler would, and they make no progress. A traveler takes along as few things as possible; and a staff is often all that a pilgrim has. We make the most rapid progress in our journey to our final home when we are least encumbered with the things of this world” [Barnes' Notes, *ibid.*].
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- 2) Attachments that would deter or divert us from our heavenly destination are to be avoided.
 - a) Hebrews 11:10: “For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”
 - b) Hebrews 13:14: “For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.”
 - c) Colossians 3:1-3: “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”
- g. With the foregoing information, Peter is now ready to give the primary admonition of the verse:
abstain from fleshly lusts.
 - 1) To abstain is to hold back from, to refuse to participate in some activity that would be detrimental to the soul.
 - 2) Fleshly lusts are also called works of the flesh.
 - a) Galatians 5:19-24: “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”
 - b) Romans 13:4: “For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.”
 - c) 2 Timothy 2:22: “Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”
 - d) Titus 2:12: “Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.”
 - e) 1 Peter 1:14: “As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance.”
 - h. Fleshly lusts **war against the soul.**
 - 1) These sinful lusts do not merely stand in opposition to the soul, but operate aggressively to the hurt of the soul.
 - 2) The ultimate consequence of this war against the soul is eternal ruin: “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (Jas. 1:13-15).
 - 3) The soul is the spirit—the eternal part of us, the part that is made in God’s image. Man’s physical body dies and returns to the elements of the earth; the soul never dies in the sense that it goes out of existence. God never dies, and that part of man which is made in God’s image never dies. The soul dies only in the sense that it is separated from God. The key idea in “death” is separation: “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (Jas. 2:26). The body separated from the spirit is dead; the spirit [the soul] separated from God is dead.
 2. Verse 12: “Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.” “Having your behavior seemly among the Gentiles; that, wherein they speak against you as evil-doers,

they may by your good works, which they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation” (ASV).

- a. If the brethren heeded the apostle’s admonition in verse eleven, then the condition of this verse would result—they would conduct their lives properly before the Gentiles among whom they dwelled. The Gentiles referred to here were the pagan unbelievers.
 - b. For the church to have the best influence on our unbelieving world, Christians are to live pure and attractive lives. “He who exhibits a stern and unbending disposition, though his life be an exemplary one, is lacking in the qualities which are described in the Bible as good” (Woods, p.67).
 - c. False charges were often brought against the Christians, as in Acts 17:6-7: “And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus” (Acts 17:6-7). Peter calls on us to so-live that the enemy cannot have any real charge to bring against us.
 - 1) Philippians 2:15-16: “That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.”
 - 2) 1 Peter 4:4: “Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you.”
 - 3) Titus 2:7-8: “In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.”
 - 4) Matthew 5:13-16: “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”
 - 5) “Wrote Tertullian (born about 160 A.D., died between 220 and 240 A.D.), ‘If the Tiber rises to the walls of the city, if the Nile does not irrigate the fields, if an earthquake takes place, if famine or the pestilence arise, they cry forthwith: Away with the Christians to the lions.’ Heathen writers, when not possessed of the bitterness of spirit and maliciousness of heart characteristic of those actively engaged in persecution of the church, were led by the popular feeling to speak of them in similar contemptuous vein, and to join in the condemnation which all but universally prevailed during the early years of Christianity. Tacitus, Suetonius, and Pliny—all prominent and well-known Roman authors and historians—imbibed the prevalent spirit and described the early Christians as being possessed of a perverse and excessive superstition, wicked and deadly in its nature. In suffering such the disciples were simply experiencing that which Jesus had predicted would come to pass, and were following in his own footsteps, in demonstration of the adage that the servant is not above his lord” (Woods, p.68).
 - d. Echoing the words of our Lord in Matthew 5:16, Peter speaks of Christians so-conducting themselves as to elicit from the unbelievers the right response toward the Lord: that they, by the good works which they see in us, will also ultimately glorify God even as we do.
 - 1) Matthew 5:16: “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 6:20: “For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”
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- e. The reference to the “day of visitation” is not without its difficulty. Does this have reference to the day of Judgment? Does it have reference to the time of great upheaval surrounding the destruction of the Jewish state? Or does it refer to the time-frame when the gospel was being widely disseminated among the Gentiles?
- 1) Our Lord used a similar expression in the last sense in Luke 19:44: “And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.” Here Christ teaches that the Jews would be punished severely because they did not know “the time of thy visitation.” They had been given glorious opportunities to learn the identity and teachings of the Messiah; they chose not to hear and heed.
 - 2) It is likely the case, therefore, that Peter is using the expression here in a similar way—that it was his wish that the saints would live right so that the unbelieving Gentiles might turn from their wicked ways and glorify God. Compare: “But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth” (1 Cor. 14:24-25).
 - 3) If the reference is to the punishment to be meted out in the Judgment, it was Peter’s desire that the godly lives of the saints would influence many of the Gentiles to obey the gospel so that they could glorify God on that great occasion.
- f. Barnes offers these comments on this point:
- 1) “[In the day of visitation] Many different opinions have been entertained of the meaning of this phrase, some referring it to the day of judgment; some to times of persecution; some to the destruction of Jerusalem; and some to the time when the gospel was preached among the Gentiles, as a period when God visited them with mercy.
 - 2) “The word ‘visitation’ *episkopee* (NT:1984) means the act of visiting or being visited for any purpose, usually with the notion of inspecting conduct, of inflicting punishment, or of conferring favors. Compare Matt 25:36,43; Luke 1:68,78; 7:16; 19:44. In the sense of visiting for the purpose of punishing, the word is often used in the Septuagint for the Hebrew *paaqad* (OT:6485), though there is no instance in which the word is so used in the New Testament, unless it be in the verse before us. The ‘visitation’ here referred to is undoubtedly that of God; and the reference is to some time when he would make a ‘visitation’ to people for some purpose, and when the fact that the Gentiles had narrowly inspected the conduct of Christians would lead them to honor him.
 - 3) “The only question is, to what visitation of that kind the apostle referred. The prevailing use of the word in the New Testament would seem to lead us to suppose that the ‘visitation’ referred to was designed to confer favors rather than to inflict punishment, and indeed the word seems to have somewhat of a technical character, and to have been familiarly used by Christians to denote God's coming to people to bless them....
 - 4) “This seems to me to be its meaning here; and, if so, the sense is, that when God appeared among people to accompany the preaching of the gospel with saving power, the result of the observed conduct of Christians would be to lead those around them to honor him by giving up their hearts to Him; that is, their consistent lives would be the means of the revival and extension of true religion.
 - 5) “And is it not always so? Is not the pure and holy walk of Christians an occasion of His bending His footsteps down to earth to bless dying sinners, and to scatter spiritual blessings with a liberal hand?” (ibid.).

1. Verse 13: “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme.”
 - a. The ordinances of men are the civil laws of human government. It is understood that this direction does not require Christians to obey any human ordinance that would require disobedience to God, but in all other matters, we are to be submissive to civil rulers.
 - b. When an enemy seeks to oppose a Christian, any handy charge will be used, even though there is no grounds for the accusation. Under the best of circumstances, we may face opposition of unbelievers; we must make sure that there is nothing in our conduct or words that would give a semblance of a charge against us. One of the common charges that were brought against our brethren in the first century accused them of acting in disobedience to Roman law.
 - c. Compare: “And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have **turned the world upside down** are come hither also; Whom Jason hath received: and these all do contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus” (Acts 17:6-7).
 - 1) Their having "turned the world upside down" was not intended as a compliment, but as an accusation that they had disturbed the peace wherever they had gone. This was a false charge; it was not Paul and Silas who had caused the furor at Philippi and Thessalonica, but the spiteful enemies of the gospel.
 - 2) Ahab tried to make Elijah to be the trouble-maker in ancient Israel: "And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim" (1 Kings 18:17-18).
 - d. The Scriptures do not legislate as to the best kind of human government. The obligation to obey civil law is bound regardless of the kind of government in power. Even if the government under which we live is a dictatorship, we are to submit to its laws; if it is a monarchy, we are to be obedient; if it is a tyrannical form of government, we are obliged by the gospel to follow its edicts; if it is a democracy such as we have in the United States, we are to be submissive—and grateful!
 - e. God’s law requires that we be obedient to civil authority; both Peter and Paul were inspired to affirm this proposition: “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour” (Rom. 13:1-7).
 - f. When human law opposes God’s law, Christians must be obedient to God, regardless of the consequences.
 - 1) Acts 4:19-20: “But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.”
 - 2) Acts 5:29: “Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.”
 - g. Our Lord set the example of obedience to civil authority: “And when they were come to Capernaum,

they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee” (Matt. 17:24-27).

- h. Peter begins to make specifications of the admonition when he speaks of the king. The king then on the throne in Rome was Nero, one of the most corrupt and wicked individuals ever to reign. The king in a monarchy reigns supreme. [The term here rendered *supreme* is translated *higher* in Romans 13:1]. The point the apostle is making requires our obedience to the supreme ruler of the land in which we live, but as he will show in the next verse, the requirement also applies with the authority of lesser rulers.
2. Verse 14: “Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.”
 - a. The governors were certain lesser rulers; these were under the greater authority of the emperor in Rome. The term designates leaders, and is used in reference to proconsuls and magistrates who ruled in the provinces of the Empire.
 - b. The rulers are “sent by him.” Who is this one who sends these lesser rulers? This must be the supreme ruler in the Empire—the king. Of course, it is God who possesses ultimate authority, and gave civil rulers power to rule in the human sphere.
 - 1) John 19:10-11: “Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.”
 - 2) Daniel 4:17: “This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.”
 - c. As stated by Peter, the purpose of civil rulers is to punish evildoers and to encourage those who do right. By punishing criminals, the lawabiding citizens are protected and are able to conduct their affairs with happiness and maintain the hope of success.
 - d. Christians are to pray for God’s help to be given civil rulers; this indirectly will enhance their own life and circumstances: “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty” (1 Tim. 2:1-2).
 - e. Civil rulers will have to answer to God. “This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men....The king spake, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty? While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken; The kingdom is departed from thee. And they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field: they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee, until thou know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will” (Dan. 4:17, 30-32).
 3. Verse 15: “For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.”
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- a. If the saints would be obedient to the laws of the land, their enemies would be without that charge to use against them. In this way, the brethren would be able to put to silence those who would bring evil reports. The ignorance of foolish men the apostle mentions is a reference to their false accusations against the saints.
 - b. The expression “put to silence” means to “muzzle.” A muzzle on the mouth of a vicious animal renders him harmless; so these slanderers would be muzzled. “In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you” (Titus 2:7-8).
 - c. The way to put evil men to silence (to muzzle them) is to maintain good works, including obedience to the law of the land. The word “muzzle” is used in its literal sense in these passages:
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 9:9: “For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?”
 - 2) 1 Timothy 5:18: “For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.”
4. Verse 16: “As free, and not using *your* liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.”
- a. NKJ: “As free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.”
 - b. A Christian has certain rights (liberties), but these must be foregone if such is necessary to keep from giving unnecessary offense to unbelievers. Liberty is not a license to do evil. In our day, men are citing liberty as the right to believe and practice almost anything in the name of Christianity. Those who oppose them are referred to as “knuckle-heads,” “Pharisaic,” “legalistic,” and “extremists.”
 - c. Christians have freedom from the guilt of sin, freedom from the Law of Moses, and freedom from the fear of death.
 - 1) John 8:32: “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”
 - 2) John 8:36: “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”
 - 3) Galatians 5:1: “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”
 - 4) Romans 7:1-4: “Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”
 - 5) Romans 8:1-2: “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”
 - 6) Romans 6:17-18: “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”
 - 7) Hebrews 2:15: “And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”
 - d. We must not use our liberty as a cloak to do wickedness.
 - 1) Romans 6:1-3: “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God
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- forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"
- 2) Galatians 5:1: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."
- e. One who runs away from the restraint placed on him by the Scriptures, will surely place himself under the cruelest taskmaster—sin.
- 1) John 8:34: "Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."
 - 2) 2 Peter 2:18-20: "For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning."
 - 3) Compare: "As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him" (Amos 5:19). Amos is showing the Israelites that their punishment for wicked living would surely come; if they escaped from the clutches of a bear, they would be bitten by a snake. Liberty without restraint is license; unrestrained license is wretched bondage (cf. dope addicts, alcoholics). No one can avoid God's judgment and one who subjects himself to sin will become the slave of sin.
- f. Christians indeed have liberty, but we must always be obedient to God.
5. Verse 17: "Honour all *men*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king."
- a. **Honor all men.**
- 1) Respect for all men is here required. Disrespect for no man is allowed. Even enemies are to be treated with respect, despite the ugly nature of their character and their evil charges against us.
 - 2) Although respect [honor] is not as broad or as deep as love, yet love includes respect.
 - a) Matthew 5:44-48: "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."
 - b) Romans 12:9-10: "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another."
 - c) Romans 13:10: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."
 - d) 1 Corinthians 13:1-3: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."
 - e) Matthew 7:12: "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."
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b. Love the brotherhood.

- 1) The brotherhood is the church—the family of God. As love flows naturally through the members of a human family, so love permeates the entire body of Christ, his church.
- 2) We are to be especially fond of the local congregation where we hold membership, but our love is to extend to the entire brotherhood. We want the local church to grow and prosper and be built up in the most holy faith; but we want all other congregations to flourish.
- 3) This being the case, we will not try to “steal sheep” from other congregations; we will not hurt their influence by speaking evil of them; we will not knowingly disrupt their work or hinder their progress.

c. Fear God.

- 1) Barnes’ comments are informative regarding fear of God: “A duty everywhere enjoined in the Bible, as one of the first duties of religion....The word fear, when used to express our duty to God, means that we are to reverence and honor him. Religion, in one aspect, is described as the fear of God; in another, as the love of God; in another, as submission to his will, etc. A holy veneration or fear is always an elementary principle of religion. It is the fear, not so much of punishment as of his disapprobation; not so much the dread of suffering as the dread of doing wrong” [ibid.].
- 2) The Bible is filled with statements and requirements regarding our fear of God.
 - a) Leviticus 25:17: “Ye shall not therefore oppress one another; but thou shalt fear thy God: for I am the LORD your God.”
 - b) Psalms 25:14: “The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.”
 - c) Proverbs 1:7: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”
 - d) Proverbs 9:10: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.”
 - e) Proverbs 23:17: “Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long.”
 - f) 2 Corinthians 7:1: “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”
- 3) Because God is God and man is his lowly creation, awe and reverence is due him.
 - a) Ecclesiastes 12:13-14: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”
 - b) Ecclesiastes 5:1-2: “Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.”
 - c) Hebrews 12:28-29: “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.”

d. Honor the king.

- 1) This king is the civil ruler [we know this because it is used in distinction to God in the preceding clause, which identifies the Almighty].
 - 2) The point of this clause also applies to those living under a form of government other than a monarchy. As the apostle has already stated in the context, we are to be subject to the laws of the
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civil government under which we live; here he tells us to show honor to the ruler.

- 3) Romans 13:1-7: “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.”

E. 1 Peter 2:18-20: Christian Servants are to be Obedient to Their Masters.

1. Verse 18: “Servants, *be* subject to *your* masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.”
 - a. That was a time of wide-spread slavery. As the Roman legions conquered other nations, slave dealers followed the army, enslaving many of the defeated people. There were millions of slaves in the Empire, many of whom obeyed the gospel. Indeed, more than a few slave-owners also obeyed. In 30 B.C., there were an estimated 400,000 slaves in Rome, with about 1,500,000 in Italy. By the middle of the first century, those numbers were doubtless far greater. Some rich Romans are said to have owned 20,000 slaves. (See Durant, *Caesar and Christ*, pp.333f). Under ancient Roman law, the master had unlimited authority over his slaves.
 - 1) “These, and his wife and children, were *mancipia* to him—literally, ‘taken in hand’; and no matter what their age or status, they remained in his power until he chose to emancipate them—to let them ‘out of hand.’ These rights of the *paterfamilias* were checked to some degree by custom, public opinion, the clan council, and praetorian law; otherwise they lasted to his death, and could not be ended by his insanity or even by his own choice” (Durant, *ibid*, p.57).
 - 2) “Under the kings they had been costly and few, and therefore had been treated with consideration as valuable members of the family. In the sixth century B.C., when Rome began her career of conquest, war captives were sold in rising numbers to the aristocracy, the business classes, and even to plebeians; and the status of the slave sank. Legally he could be dealt with as any other piece of property; in theory, and according to the custom of the ancients, his life had been forfeited by defeat, and his enslavement was a merciful commutation of his death. Sometimes he managed his master’s property, business, or funds; sometimes he became a teacher, writer, actor, craftsman, laborer, tradesman, or artist, and paid his master part of his earnings. In this or other ways he might earn enough to buy his freedom and become a member of the plebs” (*ibid*, p.22).
 - b. Christian servants were to serve their masters with singleness of heart, which means to do their work with sincerity and integrity. They are taught to do service as though they were rendering that service to the Lord and not to men. They were to serve their masters well because of inner principles. In fact, by performing service to their masters, Christian servants were serving the Lord. The principles which Paul and other writers of the New Testament applied to the slave-master relationship of their day, have the same application today in the employee-employer relationship.
 - c. Christians knew that God places no distinction between people of different backgrounds and social standings: “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:26-29). There was the possibility that

they might rebel against their masters, thus violate the law of the land which permitted slavery, and bring unnecessary suffering upon themselves, and cause the religion of Christ to be denigrated. The New Testament contains a considerable amount of teaching regarding this situation.

- 1) Ephesians 6:5-8: “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.”
 - 2) Colossians 3:22: “Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God.”
 - 3) 1 Timothy 6:1-2: “Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort.”
- d. In our text, Peter instructs Christian servants to be subject to their masters with all fear. There was a need for them to be aware that they could be punished; they should fear lest they should offend God; they also ought to fear that they might bring reproach upon Christ. They should fear their masters also in the sense of having respect for them. This disposition would put them in better standing with their masters, and would likely create a higher degree of concern on the part of the master for the Christian slave.
 - e. These requirements placed on the Christian servant applied regardless of the nature of the master. If the master was good and kind or if he was froward (crooked), the Christian was to be governed by the precepts the gospel requires. They were to treat either kind of master in the same way.
 - f. Since Christianity and slavery are in direct contrast to each other, why did not God destroy slavery when the gospel was preached? If he had done so, the results would have been disastrous for everyone concerned. Society would have been left in shambles; many innocent people would suffer. No doubt the situation of slaves would be worse than when they were in bondage. How could they have earned a living? The Lord destroyed slavery, but not by an outward assault; he did it when the principles of the gospel became widely known and accepted. [In recent years, some reports have surfaced that some of the Moslems in northern parts of Africa are enslaving non-Moslems (“Christians”). One case told of a teenage boy who was nailed to a board to punish him for allowing the camels under his care to wander].
2. Verse 19: “For this *is* thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.” NKJ: “For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.”
 - a. Obedience to one’s master is worthy of thanks; it is an acceptable condition. Compare: “For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them” (Luke 6:32). It is easy and common for one to love those who love him, but it is difficult and uncommon to love an opponent.
 - b. The thanks indicated has reference to a reward or praise. When a Christian suffers abuse in order to be obedient to God’s will, God takes note, and approves. The suffering incurred by the faithful saint and rewarded by the Lord is that which comes from doing God’s will—suffering for righteousness’ sake.
 - c. Suffering that comes from one’s own fault is not under consideration in the passage. Everyone suffers sooner or later in this life, for there are many ailments and adversities that are the common lot of humanity; the suffering that is rewarded is that which is acquired on account of our faithful obedience to God. “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of
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heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you” (Matt. 5:10-12).

- d. Again, the suffering which Peter is addressing is that which results when a man (a Christian), living in harmony with his conscience, is persecuted—suffering wrongfully. Of course, when a Christian also remains steadfast as he undergoes the common troubles of life, his Lord sees his faithfulness, and rewards him accordingly.
3. Verse 20: “For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God.”
 - a. This completes the thought of the previous verse. There is no glory (honor, reward, praise) when we are punished for wrongdoing. If a servant violates his master’s will in some matter, he should not expect to be praised for his disobedience. On the other hand, if the Christian does the right thing, and is censured for doing so, he is to endure the suffering patiently, knowing that this is acceptable with God—in God’s sight it would be worthy of praise.
 - b. “[If, when ye be buffeted for your faults] That is, if you are punished when you deserve it. The word ‘buffet’ *kolafizoo* (NT:2852)—means, to strike with the fist; and then to strike in any way; to maltreat, Matt 26:67; Mark 14:65; 1 Cor 4:11; 2 Cor 12:7. Perhaps there may be a reference here to the manner in which servants were commonly treated, or the kind of punishment to which they were exposed. They would be likely to be struck in sudden anger, either by the hand, or by anything that was accessible. The word rendered ‘for your faults,’ is sinning, *hamartanontes* (NT:264). That is, ‘if being guilty of an offence, or having done wrong.’ The idea is, that if they were justly punished, and should take it patiently, there would be no credit or honor in it” [Barnes' Notes, *ibid.*].
 - c. Our attitude ought to be that of our brethren in the first century, who rejoiced when they were called on to suffer for right-doing.
 - 1) Acts 5:40-42: “And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”
 - 2) Acts 16:25: “And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.” [The two brethren had been severely beaten and imprisoned unjustly, but there was much for which they could be thankful].

F. 1 Peter 2:21-25: Imitating Christ.

1. Verse 21: “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.”
 - a. The preceding passage deals with Christian servants suffering at the hands of unjust masters. Growing out of this, the apostle calls our attention to the suffering of our Saviour, using his case as an example for our imitation. This point, while having initial application to Christian slaves, has application to all Christians, regardless of the place, time, and circumstances under which they live. Especially during the first century or so of the gospel age, it was the common lot of our brethren to face harsh physical persecution.
 - 1) Acts 14:22: “Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.”
 - 2) 2 Timothy 3:12: “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”
 - 3) Persecution comes in varying degrees. Some may be extreme, even to the extent of death or imprisonment; in our day and nation, outward persecution is not lawful, but the enemy can find

- any number of ways to make our lives miserable—because we are faithful adherents of the gospel and demand a “thus saith the Lord” for all religious beliefs and practices.
- b. The gospel issues a call to those who will listen to its message; it calls on us to come out from the world and follow the will of Christ. When we respond to this call, opposition of some kind and degree will surely come (sooner or later).
- 1) 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14: “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - 2) Philippians 1:29: “For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.”
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 6:14-18: “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”
 - 4) Acts 2:40-41: “And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”
- c. It is not God’s will to bring suffering upon us arbitrarily. But suffering for righteousness’ sake is good for the individual (it makes him stronger) and for the church (it is drawn closer together in love and is strengthened).
- 1) Hebrews 12:5-11: “And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks unto you as unto children, My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loves he chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chastens not? But if you be without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then are you illegitimate children, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh who corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them who are trained by it” (NKJV).
 - 2) God knew the spiritual condition of the world of the first century, and he knew how hated the way of the gospel would be to the pagans and the Jews; he could know that his people would be hated and persecuted. Therefore, he could know that we are called out of the world into Christ to suffer for the faith.
- d. Christ suffered for us, establishing an example for us to imitate. The servant is not greater than the master; since he suffered, we can expect no life of ease as we bear our cross.
- 1) John 15:18-20: “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.”
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- 2) The word “example” is translated from the Greek *hupogrammos* [*hupo*—under, and *gramma*—to write]; the term means literally, “to write under.” “It is a figure suggested by the copy-book method of teaching penmanship. Christ thus becomes the copy-head, the beautiful writing at the top of the page. Implied in the figure is a copy-book, a perfect pattern of writing, a white, unblemished sheet of paper, the student’s effort to transcribe the copy, the awkward attempts at the beginning, persistent determination, constant and unremitting practice; and then, eventually —success!” (Woods, p.79).
 - 3) The old method of teaching penmanship was for the teacher to produce a sample writing which the student is to reproduce down the page. As the pupil writes each line, he must use the topmost line before him; the further down the page he progresses and the less he looks back to the example, the less perfect his attempts to reproduce it will be. Similarly, we must keep our eye on our perfect example (Christ), or else our reproduction of his lifestyle will not be what it ought to be.
 - e. “Suffering for evil conduct they might have accepted as that which should be expected under the circumstances; but to suffer unjustly and at the hands of unbelieving heathens was indeed a difficult trial to bear. Christ, as an example of an innocent sufferer, is offered to sustain them in bearing similar trials. Though he suffered, and suffered unjustly, this did not prompt him to sin...” (Woods, *ibid.*).
 - f. Christians are told to follow the steps of Christ. He has gone before us, breaking the trail, and showing us the way to go. It is difficult to suffer when one knows he is innocent of any wrongdoing. Our sense of justice urges us to strike back at this outrage. But Peter uses the case of Jesus as the example we should imitate and in his steps to follow. No one was as innocent as Christ.
2. Verse 22: “Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.”
- a. Despite being so harshly and criminally treated, our Lord did not commit sin by retaliating or by using any deceitful speech. He did not resist those who arrested him, scourged him, insulted him, and falsely accused him. He rebuked Peter for using a sword in an attempt to defend the Lord: “Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him” (John 18:10-12).
 - b. In his arrest and trials, the Lord did not commit a single act of sin, and neither did he resort to guile in trying to deliver himself. But he was totally without sin and guile throughout his public ministry; neither did he do any sin or speak any guile before he began his ministry. His life was sinless; his teachings are all truthful. This could not be said about any other accountable person!
 - 1) John 8:46: “Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?”
 - 2) Hebrews 4:15: “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.”
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 5:21: “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”
 - 4) 1 John 3:5: “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.”
 - 5) Hebrews 7:26-28: “For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.”
 - 6) Isaiah 53:9: “And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.”
 - 7) About all other accountable persons, the Bible says: “For all have sinned, and come short of the
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- glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).
- c. “[Who did no sin] Who was in all respects perfectly holy. There is an allusion here to Isa 53:9; and the sense is, that he was entirely innocent, and that he suffered without having committed any crime. In this connection the meaning is, that we are to be careful that, if we suffer, it should be without committing any crime. We should so live, as the Saviour did, as not to deserve to be punished, and thus only shall we entirely follow his example. It is as much our duty to live so as not to deserve the reproaches of others, as it is to bear them with patience when we are called to suffer them. The first thing in regard to hard treatment from others, is so to live that there shall be no just occasion for it; the next is, if reproaches come upon us when we have not deserved them, to bear them as the Saviour did. If he suffered unjustly, we should esteem it to be no strange thing that we should; if he bore the injuries done him with meekness, we should learn that it is possible for us to do it also; and should learn also that we have not the spirit of his religion unless we actually do it...[Neither was guile found in his mouth] There was no deceit, hypocrisy, or insincerity. He was in all respects what he professed to be, and he imposed on no one by any false and unfounded claim. All this has reference to the time when the Saviour was put to death; and the sense is, that though he was condemned as an impostor, yet that the charge was wholly unfounded. As in his whole life before he was perfectly sincere, so he was eminently on that solemn occasion” [Barnes' Notes, *ibid.*].
3. Verse 23: “Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously.”
 - a. He did not revile those who reviled [literally, they kept on reviling] him. False charges were placed against him at his trials; and as he suffered on the cross, some of the most vile and hate-filled statements imaginable were hurled at him.
 - 1) Matthew 26:59-68: “Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?”
 - 2) Matthew 27:39-44: “And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.”
 - 3) His enemies continually reviled him during his ministry; their aim was to destroy his influence, while clinging to their weakening positions before the people. They knew that their prestige and power would suffer to the extent of the success of Jesus.
 - a) Matthew 11:19: “The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her
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children.”

- b) Luke 7:34: “The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!”
 - c) Matthew 12:24-27: “But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges.”
 - d) Luke 23:1-5: “And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King. And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it. Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man. And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.”
 - e) Matthew 26:59-68: “Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?”
- b. When he suffered, he did not threaten his tormentors.
- 1) If our Lord were a mere man, we might expect him to threaten his enemies with eternal destruction in the place prepared for the devil and his angels, but this was not the circumstances in which such a dire warning should be issued. This would have been viewed as a weakness on his part, and perhaps an attempt to coerce them into setting him free. In either case, he would not have been the perfect example for us.
 - 2) Our Lord had given his opponents ample warning during his public teaching, and they had taken no heed to those warnings.
 - a) Matthew 7:21-23: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”
 - b) Matthew 23:13-15: “But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one
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- proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.”
- c) Matthew 23:23-25: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.”
 - d) Matthew 23:27-29: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous.”
 - e) Matthew 23:34-38: “Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.”
 - f) Luke 19:41-44: “And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.”
- 3) His example is our pattern; it is also the practice of the righteous angels: “Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee” (Jude 9). He not only taught his people against retaliation, but he practiced it under the most grievous of circumstances (as noted already).
- a) Matthew 5:44-48: “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”
 - b) Romans 12:17-21: “Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”
- c. Rather, he committed [literally, kept on committing] himself to him who judges righteously.
- 1) He fully knew that God would punish all evildoers in his own way and time. We have seen cases
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- in the Bible and in our own experiences of evil men receiving punishment for their wickedness, even in this life. We are shown in the Bible that there will be a day of reckoning, the Day of Judgment, at the end of time.
- a) Matthew 25:31-33, 46: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left....And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”
 - b) Acts 17:30-31: “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”
 - c) Romans 14:10-12: “But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”
 - d) 2 Corinthians 5:10-11: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.”
 - e) 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10: “Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.”
- 2) “The meaning is, that he committed his cause, his name, his interests, the whole case, to God. The meaning of the phrase ‘that judgeth righteously’ here is, that God would do him exact justice. Though wronged by people, he felt assured that he would do right. He would rescue his name from these reproaches; he would give him the honor in the world which he deserved; and he would bring upon those who had wronged him all that was necessary in order to show his disapprobation of what they had done, and all that would be necessary to give the highest support to the cause of virtue. Compare Luke 23:46 [”And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost”]. This is the example which is set before us when we are wronged. The whole example embraces these points:
- a) “We should see to it that we ourselves are guiltless in the matter for which we are reproached or accused. Before we fancy that we are suffering as Christ did, we should be sure that our lives are such as not to deserve reproach. We cannot indeed hope to be as pure in all things as he was; but we may so live that if we are reproached and reviled we may be certain that it is not for any wrong that we have done to others, or that we do not deserve it from our fellow-men.
 - b) “When we are reproached and reviled, we should feel that we were called to this by our profession; that it was one of the things which we were taught to expect when we became Christians; that it is what the prophets and apostles endured, and what the Master himself suffered in an eminent degree; and that if we meet with the scorn of the great, the frivolous, the rich, the powerful, it is no more than the Saviour did, and no more than we have been
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taught to expect will be our portion. It may be well, too, to remember our unworthiness; and to reflect, that though we have done no wrong to the individual who reviles us yet that we are sinners, and that such reproaches may not be a useless admonisher of our being guilty before God. So David felt when reproached by Shimei: 'So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?' 2 Sam 16:10.

- c) "When this occurs, we should calmly and confidently commit our cause to God. Our name, our character, our influence, our reputation, while living and after we are dead, we should leave entirely with him. We should not seek nor desire revenge. We should not call down the wrath of God on our persecutors and slanderers. We should calmly feel that God will give us the measure of reputation which we ought to have in the world, and that he will suffer no ultimate injustice to be done us. 'Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass; and he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day,' Ps 37:5-6" [Barnes' Notes, *ibid.*].
 - 3) With this knowledge, we can take comfort in the fact that all evil will be punished and righteousness will be rewarded. We rejoice over the blessings promised to the faithful; and we are content to know that evil will be justly punished.
 - 4) It is not our desire to see the punishment of wicked men; we had rather see them repent of their evil and obey the gospel. When we withdraw from a sinful member of the church, we do so with a broken heart; when we see a criminal punished, we are saddened at this tragedy; when we see sinful people persist in their wicked ways, we grieve over what we know awaits them.
 4. Verse 24: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."
 - a. Some momentous truths are brought to our attention in this part of the epistle. We have been taught that Christ's uncomplaining death is our example to imitate, that he suffered unjustly, that he was not guilty of any sin or deceit, that he did not seek retaliation when his enemies falsely accused him and abused him, and that his death was not merely the death of a martyr, but was in our behalf.
 - b. Peter affirms that the death of Christ was the subject of Old Testament prophecy. He cites a statement from Isaiah 53: "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the
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- transgressors” (Isa. 53). No one can comprehend Isaiah 53 except by understanding it to be given in reference to Christ. The Jews of the Old Testament era could not grasp it; the Jews of modern times cannot explain it. That it has reference to Christ is shown by Philip’s use of it in Acts 8:26-40.
- c. Christ did not die for any sin on his part, but he sacrificed himself in our behalf and in our place. This is shown by Peter and by Isaiah 53.
 - 1) Matthew 20:28: “Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”
 - 2) 1 Timothy 2:6: “Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”
 - 3) Hebrews 2:9-10: “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”
 - d. The word “bore” carries the idea of sacrifice. Brother Woods states that the Greek term [*anaphero*] is used in the Septuagint [the Greek translation of the Old Testament] to depict the “bearing up on the altar of the sacrificial victim by the priest” (p.82). Christ was both the sacrificial lamb and the priest offering the sacrifice. “Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation” (Heb. 9:25-28).
 - e. Peter speaks of the cross as “the tree.” The instrument of his crucifixion was constructed from a tree, thus the source of the instrument is spoken of as the instrument. Compare:
 - 1) Deuteronomy 21:23: “His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.” [Moses is here speaking of anyone who is executed by hanging during the Mosaic Age].
 - 2) Acts 5:30: “The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.”
 - 3) Acts 10:39: “And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree.”
 - 4) Galatians 3:13: “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.”
 - 5) Luke 23:26: “And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus.”
 - f. Christ bore our own sins in his own body. That does not mean that he was stained by our guilt; it does mean that he suffered death for us.
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 5:21: “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”
 - 2) John 1:29: “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”
 - 3) 1 John 2:1-3: “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.”
 - 4) Romans 5:6-13: “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.
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For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.”

- g. He bore our sins in his own body on the cross so that we, being dead, should live unto righteousness. The mere fact that Christ died for us does not automatically mean that we are all saved spontaneously by his death, without any obligation being imposed on us.
- 1) This scribe asked a member of the “Watchtower Witnesses” how a sinner is saved. The false teacher replied that Christ’s death on the cross provided salvation to all. He was stunned when he was then asked whether that meant everyone was saved; he could not explain why he was trying to teach his doctrine to others—why should he or any one else do anything if salvation is provided universally and unconditionally.
 - 2) The many conditional statements in the New Testament show that salvation is not automatically given to anyone; the many statements in the Gospel which show that some will be lost deny this notion; indeed, the Lord said that “many” would be lost while “few” would be saved (Matt. 7:13-14; cf. 7:21-28).
 - 3) Salvation is offered only to the obedient who remain faithful to Christ. The following are a few of the pertinent passages:
 - a) Mark 16:15-16: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
 - b) Acts 2:38: “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”
 - c) Romans 10:1-3: “Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”
 - d) Hebrews 5:8-9: “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”
 - e) Matthew 10:22: “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.”
 - f) Revelation 2:10: “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”
 - g) Revelation 22:14: “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”
 - h) Romans 1:16-17: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”
 - 4) Righteousness is the state or condition of being righteous; to be righteous is to keep God’s
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- commands:
- a) Psalms 119:172: “My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.”
 - b) Acts 10:34-35: “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”
 - c) Romans 6:1-6, 16-18: “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin....Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”
 - d) 1 John 3:7: “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.”
- h. We are healed by his stripes.
- 1) “This is taken from Isa 53:5....The word rendered ‘stripes’ *mooloopi* (NT:3468) means, properly, the livid and swollen mark of a blow; the mark designated by us when we use the expression ‘black and blue.’ It is not properly a bloody wound, but that made by pinching, beating, scourging. The idea seems to be that the Saviour was scourged or whipped; and that the effect on us is the same in producing spiritual healing, or in recovering us from our faults, as if we had been scourged ourselves. By faith we see the bruises inflicted on him, the black and blue spots made by beating; we remember that they were on account of our sins, and not for his; and the effect in reclaiming us is the same as if they had been inflicted on us. [Ye were healed] Sin is often spoken of as a disease, and redemption from it as a restoration from a deadly malady” [Barnes' Notes, *ibid.*].
 - 2) The **stripes** the Lord suffered are used to include the entire crucifixion process—the scourging, the crown of thorns, and the crucifixion itself. We are saved by his death, which included the scourging, by which the stripes were inflicted.
 - 3) Salvation from sin is depicted as being healed from a dread disease (that of sin).
 - a) Matthew 13:15: “For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”
 - b) Matthew 9:12: “But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.”
 - 4) Some have the mistaken idea that physical healing is a primary purpose of the Gospel. This misses the real reason for miracles—confirmation of the word of God (Mark 16:15-20; Heb. 2:1-4). The sick who were miraculously healed in the first century were given this benefit, not for his personal good only, but to confirm God's will (cf. Mark 2:1-12). There were several in the New Testament who were ill but received no miraculous healing.
 - a) 1 Timothy 5:23: “Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.”
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- b) 2 Corinthians 12:7: “And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.”
 - c) 2 Timothy 4:20: “Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.”
 - d) Philippians 2:25-27: “Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.”
- 5) The healing vouchsafed by the Gospel is for the soul—salvation.
5. Verse 25: “For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”
- a. Our condition was desperate. We were lost in sin; there was no means of salvation; but Christ died making it possible that we could receive forgiveness of sins and hope of eternal life.
 - b. Our lost condition is pictured as straying sheep, which are separated from the shepherd and having no access to the safety of the sheepfold. But Christ has made it possible for us to return to him, the Shepherd and Bishop (Overseer) of our souls.
 - c. “The Lord is presented here under two aspects: (1) he is a shepherd, in that he feeds, guides, and protects his sheep; (2) he is a bishop (overseer) because he superintends, supervises, and directs their activity. Those whose duty it is to direct the affairs of the churches are undershepherds in feeding, guiding, and directing the work of the church; and they are bishops in overseeing, under Christ, the work committed into their hands. (Eph. 4:11; Acts 20:28.) The author of this epistle was an elder (1 Pet. 5:1), and Christ is presented as the ‘chief shepherd’ (1 Pet. 5:40). There is perhaps significance in the fact that attention is drawn to Christ as shepherd and bishop of souls. Though these to whom Peter primarily wrote were in bondage in the flesh, their souls, their higher nature was free and answerable only to the Great Shepherd” (Woods, p.85).
6. The death of Christ was not a last-minute substitution as the millennialists falsely claim; it was planned from eternity and predicted in Old Testament prophecies; it was also foretold by the Lord himself. If the millennial theory is true, then the crucifixion of Christ was not in God's original plan. The theory alleges that if God's original plan had met with Jewish approval, Jesus would have established an earthly kingdom, and would not have been required to go to the cross.
- a. If it can be shown that God intended for his Son to die for the sins of the world, millennialism will have been exposed as human error.
 - 1) Revelation 13:8 speaks of the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." It appears definite from this passage that God intended, from the beginning of the world, for Christ to be slain.
 - 2) All of the Old Testament animal sacrifices prefigured the ultimate sacrifice—the sacrifice of the Lamb of God (Christ). Each of these Old Testament sacrifices would have been meaningless without the sacrifice of God's Son.
 - 3) Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins (Heb. 9:22). But the blood of animals cannot take away sin (Heb. 10:1-4). Only the blood of Christ has the power to remove the guilt of sin (1 Pet. 1:18-19; Rev. 1:7; Heb. 10:16-19; Matt. 26:28; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:13-14). If Christ had not died, there would be no available means for the salvation of our souls! God intended to offer salvation to men.
 - b. Isaiah 53 predicted the death of Christ. The Jews were unable to identify the "man of sorrows" of this passage. Their conception of the Messiah precluded believing it was he. The man of Ethiopia, a Jew by religion, if not also by race, did not understand Isaiah 53. He asked Philip, the evangelist, "I pray
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thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" (Acts 8:28-34). Philip "began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus" (Acts 8:35).

- 1) Philip taught the Ethiopian that Isaiah 53 was in reference to Jesus Christ! Isaiah did his work more than 700 years before the coming of Christ. He showed that Christ would die for the sins of the world.
 - 2) Since Isaiah showed beforehand that Christ was to die, his crucifixion was not an unintended, unexpected, and spontaneous event!
- c. Jesus himself taught that he came into the world to die (John 3:14-17; 8:28; 12:32-33; Luke 19:10; cf. 1 Tim. 1:15). How did he save sinners? By means of the gospel (Rom. 1:16-17). What is the gospel? It is that God-given message containing facts to be believed, commands to be obeyed, promises to be enjoyed, and warnings to be heeded. Its basic facts are: the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-4). Thus, sinners are saved by the gospel. The heart of the gospel are the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; Christ came into the world to save sinners by the gospel; therefore, Christ came into the world to die on the cross, to be buried, and to rise from the dead on the third day.
- 1) Luke 19:10: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."
 - 2) John 3:14-17: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."
 - 3) John 8:28: "Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am *he*, and *that* I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things."
 - 4) John 12:32-33: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die."
 - 5) 1 Timothy 1:15: "This *is* a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."
- d. The death of Jesus was mandated from the beginning of the world. Beginning in Genesis 3:15, God gave to man a long series of promises that ultimately would be fulfilled in the crucifixion of Christ. His death lay at the heart of God's eternal plan. It was planned for and prophesied of for hundreds and even thousands of years before his coming. But if the millennial theory is correct, Christ's death was a mere accident, unplanned and unintended. But the theory is false!
- e. Millennialism denies that the gospel is the culmination of God's purpose and plan. If the millennial assertions are correct, God intended to establish an earthly kingdom, and have Christ sitting on David's throne and ruling the world from Jerusalem. The gospel, according to the theory, was not in the original plan, but when the Jews rejected Jesus as king, the gospel system was given in lieu of the kingdom.
- 1) But the gospel was promised beforehand by the prophets, therefore was not a last-minute substitution. "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God. (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures)" (Rom. 1:1-2).
 - 2) God knew that Christ would die and the gospel system would be inaugurated—he knew it because he had planned it that way!
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I PETER 3

A. 1 Peter 3:1-6: Duty of Christian Wives to Their Husbands.

1. Verse 1: “Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives.”
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) “In like manner, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, even if any obey not the word, they may without the word be gained by the behavior of their wives” (ASV).
 - 2) “Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives” (NKJ).
 - 3) “Likewise, wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that if any of them are disobedient to the word they may, without a word, be won by the manner of life of the wives” (English Study Bible).
 - b. Each Christian bears obligations in his many relationships in this world. Each has responsibilities toward civil authority; those who work outside the home, have duties toward their employer; those who are in charge of employees, have obligations toward those workers; in the slave society of ancient Rome, masters and slaves bore obligations toward each other. And in the home, there are certain obligations borne by the members of the family toward each other. “The rich and poor meet together: the LORD is the maker of them all” (Prov. 22:2). The rich man needs the poor man to do the work that must be done; the poor man needs the rich man for the job he needs to provide for his family.
 - c. In this passage, the duties of the wife to her husband are addressed. This verse connects back to chapter 2 and verse 18, where the apostle had given admonitions to servants to be submissive to their masters. In like manner, Christian wives are to be submissive to their own husbands. The role of women was greatly exalted by the Gospel, as we may see by examining historical evidence about the way they were treated under paganism.
 - 1) The following information pertains to the time of Augustus, the emperor of Rome when our Lord was born:
 - a) “A large number of native-stock Romans avoided wedlock altogether, preferring prostitutes or concubines even to a varied succession of wives....Augustus was disturbed by these insignia of civilization....It was not good, he felt, for the present to break too sharply with the past; a nation must have a continuity of traditions to be sane, as a man must have memory....
 - b) “By his powers as censor and tribune Augustus promulgated—or passed through the Assembly—a series of laws of now uncertain date and sequence, aimed at restoring morals, marriage, fidelity, parentage, and a simpler life....The most important of these ‘Julian laws’ was the... ‘law of chastity and repressing adultery. Here for the first time in Roman history marriage was brought under the protection of the state, instead of being left to the *patria potestas*.
 - c) “The father retained the right to kill an adulterous daughter and her accomplice as soon as he discovered them; the husband was allowed to kill his wife’s paramour if caught in the husband’s house, but he might kill his wife only if he found her sinning in his own home. Within sixty days of detecting a wife’s adultery, the husband was required to bring her before the court; if he failed to do this, the woman’s father was required to indict her; if he too failed, any citizen might accuse her.
 - d) “The adulterous woman was to be banished for life, was to lose a third of her fortune and half her dowry, and must not marry again. Like penalties were decreed for a husband conniving at his wife’s adultery. A wife, however, could not accuse her husband of adultery, and he might with legal impunity have relations with registered prostitutes. The law applied only to Roman

Citizens” (Will Durant, *Caesar and Christ*, pp.222f).

- 2) Centuries earlier, in ancient Sparta, the condition regarding women was harsh and uncouth: “Marriages were usually arranged by the parents, without purchase; but after this agreement the bridegroom was expected to carry off the bride by force, and she was expected to resist; the word for marriage was *harpadzein*, to seize. If such arrangements left some adults still unmarried, several men might be pushed into a dark room with an equal number of girls, and be left to pick their life mates in the darkness; the Spartans thought that such choosing would not be blinder than love. It was usual for the bride to stay with her parents for a while; the bridegroom remained in his barracks, and visited his wife only clandestinely; ‘in this relation’ says Plutarch, ‘they lived a long time, insomuch that they sometimes had children by their wives even before they saw their faces by daylight” (Will Durant, *The Life of Greece*, p.84).
- 3) Through the years, Islam has placed severe limitations on women, sometimes having extremely harsh things to say about them. The following quotes are from Will Durant’s *The Age of Faith*.
 - a) “The Arabs had always feared, as well as admired, woman’s charms, and had revenged themselves for instinctive subjection to them by the usual male doubts about her virtue and intelligence. ‘Consult women,’ said Omar I, ‘and do the contrary of what they advise” (p.220).
 - b) “The Moslem husband knew the passionate temper of the Oriental, felt a need to protect his women, and saw no escape from their adultery except through their incarceration. It became reprehensible for women to walk in the streets except for short distances and veiled; they could visit one another, but usually they traveled in curtained litters; and they were never to be seen abroad at night. They were separated from the men in the mosque by a screen or railing or gallery; finally they were excluded altogether...” (p.221).
 - c) “Rarely, except in the lower classes, did the women sit at table with their husbands. It was unlawful for a Moslem to see the face of any woman except his wives, slaves, and near relatives. A physician was allowed to see only the afflicted part of a woman patient. The man found the system very convenient; it gave him at home a maximum of opportunity, and outside the home full freedom from surveillance or surprise” (pp.221).
- 4) “The lot of women in non-Greek countries, particularly before the influence of the gospel began to be felt, was a deplorable one. Aristotle writes that among the barbarians (non-Greeks) women and slaves held the same rank; and though among the Greeks her position was not quite so degraded, they considered her as holding only an intermediate position between free persons and slaves, mother of her children, but not worthy to educate them, qualified to receive orders, but never to give them. As the influence of Christianity began to exercise itself such barbarous ideas were destined to fail; slavery was to perish, and women to be elevated to their proper place in society; it was essential to the well-being of the cause which was to produce such effects, however, that these changes should be gradual and not violent; produced by instruction and not by revolution” (Woods, p.86).
- d. The New Testament requires that the wife be in subjection to her own husband; and the husband is required to love his wife as he loves himself.
 - 1) Ephesians 5:22-25: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it."
 - 2) Ephesians 5:31: "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh."
 - 3) Ephesians 5:33: "Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself;

- and the wife *see* that she reverence *her* husband."
- 4) Colossians 3:18: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord."
 - e. The Bible gives women a subordinate role to men. This is not due to any insufficiency on their part; it is the way God ordered it. Men and women are equal in value and in the blessings they are given in Christ:
 - 1) Galatians 3:28-29: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."
 - 2) Genesis 1:26-28: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that loveth upon the earth."
 - 3) Genesis 2:18: "And the LORD God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him."
 - 4) 1 Corinthians 11:3: "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman *is* the man; and the head of Christ *is* God."
 - 5) 1 Corinthians 11:8-9: "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man."
 - f. God never intended for women to be mere property; he gave them safeguards in the Old Testament.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 21:15-17: "If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have born him children, *both* the beloved and the hated; and *if* the firstborn son be hers that was hated: Then it shall be, when he maketh his sons to inherit *that* which he hath, *that* he may not make the son of the beloved firstborn before the son of the hated, *which is indeed* the firstborn: But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated *for* the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he *is* the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn *is* his."
 - 2) Deuteronomy 24:1-4: "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give *it* in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's *wife*. And *if* the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth *it* in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her *to be* his wife; Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that *is* abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee *for* an inheritance."
 - 3) Matthew 19:3-9: "The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry
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- another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery."
- 4) The New Testament requires that the wife be in subjection to her own husband; and the husband is required to love his wife as he loves himself. A woman is out of order when she tries to change God's plan; so is the man. In the home, God has ordained that the man have the authority, that the wife and children are to be under his jurisdiction. God has ordained that men have the authority in the church. There is no authority for women preachers, women elders, women deacons, women song leaders, etc.
 - g. The believing wife will naturally try to win her husband to Christianity. If she has made diligent effort to that end without success, good judgment dictates that she avoid badgering him—that would have the opposite effect. The picture the Greek gives in the phrase, “obey not the word,” suggests the idea of willful disobedience. To pressure such a person to obey the gospel would likely drive him further from the truth.
 - h. But because the husband has so far refused to obey the gospel, there is still hope. He may still be won without formal teaching. There is no article before the second usage of “word” [Greek does not have an indefinite article—”a” or “an”]. Peter is not saying that if the husband will not obey the word, he can be won to Christ without the word; such would be impossible, for the gospel is the power God uses in saving souls (Rom. 1:16). Peter is saying, if the husband will not obey the word, he may be won to the Lord without a word being spoken—by the faithful life of the saintly wife. Her godly manner of life can break down the husband’s stubbornness, and he may obey the gospel when he sees her chaste behavior.
 - i. “[By the conversation of the wives] By the conduct or deportment of their wives....The word conversation, in the Scriptures, is never confined, as it is now with us, to oral discourse, but denotes conduct in general. It includes indeed ‘conversation’ as the word is now used, but it embraces also much more—including everything that we do. The meaning here is, that the habitual deportment of the wife was to be such as to show the reality and power of religion; to show that it had such influence on her temper, her words, her whole deportment, as to demonstrate that it was from God” [Barnes' Notes, *ibid.*].
 2. Verse 2: “While they behold your chaste conversation *coupled* with fear.”
 - a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: “Beholding your chaste behavior coupled with fear.”
 - 2) NKJ: “When they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.”
 - b. Chaste conduct and reverential awe for the Almighty are a robust combination! The worldly-minded may not be highly impressed, but Heaven is. She is to have respect for her husband also—respect for his person and his authority.
 - c. “From Clement of Alexandria, born about the middle of the second century, comes this excellent comment: ‘The wise woman, then, will first choose to persuade her husband to be her associate in what is conducive to happiness. And should that be found impractical, let her by herself earnestly aim at virtue, gaining her husband’s consent in everything, so as never to do anything against his will, with exception of what is reckoned as contributing to virtue and salvation.’” (*Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol 2, page 432)” (Woods, p.88).
 - d. See the article at the end of the chapter which was written by Hugo McCord, and appears on his website [www.christian-articles.org]. The cases he cites illustrate the enormous power of a godly wife’s influence.
 3. Verses 3-4: “Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”
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- a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: “Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”
 - 2) NKJ: “Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.”
- b. One aspect of her chaste behavior coupled with reverence is seen in the way she dresses. The emphasis she places will be on her spiritual beauty. She will adorn her inner self (her soul) with a meek and quiet spirit, which is of great value to God.
 - 1) A meek spirit is one that is untainted by pride, envy, and selfishness; it is a spirit that is under the guiding hand of God, who rules through his inspired word. The wife’s desire will be to happily be under the direction of God and be also submissive to her husband. “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord” (Col. 3:18).
 - 2) A quiet spirit is one that is characterized by calmness, tranquility, and peace. This godly disposition on the part of Christians in that ancient day as they faced persecution greatly impressed unbelievers, and thus influenced many to obey the gospel. Such is the purpose for which it is stated in the text—to win the unbelieving husband to the Lord.
 - 3) Possessing a meek and quiet spirit is greatly prized by the Lord. Mary used an ointment of *great* price to anoint the Lord’s body in anticipation of his burial (Mark 14:3). God’s values and man’s values are often at variance:
 - a) Isaiah 55:8-9: “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”
 - b) 1 Peter 2:4-7: “To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner.”
 - c) 1 Corinthians 1:18-21: “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”
 - 4) There is nothing more beautiful than a good Christian life; there is nothing finer than a godly Christian woman. Our conduct is a revelation of our heart.
 - a) Matthew 12:34-35: “O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.”
 - b) Matthew 15:18-19: “But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.”

- c. Some have taken this passage in a strictly literal sense, and see it as forbidding any kind or degree of ornamentation of the body. If it is the case that the Bible here forbids a woman to plait her hair or to wear gold, then it would also forbid her to wear clothing; what proves too much, proves nothing! The apostle is giving instructions; he is not to be understood as strictly prohibiting any and all uses of the items indicated.
- 1) Peter's statement is parallel in form to the Lord's statement in John 6:27: "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed." Christ is not saying that we must not work for our food; he is saying that the greater emphasis is to be on spiritual nourishment.
 - 2) 1 Timothy 2:9: "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array."
- d. The point the apostle makes is that a godly wife will not emphasize outward adornment of the body, but the inward adorning of the spirit. The means by which she can win her husband to the Lord is not by worldly adornment, but by the adornment of her spirit by cultivating and practicing the spiritual qualities of the gospel. Worldly-minded women seek to impress men by their physical appearance and appeal; a Christian lady seeks to influence others by her spiritual attainments.
- e. Historians of that ancient time wrote of the practice of some women going to great effort in braiding and plaiting their hair, often weaving into it strands of gold and chains of pearls, which gave an appearance of elegance and splendor. "Clement of Alexandria says that many women of his time dared not touch their heads for fear of disarranging their hair, and that they regarded sleep with terror lest during it they should destroy their waves. It is such vanity as this that the apostle condemns. Forbidden is any lavish display of artificial adornments and all gaudiness contributing to the vanity of those participating. Christians, whether men or women, should array themselves in modest and unassuming garments, befitting their station in life, and the cause which they have espoused" (Woods, p.89).
- f. "Of plaiting (*emplokhv*). Only here in New Testament. Compare 1 Timothy ii. 9. The Roman women of the day were addicted to ridiculous extravagance in the adornment of the hair. Juvenal ('Satire,' vi.) satirizes these customs. He says: 'The attendants will vote on the dressing of the hair as if a question of reputation or of life were at stake, so great is the trouble she takes in quest of beauty; with so many tiers does she load, with so many continuous stories does she build up on high her head. She is tall as Andromache in front, behind she is shorter. You would think her another person.' The hair was dyed, and secured with costly pins and with nets of gold thread. False hair and blond wigs were worn. Putting on (*ενδυσσεως*). Only here in New Testament. Female extravagance in dress in the days of the empire reached an alarming pitch" (M.R. Vincent, *Word Studies*, Seeking the Old Paths Website).
2. Verses 5-6: "For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement."
- a. ASV: "For after this manner aforetime the holy women also, who hoped in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose children ye now are, if ye do well, and are not put in fear by any terror."
 - b. Peter uses some great ladies from the Old Testament era as godly examples for these Christian women to imitate. The specific person he identifies is Sarah, the beloved wife of Abraham. Sarah and the other unnamed ladies trusted in God—they placed their hope in God, trusting him to fulfill their earnest desires and grant them the fruition of his promises. Notice that the praise heaped upon them by the apostle was not on account of their outward adornment, but of their inner spiritual beauty. They demonstrated their inward loveliness by their godly lives.
 - c. "Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" (Gen. 18:12). Perhaps this passage was the background for Peter's remark. Sarah
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spoke of Abraham as her “lord.” She understood that he was the one who bore primary authority in their family. This did not mean she had to “bow and scrape” before him, or tremble when he entered the room. She did respect his God-given position, living in sub-mission to him. Other great ladies of the Old Testament include Deborah, Naomi, Ruth, and Abigail.

- d. Peter describes the godly women he addressed as the children of Abraham [and Sarah]—if they followed that righteous lady’s example. “By adorning themselves as Sarah did they became daughters of her to the extent that a child is like its parent” (Woods, p.91).
 - 1) Galatians 3:7: “Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.”
 - 2) Galatians 3:27-29: “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”
 - 3) Romans 4:11: “And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also.”
- e. “The word lord has the elementary idea of ruling, and this is the sense here—that she acknowledged that he had a right to direct the affairs of his household, and that it was her duty to be in subjection to him as the head of the family....Among the Romans, it was quite common for wives to use the appellation lord, (*dominus*), when speaking of their husbands. The same custom also prevailed among the Greeks....This passage does not prove that the term lord should be the particular appellation by which Christian wives should address their husbands now, but it proves that there should be the same respect and deference which was implied by its use in patriarchal times. The welfare of society, and the happiness of individuals, are not diminished by showing proper respect for all classes of persons in the various relations of life” [Barnes, *ibid.*].
- f. The apostle lists two conditions which must be met before these Christians ladies could properly be called the children of Abraham [and Sarah]: They were to do well and not be put in any terror.
 - 1) To do well is be a faithful child of God and a loyal wife to the husband. The former includes the latter—if a wife is faithful to God, she will be a faithful wife. A Christian wife married to an unbelieving husband is still required to be obedient to God and faithfully discharge her duties to her husband.
 - 2) It appears that Peter has in mind, in the second condition, the case in which the Christian wife is maltreated by her unbelieving husband. Her first obligation is to God, despite the opposition this might incite in her husband. If the husband in such a case tried to coerce her to forsake the Lord, she was not to be intimidated—she was not to be so terrified of him that, to protect herself, she would turn from her Lord. [Notice again the cases listed earlier by brother McCord].

B. 1 Peter 3:7: Instructions to Christian Husbands.

1. Verse 7: “Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.”
 - a. Other translations:
 - 1) ASV: “Ye husbands, in like manner, dwell with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor unto the woman, as unto the weaker vessel, as being also joint-heirs of the grace of life; to the end that your prayers be not hindered.”
 - 2) NKJ: “Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be
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hindered.”

2. There are also responsibilities and restrictions imposed on the husband. The husband is told to “dwell” with their wives in keeping with knowledge. The word *dwell* has reference to the home life of a man and his wife—it denotes the entirety of their marriage and home. Their life together is not to be a thoughtless or aimless existence, but one that is based on knowledge. They both understand their respective roles in the marriage; they learn what their duties and restrictions are. The husband knows his wife’s emotional and physical needs. He not only knows these matters—he is not indifferent toward them. Many marriages fail because of the husband’s ignorance and indifference.
 3. The husband is directed to give honor unto the wife. The Greek word translated “honor” in this verse, is rendered “precious” in 1 Peter 1:19. Because a man values his wife as precious, he happily bestows honor upon her. “It was an important advance made in society when the Christian religion gave such a direction as this, for everywhere among the pagan, and under all false systems of religion, woman has been regarded as worthy of little honor or respect. She has been considered as a slave, or as a mere instrument to gratify the passions of man. It is one of the elementary doctrines of Christianity, however, that woman is to be treated with respect; and one of the first and most marked effects of religion on society is to elevate the wife to a condition in which she will be worthy of esteem” [Barnes, *ibid.*].
 - a. The wife is spoken of as the “weaker vessel.” A woman is physically weaker than a man—this is the obvious and usual rule. There is no reason to think that a woman is weaker than a man in moral or intellectual realms. Abigail was far superior to her husband Nabal in all areas, except in physical strength (1 Sam. 25).
 - b. Generally, women are more spiritually-inclined than men. Many men think it is somehow beneath their dignity to humbly submit to the will of God. Also, men associate with worldlings in their work and are frequently contaminated by them. Women, at least in previous generations, worked at home, tending to the children and affairs of the house, and were insulated against much of the sin that is found outside the home. A negative aspect of women in the workplace is the possible tainting influences that abound in many work environments.
 - c. Women are not bettering themselves when they take up foul language, exhibit a tough disposition, or otherwise lose the tenderness with which they are naturally blessed. The husband, seeing her as the weaker vessel [instrument], is to treat the wife with kindness and tenderness, and not with harshness.
 - d. A tragic event occurred in March, 2005 in Atlanta. A 51-year-old woman, small in stature, was guarding a strong young man who was about to be tried for a felony. He easily over-powered this grandmother, shot her, and proceeded to kill three people at the courthouse and another man later in the day. It is obvious that the little deputy was not physically able to do the job she was charged with doing. Our politically-correct society permitted this calamity by ignoring the physical differences between men and women.
 - e. By speaking of the woman as the weaker vessel, Peter does not discriminate against women; he merely recognizes the difference in physical strength between men and women. Wives are to be accorded the honor that is due them; they are to be deemed precious in the eyes of the husband. The Bible exalts the lot of women. If the Bible were followed by more husbands and wives, society would be far superior to its degraded state of today.
 4. Since the wife is spoken of as the weaker vessel, Peter implies that the husband is also a vessel [an instrument in God’s hands]. The man has work to do in the Lord’s kingdom; the woman has a work to do in the Lord’s kingdom. They are both serving the same Lord; they are both heirs of “the grace of life.” The grace of life is the grace that provides—the gospel. The wife is to view her husband in this light; the husband is to see his wife in this light. They are both bound for heaven if they are faithful. Each is to encourage the other in their quest for heaven.
 - a. John 17:3: “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ,
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whom thou hast sent.”

- b. Mark 10:30: “But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.”
 - c. Galatians 3:28-29: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”
 - d. Mark 16:15-16: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
 - e. Matthew 22:30: “For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.”
5. Peter states one of the purposes of his admonition: “So that your prayers will not be hindered.” To “hinder” is to “interrupt, short-circuit, to interfere with.” He implies that if the husband does not live up to his obligations, his prayers will be hindered; and the wife’s prayers will be hindered if she does not fulfill her obligations. Trouble in the home between husband and wife, or an improper attitude toward each other, can interfere with their relationship with God. Having God’s approval includes a proper relationship with other people. If the husband’s (or wife’s) life is not right, his prayers will be short-circuited—they will not be received in heaven.
- a. Psalms 66:18: “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.”
 - b. Proverbs 28:9: “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.”
 - c. John 9:31: “Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.”

C. 1 Peter 3:8-12: Duties of Christians to Each Other.

1. Verse 8: “Finally, *be ye* all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, *be* pitiful, *be* courteous.” [Having finished with the subject matter of the previous verses, the apostle now turns to another set of instructions of equal importance. Preceding the present admonitions, Peter had instructed servants, wives, and husbands; now he addresses Christians in general. This verse contains only five words (excluding “finally”) in the Greek text].
 - a. **Be ye all of one mind.**
 - 1) Unity is important in all that we do. An automobile is of little use unless all the parts and components function harmoniously. In cases of certain illnesses, the human body cannot work as a unit. An orchestra must have near perfect unity if the music they play is to be pleasant to the audience. The same is true with a sports team and a family. The same is likewise true of a local congregation of the Lord’s people.
 - 2) Unity is paramount if the church is to function effectively.
 - a) Amos 3:3: "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"
 - b) 1 Corinthians 1:10: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."
 - 3) Unity religion can be a reality:
 - a) Acts 4:32: "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any *of them* that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common." [Our brethren who comprised the church at Jerusalem had unity at this point in their history; since they had it, we can have it].
 - b) John 17:20,21: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me
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through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." [Our Lord would not have prayed for something that was impossible or undesirable].

- 4) To be "all of one mind" ["likeminded"—ASV] is to have unity of mind and purpose, to be in agreement in all the major details of the Christian life (cf. Woods, p.93). Each book in the New Testament enjoins unity:
 - a) Matthew 12:25: "And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand."
 - b) Mark 10:35-45: "And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire. And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you? They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized: But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared. And when the ten heard it, they began to be much displeased with James and John. But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." [James and John's desire for greatness caused friction among the apostles and displeased the Lord].
 - c) Luke 11:17: "But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth."
 - d) John 17:20-21: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."
 - e) Acts 2:42: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." See also Acts 4:32.
 - f) Romans 16:17-18: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." [We are told to mark and avoid those who cause division and teach false doctrine].
 - g) 1 Corinthians 1:10: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."
 - h) 2 Corinthians 13:11: "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."
 - i) Galatians 5:19-21: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, var-iance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."
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- j) Ephesians 4:1-4: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling."
 - k) Philippians 2:2: "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Also, "Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing" (Phil. 3:16).
 - l) Colossians 3:8: "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth." And, "But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons" (Col. 3:25).
 - m) 1 Thessalonians 5:13: "And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves."
 - n) 2 Thessalonians 3:16: "Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all."
 - o) 1 Timothy 1:4: "Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do." Also, "He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings" (1 Tim. 6:4).
 - p) 2 Timothy 2:14: "Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers."
 - q) Titus 3:2,9: "To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men....But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain."
 - r) Philemon 1:16: "Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?"
 - s) Hebrews 12:14: "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."
 - t) James 4:1: "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" And, "Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door" (Jas. 5:9).
 - u) 1 Peter 3:8: "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous."
 - v) 2 Peter 3:14: "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."
 - w) 1 John 4:7: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."
 - x) 2 John 1:5,9: "And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another....Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son."
 - y) 3 John 1:9-10: "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the pre-eminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church."
 - z) The whole book of Jude condemns those that would cause division by false teaching.
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Revelation 2-3 includes the letters to the seven congregations of the province of Asia; these epistles condemn those who hold false doctrine and trouble the churches.

b. Having compassion one of another.

- 1) Vine give this definition of the Greek term: "to suffer with another (*sun*, 'with,' *pascho*, 'to suffer'), to be affected similarly" (Eng., "sympathy"), to have "compassion" upon, Heb 10:34, of "compassionating" those in prison, is translated "be touched with" in Heb 4:15, of Christ as the High Priest" [Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (c)1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers].
- 2) The love of God does not dwell in those who lack compassion: "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels *of compassion* from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 John 3:17).
- 3) Jesus is the perfect example of compassion: "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Matt. 9:36).
- 4) The Hebrew Christians were compassionate. "For ye had compassion of me in my bonds, and took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance" (Heb. 10:34).
- 5) Compassion opens many doors and brings *life and good days*.

c. Love as brethren.

- 1) There is a natural love that exists between brothers and sisters in a family. They share the same parents and live in the same place, in the average case. [America of today is not the way family life was intended to be; divorce, immorality, and rebellion against God have rent families apart]. In the Lord's church, Christians are all children of God; they share the same parentage; there is a desire on the part of each faithful one to love his fellow saints.
- 2) It is possible for one to have insincere love, but we must avoid it!
 - a) Hebrews 13:1: "Let brotherly love continue."
 - b) Romans 12:9,10: "*Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.*" [*Dissimulation* describes something that is "feigned, pretended, hypocritical."

d. Be pitiful.

- 1) To be pitiful is to be "sympathetic, full of pity, tender-hearted, have a soft heart."
 - a) Romans 12:15: "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."
 - b) Ephesians 4:32: "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."
- 2) Each should strive to have a Biblical *soft heart*. The term is translated "tenderhearted" in Ephesians 4:32. This characteristic is an attitude which manifests itself in pity and affection. This is a trait of the new man; it is the opposite which the old man of sin had. One cannot be harsh, unfeeling, or indifferent toward others and be a faithful child of God.

e. Be courteous.

- 1) Vine gives this definition: "friendly," or, more fully, "with friendly thoughtfulness" (*philos*, "friend," *phren*, "the mind"), is found in Acts 28:7, of the hospitality showed by Publius to Paul and his fellow-shipwrecked travelers" [Vine, *ibid.*].
 - 2) To be courteous is to have a "kind and friendly mind." "Julius courteously entreated Paul" (Acts 27:3). This is the opposite of arrogance and pride. We are not allowed to think of ourselves more highly than is seemly.
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- a) Romans 12:3: "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." [Note: The caution is that we ought not to think *too* highly of ourselves; a measure of self-confidence is essential if we are to be useful to the Lord].
 - b) Matthew 5:3: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
 - c) Proverbs 16:18: "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."
 - d) Proverbs 8:13: "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogance, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate."
 - e) Acts 12:21-23: "And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost." [Herod acted with a haughty heart, and brought upon himself the punishment of God].
 - f) Acts 28:7: "In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously." [Publius "*courteously*" lodged Paul and others three days].
- 3) Christians should personify kindness, humaneness, and courtesy.
2. Verse 9: "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing."
- a. **Not rendering evil for evil.**
 - 1) Real Christians do not try to "get even." His unbelieving enemies reviled the Lord as he suffered on the cross, but he prayed: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).
 - 2) Christians are not to injure, do evil to, or harm even those who are wicked.
 - 3) Those who render evil for evil operate by the standard of Satan's world.
 - b. **Not rendering railing for railing.**
 - 1) To rail is to slander or to speak reproachfully against another.
 - 2) Faithful Christians are not allowed to fellowship railers (and other sinners). "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat" (1 Cor. 5:11).
 - 3) Jesus was vilified on the cross.
 - a) Mark 15:29: "And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days."
 - b) Luke 23:39: "And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us."
 - 4) Angels refused to rail against the wicked.
 - a) 2 Peter 2:10,11: "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous *are they*, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord."
 - b) Jude 1:9: "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee."
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c. **But contrariwise blessing.**

- 1) To bring a blessing to others is to speak well toward them, to use commending words. Christians are to seek to build up, not tear down. Jesus used proper words and actions under duress. Paul used proper words and actions under duress.
 - a) Romans 12:17-21: "Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."
 - b) 1 Peter 2:21-23: "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed *himself* to him that judgeth righteously."
- 2) "There is nothing which is better suited to cause our hearts to overflow with benignity, to make us ready to forgive all others when they injure us, than the hope of salvation. Cherishing such a hope ourselves, we cannot but wish that all others may share it, and this will lead us to wish for them every blessing. A man who has a hope of heaven should abound in every virtue. and show that he is a sincere well-wisher of the race. Why should one who expects soon to be in heaven harbor malice in his bosom? Why should he wish to injure a fellow-worm? How can he?" [Barnes, *ibid.*].
3. Verses 10-11: "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it."
 - a. There has never been a more affluent society than that of modern America. There has never been a time when people had more to live with than now. But many get little or no satisfaction out of life; many are looking for thrills, many try to escape from reality through drugs; thousands commit suicide yearly; even some Christians are not contented.
 - 1) John 10:10: "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."
 - 2) Philippians 4:6-19: "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you. But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God. But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in

glory by Christ Jesus.”

- b. Peter says that if we want to live life and see good days, to live life to its fullest and richest extent, we must follow the exhortations he gives in this context.
- c. **Refrain his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile.**
 - 1) Peter quotes from Psalm 34:12-16. Righteous speaking is necessary if we are to have a good life; to speak righteously we must refrain [to cease] from using our lips from speaking guile [deceitful words]. Guile is deceitfulness, trickery, underhandedness, craftiness, and subtlety. "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and **all guile**, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings" (1 Pet. 2:1). Christ described Nathaniel as “an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!” (John 1:47).
 - 2) We must not speak slander: “He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool” (Prov. 10:18).
 - 3) We must refrain from backbiting: “LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour” (Ps. 15:1-3).
 - 4) We must avoid railing:
 - a) “He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings” (1 Tim. 6:4; cf. 1 Pet. 3:9).
 - b) 1 Peter 3:9,11: "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing....Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it."
 - 5) Lying must not contaminate our lips: “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another” (Eph. 4:25).
 - 6) We must not speak deceitful words:
 - a) Psalms 10:7: “His mouth is full of cursing and deceit and fraud: under his tongue is mischief and vanity.”
 - b) Psalms 120:2: “Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.”
 - 7) We must refrain from speaking filthy language: “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers” (Eph. 4:29).
 - 8) Vile jokes must be excluded from our speech: “Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.”
 - 9) Christians must be honest and pure in heart and life to please God. Each individual is charged with the responsibility of controlling his own tongue. One who does not bridle his tongue is vain in his religion (Jas. 1:26). A tongue is capable of being deadly (Jas. 3:1-12). To keep the tongue, he must first keep the heart.
 - a) Proverbs 4:23: “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”
 - b) Matthew 12:33-34: “Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.”
- d. **Let him eschew evil.**
 - 1) To eschew something is to shun, avoid, and have nothing to do with it.
 - a) Psalms 1:1: "Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."

- b) 1 Corinthians 15:33: "Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits" (NKJV).
- 2) We must eschew evil [and then we can do good]. A Christian must shun, avoid, turn aside from, all appearances of evil (1 Thess. 5:22).
- e. **And do good.**
- 1) Jesus did that which was good: "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him" (Acts 10:38).
- 2) We are to overcome evil with good.
- a) John 5:28,29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
- b) Romans 12:21: "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."
- c) Paul lists some good works: "Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work" (1 Tim. 5:10).
- f. **Let us seek peace, and ensue it.**
- 1) "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18). However, we are not to have peace "at any price."
- 2) Christ taught that some of his disciples would have enemies even in their own families (Matt. 10:34-39). Neither he nor his apostles would compromise the truth in order to have peace with their enemies (See Acts 4:13-20).
- 3) In our sin-filled world, trouble is easy to find. In the words of the apostle, we must seek peace—it must be sought for and effort must be expended to maintain it. A state of happiness is promised to the peacemakers (Matt. 5:9).
4. Verse 12: "For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord *is* against them that do evil."
- a. **The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous.**
- 1) The Lord looks with favor over the righteous; he approves of their conduct. The righteous will be awarded life eternal (Matt. 25:46), while the unrighteous will be assigned to eternity in hell (Matt. 25:46). Being righteous enables us to pray with assurance of being heard. "Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas. 5:16).
- 2) Because Lot was righteous (2 Pet. 2:8), he was able to escape the destruction that came upon the wicked people of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19).
- 3) Right living will bring life and good days. It is the only kind of living the Lord approves. We live righteously by obeying the Lord's will.
- a) Psalms 119:172: "My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness."
- b) Acts 10:34-35: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."
- c) Romans 10:1-3: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."
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d) 1 John 3:7: “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.”

b. His ears are open unto their prayers.

- 1) This is given as a reason for following the preceding admonitions. Do we want the Lord to hear our prayers? We have a promise of obtaining a hearing before God for our prayers only if we live in harmony with the foregoing. Remember, that Peter’s remarks are directed to members of the Lord’s church. [See the outline at the end of this chapter for a study of prayer].
- 2) God hears the prayers of the righteous (he does not hear the prayers of the rebellious).
 - a) 1 John 3:22: “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.”
 - b) 1 John 5:14: “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us.”
 - c) Proverbs 28:9: “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.”
 - d) Psalms 66:18: “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.”
 - e) John 9:3: “Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.”

c. But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil

- 1) In this life, the worst situation we can encounter is to have the Lord against us! The worst condition we can experience in eternity is to have the Lord against us! Having the Lord on our side is the greatest advantage: “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Rom. 8:31).
- 2) “His face is not mild and benignant [kind or gracious—bw] toward them, as it is toward the righteous. The general sentiment in these verses (1 Peter 3:10-12) is, that while length of days is desirable, it is to be secured by virtue and religion, or that virtue and religion will contribute to it. This is not to be understood as affirming that all who are righteous will enjoy long life, for we know that the righteous are often cut down in the midst of their way; and that in fire, and flood, and war, and the pestilence, the righteous and the wicked often perish together. But still there is a sense in which it is true that a life of virtue and religion will contribute to length of days, and that the law is so general as to be a basis of calculation in reference to the future” [Barnes, *ibid.*].
- 3) Isaiah 59:1-2: “Behold, the LORD’S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.”
- 4) Romans 2:8-9: “But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile.”
- 5) Revelation 20:12-15: “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

D. 1 Peter 3:13-17: Suffering as a Christian.

1. Verse 13: “And who *is* he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?”
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- a. Tracing the apostle's line of reasoning, his statement here draws a conclusion from his fore-going statement. In view of the fact that the Lord oversees the righteous and ever listens to their prayers, who is he that will bring harm to you? No one. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31).
 - b. Peter is saying that no enemy, despite his viciousness, can do a faithful child of God any lasting harm. He is not suggesting that a faithful Christian life will entirely insulate one from outside harm and evil; the Bible emphatically teaching the contrary. The next verse states the clear possibility that we can be persecuted for "righteousness' sake." The New Testament has other direct affirmation regarding persecution of the righteous:
 - 1) 2 Timothy 3:12: "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."
 - 2) Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
 - 3) Mark 10:30: "But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."
 - 4) Matthew 5:10-12: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."
 - c. Evil men may afflict us because of our faith; they may imprison us; they might even kill us. But those assaults against our outward man has no hurtful effect on the inward man. It is often the case that good things grow out of the evil treatment the righteous suffer.
 - d. The sufferings which Christians may face can derive from various causes:
 - 1) We can bring suffering on ourselves by sin: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:7-8).
 - 2) We can be hated and attacked because of our righteous conduct. Compare: "These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also" (John 15:17-20).
 - 3) We can be afflicted because we oppose sin and error.
 - a) This happened to our Lord and to the apostle Paul (and others).
 - b) It can happen to us—compare: "And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased" (Gal. 5:11).
 - 4) We can be rejected and opposed because we are different from the people of the world: "Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you" (1 Pet. 4:4).
 - e. Peter's point of the verse is to show that, despite the opposition we may face from unbelievers, no one can do permanent damage to our souls. However, there is a condition attached: If we are "followers of that which is good." The ASV renders this thought: "If ye be zealous of that which is good." In other words, we must be faithful despite tribulations.
 - 1) Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
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- 2) Revelation 2:10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
 - 3) 2 Timothy 4:6-8: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."
2. Verse 14: "But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy *are ye*: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled."
- a. This statement is given to clarify the preceding point, lest anyone should get the idea that living the Christian life is without opposition or peril. Godliness and righteous living are often opposed by ungodly and unrighteous men.
 - 1) Matthew 5:10-12: "Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 4:17-18: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal."
 - b. We are admonished to be not afraid of their terror, neither should we be troubled. This is a reference to Isaiah 8:12: "Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid." Brother Woods describes the thought in this way: "'Be not influenced by the terror which your persecutors would instill in you, neither be agitated.' It is an injunction to complete composure in the face of bitter and determined enemies" (p.97).
 - 1) Paul was unafraid to go to Jerusalem. "Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13).
 - 2) Paul was unafraid to make the change from Judaism to Christianity (Acts 9). He urged Christians to dismiss their terror: "And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God" (Phil. 1:28).
 - c. Determined enemies can afflict, imprison, and slay us physically, but they cannot harm our spirits. No one can defraud us of our eternal reward against our will.
 - 1) Matthew 10:28: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
 - 2) Luke 12:4-5: "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."
 - 3) Acts 5:29, 40-42: "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men....And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."
 - 4) Acts 18:9-10: "Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much

people in this city.”

- 5) John 14:1-3: “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”
 - 6) John 16:33: “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”
3. Verse 15: “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.” “But sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear” (ASV).
- a. Peter here draws a contrast to what he has just previously stated. Instead of losing your souls, set the Lord apart in your heart.
 - 1) “The sense in the passage before us is, ‘In your hearts, or in the affections of the soul, regard the Lord God as holy, and act toward him with that confidence which a proper respect for one so great and so holy demands. In the midst of dangers, be not intimidated; dread not what man can do, but evince proper reliance on a holy God, and flee to him with the confidence which is due to one so glorious.’ This contains, however, a more general direction, applicable to Christians at all times....
 - 2) “The object of Peter in quoting the passage from Isaiah, was to lull the fears of those whom he addressed, and preserve them from any alarms in view of the persecutions to which they might be exposed; the trials which would be brought upon them by people.
 - 3) “Thus, in entire accordance with the sentiment as employed by Isaiah, he says, ‘Be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.’ That is, ‘in order to keep the mind calm in trials, sanctify the Lord in your hearts; regard him as your holy God and Saviour; make him your refuge. This will allay all your fears, and secure you from all that you dread.’
 - 4) “The sentiment of the passage then is, that the sanctifying of the Lord God in our hearts, or proper confidence in him as a holy and righteous God, will deliver us from fear” [Barnes, *ibid.*].
 - b. This verse is a reference to Isaiah 8:13: “Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.” To “sanctify” is to “set apart.” To sanctify in one’s heart Christ as Lord means to regard him with the reverence and awe befitting him (cf. Woods). Compare: “And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them” (Num. 20:12). To sanctify Christ in our hearts is to consecrate him and consider him to be holy, and to venerate and hallow him, giving him the position he deserves.
 - c. “‘Lord’ (*kurios*), literally a master or owner, here designates him who has authority over all things, both in heaven and on earth (Matt. 29:18-20), the Saviour of the world. Peter offers here direct and unequivocal testimony to the deity of the Lord Jesus, and to his relationship to the God of the universe” (Woods, p.97).
 - d. We are instructed to be ready always to give answer [to make a defense of] concerning the hope we have. The word *answer* is from the Greek term *apologia*, which is defined by Thayer as a “verbal defense, speech in defense: Acts 25:16” [Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2000 by BibleSoft]. “To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him” (Acts 25:16). Having an enjoyable life and having good days includes being prepared to answer those who inquire about why we believe and follow Christ, and why we expect to go to heaven. Careful and close study is necessary for us to give the proper
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- answer. This readiness is to be constant. To always be ready to give answer requires a great deal of study.
- 1) 2 Peter 3:18: “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”
 - 2) 2 Peter 1:5: “And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge.”
 - 3) 2 Timothy 2:15: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”
- e. The answer is to be given to everyone who asks about our hope. It is obvious that this is not a universal obligation, for there are some who would seek to entrap us or to use our reply against us. Christ did not dignify Herod’s requests with any audible answer: “And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing” (Luke 23:8-9). Wisdom and knowledge are required in order to know who to answer, and how to answer, and when to answer.
- f. The answer the apostle advises us to give has reference to our hope—why we have hope of going to heaven. Hope is comprised of desire plus expectation; we do not now possess the object of our hope: “For in hope were we saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for who hopeth for that which he seeth? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it” (Rom. 8:24-25, ASV).
- 1) We cannot have hope for something we do not desire to have; and we cannot have hope to obtain it if there is no possibility of receiving it. If we cannot get it, we cannot hope for it.
 - 2) Hope grows out of our faith and hope can sustain faith. “That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Heb. 6:18-20).
- g. “The defence is to be made with ‘meekness and fear.’ When called on to justify their position, Christians are to do so with reason and logic; but not with bold defiance nor arrogance and pride; the ‘answer’ is to be made with ‘meekness,’ i.e., an attitude free of scorn, haughtiness and bitterness; and ‘in fear,’ fear of God and the judgment” (Woods, p.98). Mr. Barnes offers the following:
- 1) “[With meekness] With modesty; without any spirit of ostentation; with gentleness of manner. This seems to be added on the supposition that they sometimes might be rudely assailed; that the questions might be proposed in a spirit of evil; that it might be done in a taunting or insulting manner. Even though this should be done, they were not to fall into a passion, to manifest resentment, or to retort in an angry and revengeful manner; but, in a calm and gentle spirit, they were to state the reasons of their faith and hope, and leave the matter there.
 - 2) “[And fear] Margin, ‘reverence.’ The sense seems to be, ‘in the fear of God; with a serious and reverent spirit; as in the presence of Him who sees and hears all things.’ It evidently does not mean with the fear or dread of those who propose the question, but with that serious and reverent frame of mind which is produced by a deep impression of the importance of the subject, and a conscious sense of the presence of God.
 - 3) “It follows, from the injunction of the apostle here: (1) that every professing Christian should have clear and intelligent views of his own personal interest in religion, or such evidences of piety that they can be stated to others, and that they can be made satisfactory to other minds; (2) that every Christian, however humble his rank, or however unlettered he may be, may become a valuable defender of the truth of Christianity; (3) that we should esteem it a privilege to bear our testimony
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to the truth and value of religion, and to stand up as the advocates of truth in the world. Though we may be rudely assailed, it is an honor to speak in defense of religion; though we are persecuted and reviled, it is a privilege to be permitted in any way to show our fellow-men that there is such a thing as true religion, and that man may cherish the hope of heaven” [Barnes, *ibid.*].

4. Verse 16: “Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.”
 - a. To make an adequate defense of the truth before others, we must be possessed of a good conscience. That is, one must have a firm conviction that what he stands for is the truth, and that he is has a measure of worthiness to present and defend it.
 - b. If we operate in defiance of our conscience, or in disregard to it, we cannot have a good conscience. Inwardly, we know we do not measure up to our knowledge of the truth, and consequently, our defense will be from a compromised position. We must try never to act in opposition to our soundly-trained conscience. Compare: “Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (Rom. 14:22-23). We must be prepared in heart, mind, and life in order to defend the faith.
 - c. Paul had a conscience void of offense.
 - 1) Acts 23:1: "And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men *and* brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."
 - 2) Acts 26:9-11: “I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.” [Even though he persecuted the Lord’s people, he believed he was doing the right thing—his conscience was pure].
 - 3) Hebrews 13:18: "Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly."
 - d. When we take a stand for the truth, the enemies of the truth will often resort to various means to defeat us.
 - 1) They may try a direct, personal attack.
 - 2) They may try to undermine our influence, by casting aspersions against our character or practices.
 - 3) They may try to be martyrs—act like they are being victimized.
 - 4) They may try to appeal to emotions—try to make you feel guilty.
 - 5) They may try to appeal to the emotions of others present—in this way, they attempt to prejudice their minds against the truth.
 - e. Enemies of the truth will frequently attack the character of faithful Christians, speaking evil of us. “Conversation” here refers to our behavior, conduct, or manner of life. The word includes our words, but also our attitudes and morality. Compare:
 - 1) Philippians 1:27: "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel."
 - 2) 1 Peter 2:12: "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."

- f. Others may be won to Christ by the good influence of our righteous lives. "Wives, likewise, *be* submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives" (1 Peter 3:1, NKJV). In view of the fact that Christ will return some day, we must live right. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" (2 Peter 3:10-14).
- g. By following the counsel laid down by inspiration, the adversary can be put to shame—he can be defeated, have his errors exposed, and the truth will shine. The enemy described is not an honorable opponent, but one who reviles—he raises wild, unfounded charges against us.
5. Verse 17: "For *it is* better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing."
- a. This is not a mere truism, but expresses a profound principle. If one is to suffer, it is far better to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.
- b. "God often sees it to be necessary that his people should suffer. There are effects to be accomplished by affliction which can be secured in no other way; and some of the happiest results on the soul of a Christian, some of the brightest traits of character, are the effect of trials. But it should be our care that our sufferings should not be brought upon us for our own crimes or follies. No man can promote his own highest good by doing wrong, and then enduring the penalty which his sin incurs; and no one should do wrong with any expectation that it may be overruled for his own good. If we are to suffer, let it be by the direct hand of God, and not by any fault of our own. If we suffer then, we shall have the testimony of our own conscience in our favor, and the feeling that we may go to God for support. If we suffer for our faults, in addition to the outward pain of body, we shall endure the severest pangs which man can suffer—those which the guilty mind inflicts on itself" [Barnes, *ibid.*].
- c. The apostle does not suggest that suffering will not be a reality, but he speaks of the possibility of such taking place. We cannot know what the future holds; there may be nothing but sunshine and flowers in our life; but there might be heartache, trouble, and privations. We must resolve to be faithful regardless of what may befall us. If God sends suffering upon us, we will use it to our spiritual advantage; if we are blessed with happiness and ease, we will be able to serve God even more.

E. 1 Peter 3:18-22: The Flood of Noah and Our Baptism.

1. Verse 18: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."
- a. Other renditions of the verse:
- 1) "Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit" (ASV).
 - 2) "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit" (NKJV).
 - 3) "For Christ died, once for all, for our sins; the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit" (English Study Bible).
- b. Christ suffered once for sins. This is announced time after time in the New Testament; it was foretold in the Old Testament. One cannot afford to ignore or take for granted this grand theme—it is the heart of the Bible's message. Our Lord's sufferings are introduced here to bolster the saints for their
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- impending trials. They had already been facing hardships on account of their faith, but the troubles soon to appear would be more severe. Christ suffered for us; he left us an example of how to endure these afflictions. A Christian who suffers for Christ identifies himself closely with the Lord.
- c. Notice that Peter states that our Lord suffered *once*. He only had to endure crucifixion one time; it was not necessary for him to be offered continually each year or in each generation. The atonement sacrifice of the Mosaic Law was conducted every year (see Lev. 16; Heb. 10:1-4). The word “once” is from the Greek term *hapax*, which means “once for all time.” Christ did not need to offer any sacrifice for himself; in this he is entirely different from all the priests of the Levitical system. Every one of them was mortal, and thus subject to sin; but he is the sinless Son of God, who kept himself completely free from sin of every kind.
- d. Consider Hebrews 7:27: “Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.”
- 1) Christ is different from the Levitical priests in that he only had to make one sacrifice; this was sufficient for all people, for all time. The Old Testament high priests had to offer the atonement sacrifice every year, and even that did not have the power to take away sin. They had to offer sacrifices for their own sins, as well as the sins of the people; but Christ made one offering, and that was for others, since he was sinless.
 - 2) Jude 3: "Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints" (ASV). [The word here is *hapax*].
 - 3) The word translated “once” [*ephapax*] literally means “once for all time.” This word is a strengthened form of *hapax* [*epi* + *hapax*], and appears in these verses:
 - a) Romans 6:10: "For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God."
 - b) Hebrews 9:12: "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*."
 - c) Hebrews 10:10: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ *once for all*."
 - 4) Hebrews 9:24-28: “For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”
- e. He suffered for [*epi*—concerning] our sins. He gave himself as a ransom for all (1 Tim. 2:6); he bore our sins in his own body (1 Pet. 2:24). But he was entirely free from the taint of sin. He did not suffer for any personal sin; he suffered for our sins.
- 1) 1 Timothy 2:6: “Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”
 - 2) 1 Peter 2:24: “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”
 - 3) 2 Corinthians 5:21: “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”
- f. He was just [righteous] and he suffered for the unjust [unrighteous]. The word “righteous” was anciently spelled *rightwise*. [Note: there is no definite article before “just” and “unjust”].
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- 1) That he was just (pure, sinless) is affirmed in plain and powerful declarations in the New Testament:
 - a) 1 Peter 2:22: "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."
 - b) Hebrews 4:15: "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."
 - c) 2 Corinthians 5:21: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."
 - d) John 8:46: "Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?"
 - 2) That all accountable men are unjust is likewise affirmed on the holy page:
 - a) Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."
 - b) Ecclesiastes 7:29: "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."
 - c) Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
 - 3) For one to die for his friends is admirable, but to die for his enemies, and for those who are filthy in soul, and for those who are disobedient in life, is astounding. That he died for the unrighteous is beautifully noted in the sacred record: "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. 5:6-9).
 - g. Christ suffered for lost humanity that he might bring us to God. Compare: "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:19).
 - 1) Because of his sacrificial death, we now have access to God:
 - a) Isaiah 59:1-2: "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."
 - b) Romans 5:1-2: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."
 - c) Ephesians 2:12-16: "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby."
 - 2) Because of his sacrificial death, we now are privileged to boldly approach the throne of God's grace:
 - a) Hebrews 10:19: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus."
 - b) Hebrews 10:22: "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."
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- c) Hebrews 4:15-16: “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”
 - 3) Because of his sacrificial death, we who were far off from God, are now brought nigh unto God:
 - a) Ephesians 2:13: “But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.”
 - b) Ephesians 2:17: “And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.”
 - c) 2 Corinthians 5:17-21: “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”
 - h. He was put to death in flesh, but has been quickened (made alive) in spirit. [Note: there is no article before flesh and spirit in the Greek text]. “The meaning is, the sphere of death, for our Lord, was in the flesh; the sphere in which he was made alive (quickened, A.V.) was in the spirit” (Woods, p.100).
 - 1) How he was put to death in flesh is obvious—it is a reference to his crucifixion, but in what way was he made alive in spirit? And should the word *spirit* be capitalized, as it is in the KJV, or should it be in the lower case, as it is in the ESV? The point of difference is whether Christ was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit, or whether he was quickened in spirit (that his spirit was made alive again).
 - 2) The KJV shows that he was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit; the ASV indicates that he was made alive in spirit (his spirit was brought back to life). But there was never a time when the Lord’s spirit was dead, hence it could not be made alive again because it was never dead! One way of understanding the ASV rendition is to interpret it to mean that his spirit was bought back out of the Hadean realm and back into active fellowship with the Father and in service to Him. Following his resurrection, which brought his body back to life, our Lord re-entered his work with the apostles for a short while; following his ascension back to Heaven, he mounted his regal throne at the Father’s right hand, at which point he began exercising his kingly authority. In this sense, we may understand that he was made alive in spirit.
 - 3) Taking the KJV, we may properly understand the truth that the Holy Spirit was directly involved in the resurrection of Christ. Romans 1:4 reports the Holy Spirit’s involvement in his resurrection: “And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” [Note: The Scriptures show that Christ was active in his own resurrection (John 10:17); his resurrection is also attributed to the Father (1 Cor. 6:14; 2 Cor. 4:14; Eph. 1:20). An activity done by one member of the Godhead may accurately be ascribed to the other members of the Godhead].
 - 4) The Bible shows that Jesus was conceived in Mary’s womb by the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:18ff). It also affirms that Jesus was raised from the dead by the “spirit of holiness” (i.e., the Holy Spirit). The King James rendering of our text reports that the Holy Spirit raised him from the dead.
 - 5) Brother Woods thought that the spirit of the passage was the Lord’s inner nature (his eternal spirit). He argues: “‘In flesh’ and ‘in spirit’ are exactly balanced in the text; it is not likely that one is locative and the other instrumental; each is to be regarded as measuring the extent of the participles
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to which they are attached....The ‘spirit’ alluded to in this verse is, therefore, that inner principle which stands in contrast with the flesh—the divine spirit which Jesus possessed in common with all men, and which was not affected by the death which he suffered” (p.100).

- 6) This view seems to make the next verse more difficult to comprehend. With this interpretation in mind, verse nineteen teaches that it was in this spirit that Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison. We shall see that Christ did not personally preach to those individuals; rather he did the preaching through the Holy Spirit’s work in Noah.
 - 7) It seems more in keeping with the context to view the *spirit* of verse eighteen to be a reference to the Holy Spirit—that Christ was resurrected by the operation of the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom. 1:4). This allows for a smooth transition from the present verse to the next part of the passage.
2. Verse 19: “By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison” (ASV).
- a. Other renditions of the verse:
 - 1) “In which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison” (ASV).
 - 2) “By whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison” (NKJV).
 - 3) “In which also he went and preached to the spirits in prison” (English Study Bible).
 - b. The Greek term *en* has these various meanings in different contexts: in, on, at, with, by, among. The King James Version (and the NKJV) translates it in our text with the English word **by**. The ASV has “in” (as does the ESV).
 - 1) It was *in* or *by* the *spirit* or *Spirit* that this preaching was done. Thus, Christ preached *in spirit* (in a representative or figurative way); or he preached by the power of the *Holy Spirit*. It seems more difficult and less natural to speak of his preaching “in spirit” to those in prison; it appears more natural and obvious to speak of his preaching to the spirits in prison by the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - 2) It will become apparent that our Lord did not do this preaching to individuals who were in the Hadean realm during the three days his body was in the tomb and his spirit was in the Paradise of Hades. Prior to his virgin birth, he had no physical body (cf. Matt. 1:18-25; Heb. 10:5). His spirit is his real person, just as our inner spirit is our real person. There is no reason for us to suppose that Christ was actually present to personally preach to the antediluvians while the ark was being constructed. The Lord did not preach directly to them during their lifetime on earth and he would not have done so after they had died (this latter point will be established in a moment).
 - 3) If Brother Woods is correct in applying the term “in spirit” to the Lord’s inner spirit, we must conclude (as he did) that Christ preached in a figurative or representative way to these people. But again, it appears to be more natural and less difficult to understand the preaching to have been done by the Holy Spirit, who guided Noah in that great work.
 - c. We are plainly told that Noah was a preacher of righteousness: “And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly” (2 Pet. 2. 5). It is clear from this passage that Noah did some preaching to the people of his generation, during the time the ark was under construction.
 - 1) The purpose of his preaching was obviously to effect a change in the way they lived—to convince them to turn back to righteous conduct, thus to avoid the destruction the flood was to bring upon them.
 - 2) The only kind of preaching God has ever authorized is the presentation of his inspired word. In the case of inspired men, their message was directly given by God; in the case of uninspired men, the message preached is a presentation of previously-revealed truth. In Noah’s case, his message was given directly, just as Jonah’s had been: “Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is
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come up before me” (Jonah 1:1-2).

- 3) Compare: “And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years....And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Gen. 6:3,5). God gave that generation a period of about one hundred and twenty years to change their ways; during this same period of time, Noah exercised his function as a preacher of righteousness; during this same time period, and working through Noah, the Holy Spirit [*my Spirit*] strove with mankind—but to no avail.
- 4) Notice:
 - a) Between Paradise and Tartarus a great chasm is fixed. There can be no passage by any of the inhabitants between the two places [Luke 16:19-31]. Jesus was in Paradise while the wicked man of Luke 16 and all the evil angels and lost men are reserved to the day of Judgment.
 - b) 2 Peter 2:4: “For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.”
 - c) Jude 6: “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”
- d. Various theories have been propounded in explanation of this passage (1 Peter 3:18-20).
 - 1) Many assert that Christ personally preached to the lost souls of Noah’s generation (these had lived before the flood and had died during the flood, and were in the Hadean realm while the Lord was in Paradise—cf. Luke 16:23; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). The claim is that Christ preached to these people after they had died and their spirits were in Hades. But several things are wrong with this theory:
 - a) When was this preaching done? We are told in verse twenty that it was done during the time in which the ark was being built. It was not done while our Lord’s spirit was in the Hadean realm of Paradise.
 - b) What did he preach to them? They knew they were in a lost condition. It would not have been a message of salvation, for this would contradict plain passages which show that there is no second chance after death (Heb. 9:27; Rev. 22:10-11; Luke 16:19-31; 2 Cor. 5:10-11; 6:1-2; Rom. 2:1-11). Since the message could not have been an offer of salvation, what was the message? Why did he preach to them? Peter did not here reveal what the message was.
 - c) Why was the preaching only done to the people of Noah’s generation? God does not show partiality (Rom. 2:11). If he gave anyone another opportunity to be saved (after he had died), he would be obligated by his own nature of impartiality to offer the same opportunity to everyone else! If they all had the opportunity to escape the torment of the lost, every single one would do so! (Cf. Luke 16:22-31). This eventuality would contradict the plain statements of Matthew 25:46 and Matthew 7:13-14. This would cause *Tartarus* [the punishment compartment of Hades] and *Gehenna* [Hell] to be shut down due to a lack of inhabitants!
 - 2) Catholics think they find their doctrine of “purgatory” in this passage, but neither the word nor the doctrine is there. The whole scheme of purgatory contradicts the Bible at various points.
 - a) Hebrews 9:27: “And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.”
 - b) Matthew 7:13-14: “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”
 - c) Mark 16:15-16: “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
 - d) Matthew 25:46: “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into

- life eternal.”
- e) 2 Corinthians 5:10-11: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.”
 - f) 2 Corinthians 6:1-2: “We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation).”
 - g) Revelation 20:12-15: “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”
- 3) Mormons use this passage to support their doctrine of second-chance salvation. They also assert that a living person can be baptized for one who died in the lost condition [this is a perversion of 1 Cor. 15:29]. The whole concept violates the Bible principles that individual action is required in the salvation process, and the basic truth that salvation is only offered while we are alive upon the earth in this life (Acts 10:34-35). Judgment is based on our conduct on earth (Matt. 16:27; Rom. 14:10-12; 2 Cor. 5:10-11; Rev. 20:10; Rom. 2:6; Matt. 26:31-46; Luke 16:27-31; Matt. 25:10). [The Mormons had a practice of being baptized for Jews who had died; the Jews strongly objected; the Mormons relented. But if their doctrine could save dead sinners, and is a mandate of God, they are now operating in violation of divine law. Of course, their doctrine of baptism for the dead is an invention of their fertile imagination!].
- a) Acts 10:34-35: “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”
 - b) Matthew 16:27: “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.”
 - c) Romans 14:10-12: “But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”
 - d) 2 Corinthians 5:10-11: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.”
 - e) Revelation 20:10: “And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”
 - f) Romans 2:6: “Who will render to every man according to his deeds.”
 - g) Matthew 25:31-46: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:
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And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”

- h) Luke 16:27-31: “Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.
 - i) Matthew 25:10: “And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.”
- e. He preached to the spirits in prison. The next verse identifies these as being those spirits (persons) who were disobedient when they were alive upon the earth just prior to the flood, while Noah was building the ark. “Spirits” is a word used in the Bible to refer to persons: “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1).
- 1) The Spirit of Christ was in the Old Testament prophets (who were spokesmen for God).
 - a) 1 Peter 1:10-11: “Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.”
 - b) Nehemiah 9:20, 30: “Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst....Yet many years didst thou forbear them, and testifiedst against them by thy spirit in thy prophets: yet would they not give ear: therefore gavest thou them into the hand of the people of the lands.”
 - c) Isaiah 61:1: “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.”
 - 2) An action is often attributed to one who has sent another to actually do the job (cf. Matt. 20:20-28 and Mark 10:35-49; Matt. 8:5-13 and Luke 7:1-10). James and John sent their mother to make this request of the Lord; the centurion sent the elders and friends and thus communicated with Christ through them. In each case, the action done was attributed to individual (s) not actually present but who were ultimately responsible for the action being done. Christ is said to have gone and preached
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peace to the Gentiles (Eph. 2:17); he was responsible for this action, but it was through the efforts of his followers carrying out his orders that this was done: he did it but he did it representatively, through his agents. Just so in the case of our present text. Compare: “When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples)” (John 4:1-2).

- 3) Noah was a preacher of righteousness (2 Pet. 2:5). The preaching he did was obviously done while he was alive upon the earth; the preaching he did was to his fellow-citizens— others of his own generation; he preached righteousness: he called on them to live right, change to godly conduct (for they were exceedingly wicked—Gen. 5:5). Righteousness is the doing of God’s will:
 - a) Psalms 119:172: “My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.”
 - b) Acts 10:34-35: “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”
 - c) 1 John 3:7: “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.”
 - d) Romans 10:1-3: “Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”
- 4) Therefore, the preaching attributed to Christ was actually done by his agent, Noah; it was done while Noah was alive upon the earth; it was a message of righteousness directed to his generation while they were alive, before the flood destroyed them. The Spirit was striving with Noah’s generation through the preaching of Noah; God had decreed that this striving would not be forever but for one hundred and twenty years only (cf. Gen. 6:3,5).
- f. Verse twenty says that these spirits were sometime (were afore time) disobedient. Their disobedience was while they were alive on the earth; it was during this time that Christ, through his agent Noah, preached to them. This explanation fits all the details; it does no violence to any other scripture or biblical principle; it harmonizes perfectly with what the Bible elsewhere teaches.
- g. The spirits were “in prison” when Peter wrote these words. People in sin are in prison, in a sense (cf. Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18; Isa. 42:7). There is a sense in which these spirits were in prison even while they were alive on earth; and they were in the prison house (*tartarus*: translated “hell” in the KJV) when Peter wrote these words (where they still are). *Tartarus* is the name of that part of Hades in which the wicked dead await the end of time, the resurrection, and the Judgment (cf. 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). Every statement in the Bible is addressed to the living, even the statements about death. The wicked dead will not escape punishment; the righteous dead will receive rest and blessings (Rev. 14:13). The destiny of the dead cannot be changed (Luke 16:26).
 - 1) Revelation 14:13: “And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.”
 - 2) Luke 16:26: “And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.”
 - 3) 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9: “Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting

- destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.”
- 4) 2 Peter 2:4-5: “For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the ancient world, but preserved Noah with seven others, a preacher of righteousness, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly.”
 - 5) Jude 6: “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”
- h. The word “he” in verse nineteen has an alternative rendering. It is the third person singular (masculine), and could be translated “one” [or “one’s self”]. Compare:
- 1) Galatians 6:1: “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”
 - 2) James 1:27: “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”
 - 3) James 5:13-14: “Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”
 - 4) Franklin Camp, a great Bible scholar, took this view. He concluded the statement to mean, “By which also *one* went and preached...” Noah was Christ’s agent in the preaching done to the antediluvian, being guided by the Holy Spirit.
3. Verse 20: “Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water” (KJV). “That afore time were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water” (ASV).
- a. Peter tells us when those people under consideration were disobedient—it was when the ark was being prepared. They were in the prison-house of the Hadean realm when Peter wrote, but they were alive on the earth during the time of their disobedience. They were given ample warning and time to repent while Noah preached among them; they could have been delivered from the destructive flood, but they chose otherwise.
 - b. When the context is duly considered, it is apparent that Christ did the preaching ascribed to him in verse 19, but that he did it through Noah, a preacher of righteousness. What one does through a selected agent, he can be said to have done it himself. Noah warned the world through his preaching: “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith” (Heb. 11:7).
 - c. God’s longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, giving sinful men the opportunity to repent. One of the characteristics of God is the longsuffering he has toward mankind.
 - 1) Romans 2:4: “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”
 - 2) 2 Peter 3:8-9: “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”
 - 3) Genesis 6:3,5: “And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years....And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”
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- d. In the ark, eight souls were saved. The word “souls” is here used in reference to individuals. In air traffic control parlance, when an aircraft declares an emergency, the controller asks the pilot, “How many souls are on board?” We have no way to know how many people were on the earth during Noah’s generation, but certainly a large number. The eight souls who were saved are Noah and his wife, their three sons and their wives. Though their number was small, yet they were important to God! And from these few individuals, the entire population of today’s world descended!
 - e. These people were saved in the ark—the ark was the place of safety. The place of safety today is in the Lord’s church.
 - 1) Ephesians 5:23-27: “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”
 - 2) Acts 2:47: “Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”
 - 3) Ephesians 1:3: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”
 - 4) 2 Timothy 2:10: “Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.”
 - f. The people in the ark were saved **by water**. Notice that the text does not say they were saved from water. Those outside the ark lost their lives by being drowned in the water; they were lost eternally because they died in rebellion. At the same time, Noah and his family, because of their righteousness, found grace in the sight of God; they were saved through (and by) the flood waters.
 - 1) They were obedient to God in building the ark; the flood water became the means of their spiritual salvation, for had they refused to build the ark they would have been disobedient and thus would have been rejected by the Lord.
 - 2) The water that sent the disobedient ones to their eternal doom became the means for the family of Noah entering (eventually) into eternal salvation. They were delivered by means of the waters from the destruction of the antediluvian world, which destroyed the evils of the old world, and enabled Noah and his family to emerge into a new existence. They then could continue their obedience and preparation for eternity.
4. Verse 21: “The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”
- a. Other versions give these renderings of the passage:
 - 1) “Which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (ASV).
 - 2) “There is also an antitype which now saves us -- baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (NKJV).
 - 3) “And corresponding to that, immersion now saves us, not the putting off the filth of the flesh, but seeking a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (English study Bible).
 - b. Sectarians make mistakes in interpreting this verse; they claim that baptism is a figure and that it saves only in some figurative way. They almost without exception deny that baptism has any connection to
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salvation. But this verse harmonizes perfectly with other New Testament passages on the subject:

- 1) Mark 16:16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - 2) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - 3) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - 4) Acts 10:47-48: "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days."
 - 5) Romans 6:3-4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."
 - 6) Romans 6:16-18: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." [Note: the "form of doctrine" is a direct reference to baptism (of verses 3-4); it is when we are obedient to this pattern of teaching that we are made free from sin].
 - 7) Galatians 3:27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
- c. Baptism is here said to be the "like figure" (after the "true likeness") of the flood water by which Noah and his family were delivered from the evils of his generation. In biblical terminology, the *type* pictures the *antitype*. Thus, the most holy place in the tabernacle is a type of the church (the antitype); the most holy place is the type for heaven; Moses is the type of Christ (both were lawgivers and deliverers). The following information, gleaned from several sources, give a definition of types and antitypes:
- 1) "A figure or ensample of something future and more or less prophetic, called the 'antitype'" (Bullinger).
 - 2) "A type is a shadow cast on the pages of Old Testament history by a truth whose full embodiment or antitype is found in the New Testament revelation" (Broomall).
 - 3) "A type is a real, exalted happening in history which was divinely ordained by the omniscient God to be a prophetic picture of the good things which He proposed to bring to fruition in Christ Jesus" (Wayne Jackson).
 - 4) *Antitupos*, translated "figure" or "pattern" or "true likeness," means "that which corresponds to" the type; it is the reality which fulfills the prophetic picture.
- d. Baptism is said to be the antitype of the flood water; the flood is the type and baptism is the antitype. As the flood water saved (delivered) Noah and his family, so baptism now saves us. The salvation of Noah is thus made a type of the deliverance which the sinner receives when he passes through the waters of baptism. The likeness obtains in the following manner:
- 1) The waters of the flood bore up the ark and delivered its occupants from the destruction of the antediluvian world.
 - 2) These waters separated those who were saved from those who were drowned.
 - 3) The flood destroyed the evils of the old world and enabled Noah and his family to emerge into a new existence.
 - 4) Baptism is the final condition in the plan through obedience to which one is enabled to escape the condemnation of the lost (Mark 16:16). Baptism designates the line of separation between the
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saved and the lost. In baptism the old man of sin is buried and from its watery grave one comes forth to walk in newness of life.

- a) Romans 6:3-4: “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”
 - b) 2 Corinthians 5:17: “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”
 - c) Galatians 3:27: “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”
 - d) Ephesians 2:13: “But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.”
- 5) The baptism that is said to save is water baptism
- a) Ephesians 4:4-6: “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”
 - b) Matthew 28:19: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”
 - c) Acts 10:47-48: “Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.”
- e. The deliverance which baptism provides is not from persecution or death, or general suffering, for the overall context is designed to show the saints that persecution was sure to come. The salvation is that which is NOW had; it *now* saves us. That from which we are saved is past (alien) sins; there is no other means.
- 1) Baptism is also pictured in the crossing of the Red Sea by the Israelites (Ex. 14; 1 Cor. 10:1-11).
 - 2) Naaman’s dipping in the Jordan River pictures baptism (2 Kings 5).
- f. Lest anyone should get the wrong idea about baptism, Peter states that it is not the design of baptism to remove filth from the flesh; it is not the purpose of baptism to clean up the body. It is the body that is immersed in water, but it is the spirit that is baptized into Christ.
- 1) The word “filth” denotes that which is physically defiled. Baptism is not for the purpose of giving the body a bath in order to remove the dirt and grime.
 - 2) To interpret “filth” in this verse as spiritual defilement and say that baptism does not remove the stain of sin, would be to contradict several plain passages (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16). Baptism is indeed for the purpose of removing the stain of sin!
 - 3) There is no power to forgive sins in the literal water into which we are immersed. But baptism is the final condition of the plan of salvation. If we are saved before baptism, what is the new life we arise from baptism to walk?
- a) Romans 6:3-4: “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”
 - b) Hebrews 11:30: “By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.”
- g. As suggested earlier, baptism has certain things in common with several Old and New Testament cases.
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- 1) Naaman was not cleansed from his leprosy until he met the conditions imposed through the prophet: he was required to dip himself seven times in the Jordan River.
- 2) The blind man of John 9 was not given his sight until he went and washed in the pool of Siloam.
- 3) Israel was not free from Egypt until they had crossed the Red Sea.
- 4) Israel did not enter Canaan until they crossed the flooded Jordan River.
- 5) Israel did not possess the city of Jericho until they had passed around the city the prescribed number of times. "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days" (Heb. 11:30).
- 6) An alien sinner is not cleansed from the guilt of his past sins until he has passed through the waters of baptism.
- 7) No blessing was received in the cases cited until after the conditions had been fully met. There was no miraculous powers in Jordan to remove Naaman's disease; there was no supernatural power in the waters of Siloam to give sight to the blind man; there is no miraculous power in the water of baptism to remove the guilt of sin.
 - a) Titus 3:4-5: "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."
 - b) John 3:5: "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."
 - c) Ephesians 5:26: "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."
- h. The action of baptism is implied in the verse, for no one would get the idea that one could be cleansed of body filth by having a little water sprinkled or poured on him; they could get this idea if they knew the action of baptism was an immersion in water. So Peter noted that the purpose of baptism was not for the purpose of removing dirt from the body.
- i. The apostle says that baptism is the answer (or an interrogation) of a good conscience toward God. Baptism is an act through which an individual seeks to manifest a good conscience. He indicates thereby that his conscience is sensitive, and that he is desirous of doing exactly what the Lord commanded. That the conscience is said to be "good" prior to baptism does not argue against baptism being for the remission of sins. Even an alien sinner can have a good conscience; indeed, unless he is honest with himself and with the truth, he is not likely to even see the need to obey the gospel.
 - 1) Before his conversion, Paul had a good conscience, even though he was persecuting the saints at the same time:
 - a) "And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day" (Acts 23:1).
 - b) "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities" (Acts 26:9-11).
 - 2) Three thousand Jews on Pentecost Day were clearly of good conscience: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost....Then they that gladly received his word were baptized:

and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls” (Acts 2:36-38,41).

- j. Baptism obtains its power from the resurrection of Christ. If our Lord had not been raised from the dead, he would not have had the authority to command baptism; he could not have offered any spiritual benefits to anyone; he would have been a mere man. If he had not been resurrected, baptism would not now save us.
 - 1) The power to save is found in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. These are the three foundational truths of the gospel (1 Cor. 15:1-4).
 - 2) The New Testament frequently speaks of the fact that we are saved by the blood of Christ. But it also says that we are saved by baptism. We contact the saving blood of Christ when we are baptized into Christ.
 - a) Acts 22:16: “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”
 - b) 1 Peter 1:18-25: “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”
 - c) Revelation 1:5: “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.”
 - d) Matthew 26:28: “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”
5. Verse 22: “Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.”
 - a. Jesus is said to be at the right hand of God, fully empowered to act in the process of saving souls. Compare:
 - 1) Daniel 7:13-14: “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”
 - 2) Acts 2:22-33: “Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full

of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.”

- 3) Hebrews 7:25-27: “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.”
 - 4) Hebrews 4:14-16: “Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”
- b. He is often pictured in the Scriptures at God’s right hand, a position of great honor and power.
- 1) Psalms 110:1: “The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”
 - 2) Romans 8:34: “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”
 - 3) Ephesians 1:20: “Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.”
 - 4) Hebrews 1:3: “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”
- c. Angels and authorities are made subject to the rule of Christ.
- 1) Psalms 24:7-10: “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah.”
 - 2) Acts 1:9-11: “And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.”
 - 3) Daniel 7:13-14: “I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”
 - 4) Matthew 28:19: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”
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- 5) Ephesians 1:19-23: "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."
- 6) Colossians 2:10-15: "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

F. More Information on Types and Antitypes.

1. The Holy Spirit placed special significance on certain people and items in the Old Testament.
 - a. These people, places, things, offices, institutions, and events have special meanings in the New Testament. Several specific likenesses are observable between those people and items and their counterparts in the New Testament.
 - b. The English word "type" is from the Greek word *typos* [*tupoi*, plural], and is defined by Webster as "a person, thing, or event, that represents or symbolizes another that is to come; symbol; emblem; token; sign."
 - 1) We say that we have seen a horse's foot in the clay, when we have only seen the impression of his foot, which would be the type. But when we take the track of the foot for the foot, we really have just the opposite of the foot. So if a man should strike his fist into a ball of putty, he would leave there, not his fist, but the type of it.
 - 2) A child may press his hand into uncured concrete, leaving behind a handprint. We might say, "This is my boy's hand." What we mean is, "This is my son's handprint." The hand is the reality; the print is the type.
 2. Symbols are unreal, but types are real.
 - a. Adam was a type of Christ; so were the sacrifices from the foundation of the world; the kings, priests, and prophets, in that they were *anointed*; the serpent in the wilderness, Solomon, and Joshua, etc. These were as real as the Savior.
 - b. It must not simply happen to represent something in the future, and therefore do as an illustration—*it must have been intended to represent that thought or fact when it was given.*
 3. The *antitype* is always superior to the *type*.
 - a. Moses was typical of Christ in that he served as lawgiver, prophet, and leader. Christ is Lawgiver, Prophet, and Leader in the fullest sense.
 - 1) "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken" (Deut. 18:15).
 - 2) "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3:22-23).
 - 3) As great as Moses was, Christ is vastly superior.
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- b. Israel's bondage in Egypt was typical of an individual's bondage to sin.
- 1) "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea....But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples [*tupoi*], to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted....Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples [*tupoi*]: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (I Cor. 10:1-11).
 - 2) "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form [*tupon*] of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:16-18).
 - 3) As harsh as the physical hardships of the Israelites were in the wilderness, the hardships of sin are far worse.
 - 4) As important as their "baptism" was, baptism into Christ is of far greater importance (Rom. 6:3-4; Eph. 1:3).
- c. The manna Israel received during their sojourn in the wilderness [Ex. 16:16] was typical of Christ, who is the "Bread of Life." "...Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven" (John 6:32). As nourishing as the manna was to the body, the "Bread of Life" is much more nutritious to the soul.
- d. The brazen serpent Moses lifted up in the wilderness [Num. 21:8] was typical of our Lord being lifted up on the cross.
- 1) "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:14-16).
 - 2) The lifting up of Christ on the cross is vastly more important than the lifting up of the brazen serpent.

G. More information about baptism.

1. Baptism is not a work of man; it is a command of God.
 - a. Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - b. Acts 10:48: "And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days."
 - c. Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - d. Titus 3:4-5: "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."
 2. Baptism is not a work that the one being baptized does.
 - a. True, the individual willingly submits to the command to be baptized. However, he is passive in the action itself. The administrator lowers the person's body into the water and raises him up again.
 - b. In hearing, believing, repenting, and confessing, the individual is active, but in the action of baptism, he is passive.
 3. Baptism is not the only thing required—faith, repentance, and confession must precede baptism—to be
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saved. At the point of baptism, we begin the Christian life.

- a. Romans 6:5: “For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.”
 - b. 2 Peter 1:5-11: “And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”
4. Baptism is not water salvation.
- a. Naaman was cleansed but he did not praise the waters of Jordan (2 Kings 4:1-15). He praised God.
 - b. The charge of “water salvation” is a charge against Christ himself, for it was he that commanded it (Mark 16:15-16; Matt. 28:18-20).
 - c. Baptism is preceded by faith, repentance, confession, and is followed by a new life. Faith is called a work in the Scriptures [baptism is not].
 - 1) John 6:29: “Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”
 - 2) 1 John 3:23: “And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.”
 - d. Repentance is also called a work.
 - 1) Matthew 12:41: “The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.”
 - 2) Jonah 3:10: “And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.”
5. There are some things that baptism will not do.
- a. It will not change the whole heart:
 - 1) Faith changes the object of one’s trust and love.
 - 2) Repentance changes one’s practice.
 - 3) Baptism changes the relationship, condition, and state.
 - b. It will not prevent temptation; Christ, Paul, and others were tempted after baptism.
 - c. It will not remove the bitter consequences of sin; the scars of sin remain even though the guilt is removed.
 - d. It will not solve all of life’s problems: “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Tim. 3:12).
 - e. It will not cover up the need for repentance. It has no power to cleanse a criminal or sinner who will not quit his wrongful activities.
 - f. It will not change an adulterous relationship into a pure and acceptable marriage: “And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery” (Matt. 19:9).
 - g. It will not relieve one from Christian responsibility.
 - 1) Philippians 2:12: “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only,
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but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”

- 2) 2 Peter 1:5-11: “And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”
 6. The following chart is taken from the Nichols-Weaver Debate:
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PASSAGE	CONDITION	GREEK	KJV	ASV	BLESSING
Rom. 15:4	Written	<i>eis</i>	for	for	Our Learning
Mat. 26:28	Blood Shed	<i>eis</i>	for	unto	Remission
Rom. 1:16	Gospel, Power	<i>eis</i>	unto	unto	Salvation
Rom. 10:10	Believeth	<i>eis</i>	unto	unto	Righteousness
1 Tim. 1:16	Believeth	<i>eis</i>	to	unto	Live Everlasting
Rom. 5:2	By Faith	<i>eis</i>	into	into	Grace
Acts 3:19	Repent	<i>eis</i>	that	that	Sins Blotted Out
Acts 11:18	Repentance	<i>eis</i>	unto	unto	Life
Acts 20:21	Repentance	<i>eis</i>	toward	toward	God
2 Cor. 7:10	Repentance	<i>eis</i>	to	unto	Salvation
Rom. 10:10	Confession	<i>eis</i>	unto	unto	Salvation
Mark 1:4	Repent, Bapt.	<i>eis</i>	for	unto	Remission
Luke 3:3	Repent. Bapt.	<i>eis</i>	for	unto	Remission
Acts 2:38	Repent, Bapt.	<i>eis</i>	for	unto	Remission
Rom. 6:3	Baptized	<i>eis</i>	into	into	Christ
Gal. 3:27	Baptized	<i>eis</i>	into	into	Christ
1 Cor. 12:13	Baptized	<i>eis</i>	into	into	One Body
Rom. 6:3-4	Baptized	<i>eis</i>	into	into	Death

Prayer

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. There is much skepticism and ignorance about prayer.

1. Infidels say it is waste of time. J.W. McGarvey told of one such fellow who proposed a test by which the efficacy of prayer might be put to the test. He suggested that the patients in one hospital ward should be prayed for, while no prayers were to be offered for patients in another ward. If those who had prayers offered in their behalf fared better than the other group, then the power of prayer would have been demonstrated. If there was no difference in the outcome, the effectiveness of prayer would be undermined.
2. But to pray for one group and intentionally avoid praying for the other group would be wicked. To put God to the test is also sinful. No right-thinking person could expect God to respond to such hypocritical prayers.
3. Prayer is not a mystical incantation which results in a miraculous or mysterious cure.
4. Some saints never or seldom pray due to lack of faith in prayer, or a failure to see a need for prayer.

B. Why do we not always pray as we should?

1. It might be due to short-sightedness, a lack of faith, or a lack of diligence.
2. There is much in the Bible on the subject of prayer.
3. We are given much assurance that God hears; we have good reason to pray.

II. DISCUSSION.

A. The Bible sets forth the meaning of prayer.

1. Prayer is the expression of our heart's desire spoken to God.
 - a. Romans 10:1: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved."
 - b. 1 Samuel 1:10-11,13,17: "And she *was* in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head....Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken....Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant *thee* thy petition that thou hast asked of him."
2. Prayer reveals something about us.
 - a. It shows our closeness to God: we are willing to share our innermost thoughts and desires with him.
 - b. It shows that we believe he can answer and is willing to help us.
3. Lack of prayer also shows something about ourselves.
 - a. If we do not pray we show a lack of faith in prayer.
 - b. If we do not pray we show we do not want or need God's help and blessings.
 - c. If we do not pray we may show our laziness or indifference.
 - d. If we do not pray we live at a distance from God.

B. The Bible sets forth conditions for acceptable prayer.

1. Acceptable prayer comes from one who is willing to obey.
 - a. Cornelius was heard because he sought to know God's will: Acts 10.
 - b. Prayers of rebellious or disobedient hearts are not heard.
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- 1) Psalms 66:18: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me*."
 - 2) Proverbs 28:9: "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer *shall be* abomination."
 - 3) John 9:31: "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth."
 - c. God hears prayers offered by pure hearts.
 - 1) 1 Peter 3:12: "For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord *is* against them that do evil."
 - 2) 1 John 3:22: "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."
 2. Acceptable prayer must be offered with full assurance of faith.
 - a. 1 Timothy 2:8: "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."
 - b. James 1:5-8: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. or let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways."
 3. Acceptable prayer must have the endorsement of Christ.
 - a. 1 Timothy 2:5: "For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."
 - b. Hebrews 4:14-16: "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."
 - c. We have no personal credit in the Bank of Heaven, but with Christ's endorsement our requests are honored.
 4. Acceptable prayer must be fervent and sincere.
 - a. Psalms 17:1: "Hear the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my prayer, *that goeth* not out of feigned lips."
 - b. Colossians 4:12: "Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God."
 - c. James 5:16: "Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."
 5. Acceptable prayer must be unselfish. "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts" (Jas 4:3).
 6. Acceptable prayer must be regular, not a mere emergency measure.
 - a. Romans 12:12: "Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer."
 - b. Colossians 4:2: "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving."
 - c. 1 Thessalonians 5:17: "Pray without ceasing."
 7. Acceptable prayers are offered in accordance with God's will: "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us" (1 John 5:14).
 - a. God's will is revealed in the Bible (cf. Numbers 12).
 - b. God answered the prayer of Christ when those people obeyed the gospel.
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- 1) Luke 23:34: "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots."
 - 2) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - 3) Acts 9:1-9: "And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink."
 - 4) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
- c. God's will in our daily affairs may be expressed by his providence.
- C. Prayer is powerful.
1. James says prayer avails much (Jas 5:16).
 - a. He does not say the full extent of our requests are always given; our requests may not be given when or in the manner we desire.
 - b. A carefully aimed bullet may miss the exact target, but it still accomplishes something.
 - c. We cannot track down the full effect of every prayer. Our prayers for the sick, for peace, for the spread of the kingdom, for missionaries, for the lost, for saints may be answered without our being appraised of the details.
 2. Elijah's prayers were powerful. "Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit" (Jas 5:17-18).
 - a. Why did he pray that it might not rain? Not because they had had too much rain, or that the rivers were overflowing, but to cause repentance. The full narrative of this event is found in 1 Kings 17:1— 18:40.
 - b. He prayed again, and rain fell (1 Kings 18:41-45; Jas 5:17-18, 16).
 3. James did not say every prayer will be heard and answered.
 - a. Formal word-speaking prayers are not heard.
 - b. The prayers of rebellious, disobedient men are not heard.
 4. God hears the prayers of righteous people.
 - a. If we are sick, we do not call for some wicked person, or a hypocrite, or a lukewarm member to pray for us.
 - b. We want the prayers of the most devout and righteous people.
 - c. A righteous person must pray fervently, sincerely, and often.
- D. There is a great need for prayer in this time of discouragement and uncertainty.
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1. Every Christian needs to pray.
 - a. We need to pray personally and privately. We ought to set aside a regular time and place to pray.
 - b. We need to pray fervently, sincerely, daily, and scripturally.
2. Each family needs to pray together.
 - a. We need to pray when we sit down to eat, and at other times when possible.
 - b. Hearing the father pray should be familiar sound to children.
3. Christians need to pray together.
 - a. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20).
 - b. We ought to pray when special needs arise.
 - c. We ought to pray for our country, its leaders, for the gospel to have free course in the world, and for the work of kingdom.
 - 1) 2 Thessalonians 3:1: "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have *free* course, and be glorified, even as *it is* with you."
 - 2) 1 Timothy 2:1-2: "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and *for* all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."
4. We need to have great faith in the power of prayer.
 - a. The Lord indeed hears and is touched by our prayers. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do....For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, *yet* without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:13,15,16).
 - b. God is our caring, loving, and reachable Father; he is interested in hearing and answering our prayers.
 - c. God is powerful; he is able to answer since he is the Living God; he does not have to work a miracle to answer prayer.
 - d. God is wise enough to answer in the right way; he does not always respond in our way.
 - e. We ought to be fully persuaded in the effectiveness of prayer, and pray accordingly.

III. CONCLUSION.

A. Erring saints need to pray for forgiveness.

1. Acts 8:22: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."
 2. James 5:16-20: "Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."
 3. 1 John 1:7-10: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive
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us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

B. Alien sinners need to obey the gospel; prayer does not save such a person.

1. Acts 16:30-33: "And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway."
 2. Acts 17:30: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."
 3. Acts 8:37: "And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."
 4. Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 5. Saul of Tarsus came to believe on Christ, repented from his sins, and confessed his faith; at this point he spent many hours praying fruitlessly; he was told to arise and obey the gospel (Acts 9:1-11; 22:16).
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CHRISTIAN WIVES AND NON-CHRISTIAN HUSBANDS

Hugo McCord

The King James Version, my mother's Bible, has these words:

Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives (1 Peter 3:1).

If non-Christian husbands "obey not the word" of God to "repent and be baptized for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38), they "may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives" (1 Peter 3:1).

Some non-Christian husbands can be won by listening to verses from "the word" of God, while others resent their wives reading "the word" to them. When husbands show irritation, wise wives "without the word" make another approach, a silent one, displaying "a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (1 Peter 3:1, 4). They have found that conversations with such husbands about obeying Jesus Christ get no where.

But why does the King James Version say that non-Christian husbands "may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives" (1 Peter 3:1)? Those words are a contradiction: win a husband without the word, that is, without talking, and win a husband by conversation! "Conversation" is "a talking together; informal or familiar talk" (Webster).

However, the word "conversation" at the time the King James Version was written, back in 1611, did not mean "talk," but "general behavior, deportment," a definition that Webster says is now "Archaic." Therefore, since the word "conversation" now means only "talk," it is not an accurate translation of Peter's inspired word *anastrophe*, "manner of life, conduct." The New King James Version of 1980 has eliminated the word "conversation" (twice in 1 Peter 3:1-2) and replaced it with "conduct."

Thus we see that Peter was advising Christian wives, who have not won their husbands to Christ by talk, to stop talking and exhibit good conduct. Their best approach to husbands is not conversation, but a "pure manner of life" with "a gentle and quiet spirit, which before God is of surpassing value" (1 Peter 3:2-4).

The power of a wife, for good or for bad, someone has expressed in these words: "For every woman who has made a fool out of a man there is a woman who has made a man out of a fool." Thank God, there are many examples of Christian wives who have won their husbands to Christ by following Peter's inspired advice.

Daymie Pearle Gibbs

Daymie Pearle Gibbs obeyed the gospel in Centralia, Illinois, but, writes her daughter,

My dad never went to church. He loved his hunting and fishing too much to give up his time. My mother wanted to attend [services every Sunday], and she did. [On Sunday night], it would be dark when she was to come home, so she told my dad, "I guess I won't go tonight. I'm afraid to walk home by myself."

Dad said, "Get ready. I'll take you." So he went with her [for two Sunday nights. As they started on the third Sunday night] he told my mother, "I never slept a wink. I realize I am the worst of sinners. No better than a thief or murderer in God's sight. I want to go back tonight and be baptized." They went, and he was baptized.

He gave up fishing and hunting on Sunday, and they never missed a service after that. I too can thank my mother for her influence on me. I became a Christian because of her teaching (Mary Juanita Boyd, 11919 NE Knott St., Portland, OR 97220).

Willie Fayette

A Christian young lady married a non-Christian, and in much grief she paid for it. He hated the church and church people. His language was of cursing and bitterness, even in the presence of their son and daughter, and when visitors were present. Wisely, Willie stopped asking Al to go to church, though she and the children never missed. At home she went out of her way to be a kind and thoughtful wife.

With no spiritual leadership from Al, Willie decided meals would not be eaten unless thanksgiving had been expressed, and she led the prayers. She subscribed for that worthwhile magazine of daily devotionals, POWER FOR TODAY, and at the breakfast table she read a selection each morning. This Al tolerated with a frown and tried to ignore it.

One day their son, seeing a baptism at services, went home and asked his father if he had been baptized. Al's reply was coldly negative. But apparently the lad's question was not forgotten. Soon Al volunteered to go to church on Sunday mornings only, but he told Willie, "Don't ask me to go at any other time." Wisely, she agreed.

At a Sunday morning service, while they were standing up for the invitation song, Willie was weeping, which Al noticed. At home he asked her why she cried. She said, "Sit down, Al, I want to talk to you." When they had sat, she continued:

Al, you have taken out a large insurance policy on your life to take care of me and the children if you die. You have assigned your eyes to the eye bank that others might see when you are dead. You have assigned your body to the Tulane Medical School for research to help others when you are gone. You have taken care of everything but your soul, and you ask me why I am crying!

That was enough. Shortly Al was baptized. He went through quite a struggle to quit using habitual curse words. He became a daily Bible reader and never missed a service at church. Such amazing growth he made in a knowledge of the word (reading it morning and night on long bus rides to and from work), the elders at Gretna, Louisiana, asked him to supervise the Bible school. Now, in retirement, he works diligently with correspondence work and in a jail ministry in Natchez, Mississippi.

Doris Darling

George Darling was attracted to Doris, a fine Christian girl. He dated her often, and soon went to church with her at every service. She thought he would soon be baptized, and made the mistake of marrying him unbaptized. On the first Sunday after their wedding, he asked her to stay home with him. She refused, and went to services alone. He was stubborn (he told me later) and stopped going to church with her completely.

She remembered Peter's words that if husbands "obey not the word" they may "without the word be won by the conduct of the wives" (1 Peter 3:1), not "the conversation of the wives." So, with a "meek and quiet spirit" she lived with George, with no nagging, being a good wife in every way.

When their first child was born, she stayed home from services one Sunday, but the next Sunday she

arose early, bathed herself and the baby, prepared breakfast, and soon was ready to go to church. George, unknown to her, had gone out to their car in the garage, raised the hood, disconnected some wires, lowered the hood, and returned to the living room.

Doris wrapped the baby, put on a raincoat, and went to the car. It would not start. She got out, and started walking with the baby toward the church building, about a mile away. George looked out the door, opened it, and called to her, "Come back. I'll fix the car, and take you."

To himself he said, "What a heel I am, treating this precious woman this way." He told her what he had done, apologized, and drove her to the church service, and stayed. That night he drove her to services again, and stayed. In three weeks he was baptized.

He became a gospel preacher, and lived long enough to baptize some 3000 people. When I was with him in a gospel meeting in Jacksonville, Florida, he told me what had happened. Doris loved George, but she loved her Lord even more. Three thousand souls may never have been baptized had it not been for Doris.

Mary Jane Royse

"My grandparents" (writes Nyal D. Royse), "A. J. and Mary Jane Royse resided three miles west of Covington, Indiana, on the old Danville and Covington road. They had a large family. Grandmother was a Christian but grandfather wished to have nothing to do with church. Each Sunday morning she would get the horses up, put on the harness, hitch them to the wagon, and drive into Covington for worship.

"One bitter cold day Grandpap said to her, 'Maw, you're not going to take these children out in this cold weather, are you?' She replied, 'Pap, we are going.' She got the horses harnessed and hitched up and then went to the house to get the children ready. When she went out to go he had unharnessed the horses and turned them back out in the pasture. She sent the children to the house and went back out and got the horses and hitched them up and drove to worship. Granddad never pulled that trick again.

"Another real cold day he asked her again not to go. He got the same answer. He told her that he was going to drive them in, not because he wanted to, but he was ashamed for the neighbors to see her driving to town in the cold and know that he was home, comfortable by the fire. He drove them to Covington but said he would stay in the wagon. Before the service was over he almost froze and had to come in to get warm.

"After that he drove them quite often and then all the time, but he would always sit alone on the back seat. One day he came walking down the aisle and was baptized. Grandmother died in 1922 and he died in 1933. For the eleven years he lived alone he was faithful to the end, thanks to a wife who took over the spiritual leadership of the family while he served Satan."

Mary Jane Royse was God's vessel of honor, for she is the cause of five generations of Christians.

Callie Allison

Callie Allison, an Indianapolis mother of seven sons and two daughters, had a backsliding husband. For years he stayed home while Callie got the children ready and took them to all church services. She saw all of them baptized. One son has become an elder, and two are song leaders.

At Callie's passing, her husband came to the funeral service, one Friday afternoon. On Sunday morning, for the first time in 30 years, he was at church. When the invitation song was sung, he walked down the

aisle, and told the preacher, "Ask the church people to pray for me. I want to be restored. When I die I want to go where Callie is."



1 PETER 4

A. 1 Peter 4:1-6: Living to the Will of God.

1. This section of the epistle teaches that only those who do the will of God will be saved (cf. Matt. 7:21-28). Throughout the Bible, emphasis is placed on obedience, beginning in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:15-17).
 - a. Matthew 7:21-28: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine."
 - b. Genesis 2:15-17: "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."
 - c. Solomon's great conclusion, after his many ordeals, affirmed that the whole duty of man was to fear God and keep his commandments (Eccl. 12:13).
 2. Jesus came to do the will of God:
 - a. John 4:34: "Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."
 - b. John 5:30: "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."
 - c. John 6:38: "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."
 - d. John 9:4: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."
 3. Paul called on us to know the will of God (Eph. 5:17), to be filled with the knowledge of his will (Col. 1:9), and to stand complete in it (Col. 4:12).
 - 1) Ephesians 5:17: "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."
 - 2) Colossians 1:9: "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding."
 - 3) Colossians 4:12: "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God."
 - b. Knowing and doing God's will is paramount, thus the importance of this text.
 4. Verse 1: "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."
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- a. The Lord's example is again held up to us as the proper course to follow. His is the perfect example (1 Pet. 2:21). This verse connects this passage with the preceding information regarding his suffering in the flesh (cf. 3:18).
 - b. The apostle uses the Lord's experiences as an example for Christians to imitate. Christ suffered in the flesh, which showed his love for us: "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. 5:8-9).
 - 1) The Lord also showed his unselfishness: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor. 5:14-15). Perhaps the greatest battle we have to wage is the war against our selfish desires. Few in our generation demonstrate self-discipline—especially in moral and spiritual matters.
 - 2) His victory assures our victory: "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:54-58).
 - c. The mind which our Lord possessed is to be the disposition with which we are to operate. To "arm" ourselves is to equip ourselves with the Lord's attitude. This armament consists "in an unwavering faith in the righteousness of his cause and patient resignation in whatever might befall him here" (Woods, p.107).
 - d. Peter speaks of the process of suffering as causing a reduction in sinning. When one suffers for the cause of Christ, maintaining the right attitude in so-doing, he will become more dedicated to the Lord, and live a fully consecrated life—a life that will have fewer and fewer instances of sin. As brother Woods noted, one who is in the process of suffering martyrdom is not apt to be tempted by "the seductions of the world" (p.107). One who has committed his life to serving Christ, who remains faithful even though his faithfulness brings on persecution, will not likely be easily led away from the Master by temptation.
 - e. His willingness to endure suffering to serve Lord indicates his spiritual maturity. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:23).
 - f. "The apostle spoke first of the Master; now he turns to the disciple. Take, he says, for your armor the thoughts which filled the sacred heart of Christ—the thought that suffering in the flesh is not, as the world counts it, an unmixed evil, but often a deep blessing; for, or because, he that suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin. If, when we are called to suffer, we offer up our sufferings to Christ who suffered for us, and unite our sufferings with his by faith in him, then those sufferings, thus sanctified, destroy the power of sin, and make us cease from sin (comp. Rom 6:10)" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by Biblesoft].
5. Verse 2: "That he no longer should live the rest of *his* time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God."
- a. When we obey the gospel, we are to arm ourselves with the mind of Christ, and live the remainder of our lives following the will of God, and not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh. Our Master is now Christ; we no longer serve the lust of the flesh.
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- b. Christ suffered in the flesh; we are to equip ourselves with the same spirit with which he operated, so that we might live the remainder of our earthly lives serving the will of God. The majority live their lives in service to fleshly appetites—that is their primary concern.
 - c. The “lusts of the flesh” is used in contrast to the will of God. Compare the following:
 - 1) Matthew 6:24: “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”
 - 2) 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5: “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God.”
 - 3) Galatians 5:24: “And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”
 - 4) Romans 6:5-8: “For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.”
 - d. Desires of the flesh include too much food, too much entertainment and pleasure, although these may not be wrong in themselves. “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matt. 6:33).
6. Verse 3: “For the time past of *our* life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries.”
- a. “‘Past’ is, in the Greek, a perfect participle, and ‘have wrought’ a perfect infinitive, indicating that the period under consideration had been terminated and closed. The statement is one of irony, and means that enough time, and more than enough, had already been given to ungodly living such as was generally characteristic of the Gentiles of that period” (Woods, p.108).
 - b. Compare: “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light” (Rom. 13:11-12).
 - c. Lasciviousness [*aselgeia*]: “Unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, out-rageousness, shamelessness, insolence” (Thayer's Greek Lexicon, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2000 by Biblesoft).
 - d. Lusts: “Desire, craving, longing.” “And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer” (Luke 22:15).
 - e. Winebibbings: This word is from the Greek term for wine (*oinos*) and a term which means “to bubble up, to overflow.” This compound word paints a strong picture of drunkenness.
 - f. Revellings: This Greek term “was first used innocently of village merrymaking, but later came to be applied to rioting, drinking parties, and is so used here” (Woods, pp.108f).
 - g. Banquetings (carousings):
 - 1) These were drinking matches in which each participant sought to out-drink all of the others. This sin is widely practiced by some of the worldly-minded of our society.
 - 2) *Potos* NT:4224, lit., "a drinking," signifies not simply a banquet but "a drinking bout, a
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carousal," 1 Peter 4:3 (RV, "carousings" KJV, "banquetings"). Synonymous is *kraipale*, "surfeiting" [Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (c)1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers]. Compare: "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Luke 21:34).

- h. Abominable idolatries: This sinful practice involved licentious, drunken parties in which sensual and immoral conduct were done, being accompanied with idolatrous worship.
7. Verse 4: "Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with *them* to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of *you*."
- a. The profligate Gentiles could not understand why the Christians would not participate with them in their revelling and sensual conduct. Our society has degenerated greatly over the past few decades, but as bad as it has become, it is still rather tame in comparison to much of first century mores.
 - b. The world today thinks it strange that Christians do not partake of the same evil things that they consider acceptable. Thus, the faithful saint is spoken against now, as then.
 - c. The new born babes in Christ of the first century did not continue to live as they formerly lived. Their former associates would speak evil of them for this great change in lifestyle. Our former evil companions can see by the fact we have stopped doing evil things that our actions now condemn them; for this they may hate us.
 - d. Consider some of the special words of this passage:
 - 1) *Run* carries the idea of an enthusiasm for the sinful actions practiced. They hasten to participate in them, and are sorely grieved when we do not join with them.
 - 2) *Excess* has reference to an over-flowing [of the evil practices]. Brother Woods points out that this term was used in classical Greek to describe the gutters which overflowed from a sudden heavy rain (p.109).
 - 3) *Riot* refers to wastefulness or profligacy. "The word rendered 'riot' occurs also in Eph 5:18 and Titus 1:6, and is used in the adverbial form in describing the recklessness of the prodigal son (Luke 15:13). It means that lost state in which a man is given up to self-indulgence, and saves neither reputation, earthly position, nor his immortal soul" [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by BibleSoft].
 - a) Ephesians 5:18: "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."
 - b) Titus 1:6: "If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly."
 - 4) *Speaking evil* is from the Greek word meaning "to blaspheme." "The meaning here is, that they used harsh and reproachful epithets of those who would not unite with them in their revelry. They called them fools, fanatics, hypocrites, etc. The idea is not that they blasphemed God, or that they charged Christians with crime, but that they used language suited to injure the feelings, the character, the reputation of those who would no longer unite with them in the ways of vice and folly" [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by BibleSoft].
8. Verse 5: "Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead."
- a. The wicked ones of the preceding verse will have to give an account of themselves before God. They spoke evil of faithful saints; they will be called on to answer for this and other sins. God will judge the world through the agency of Christ (Acts 17:30-31); Christ is ready (he is prepared) to do that judging. He is fully equipped and able to that job.
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- b. The Judgment of the last day will encompass the living and the dead—all humanity. The dead are those who pass from this life before the coming of Christ and the resurrection; the living are those who will be alive at the Lord’s return.
 - c. The Judgment will be universal; every accountable person will be judged; the righteous will be vindicated and the wicked will be punished (Matt. 25:31-46).
 - 1) 2 Corinthians 5:10-11: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.”
 - 2) Romans 14:10-12: “But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”
 - 3) Revelation 20:12-15: “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”
 - 4) Acts 17:30-31: “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.”
9. Verse 6: “For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.”
- a. Other versions:
 - 1) ASV: “For unto this end was the gospel preached even to the dead, that they might be judged indeed according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.”
 - 2) NKJ: “For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.”
 - b. Barnes give the following interpretation: “It seems to me that the most natural and obvious interpretation is to refer it to those who were then dead, to whom the gospel had been preached when living, and who had become true Christians. This is the interpretation proposed by Wetstein, Rosenmuller, Bloomfield, and others. In support of this it may be said:
 - 1) “That this is the natural and obvious meaning of the word dead, which should be understood literally, unless there is some good reason in the connection for departing from the common meaning of the word.
 - 2) “The apostle had just used the word in that sense in the previous verse.
 - 3) “This will suit the connection, and accord with the design of the apostle. He was addressing those who were suffering persecution. It was natural, in such a connection, to refer to those who had died in the faith, and to show, for their encouragement, that though they had been put to death, yet they still lived to God. He therefore says, that the design in publishing the gospel to them was, that though they might be judged by people in the usual manner, and put to death, yet that in respect to their higher and nobler nature, the spirit, they might live unto God. It was not uncommon nor unnatural for the apostles, in writing
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to those who were suffering persecution, to refer to those who had been removed by death, and to make their condition and example an argument for fidelity and perseverance. Compare 1 Thess 4:13; Rev 14:13” [PC Study Bible].

- c. The contrast is between the living and the dead.
 - 1) “Unto this end” points to the purpose for which the gospel was preached to those the apostle described; that is, the gospel was preached to them so that they might be condemned by men but be alive to God.
 - 2) That which was preached to these individuals was the gospel, the power God uses to save souls (Rom. 1:16-17; 10:1-3).
 - 3) The gospel was preached to those who **are** dead. Since the gospel cannot be preached to dead men, the meaning is that it was preached to them while they were alive; but they are *now* dead. The tenses of the verbs are extremely important to the understanding of the verse. The gospel **was** preached to them that **are** dead. They were living when the preaching was done, but they are now dead. They were dead when Peter wrote this letter and were in the spirit world at that time, but they were alive in this world when the gospel was preached to them.
 - 4) “As a result of having heard this preaching, they obeyed the gospel and became Christians; but they had died, and were thus dead when the epistle was written. While they lived they too were subjected to the evil speaking which Peter’s readers were then suffering; and they, although judged and condemned by ‘men in the flesh’ because of their faithfulness and fidelity to the cause, lived according to God in the spirit, i.e., in the higher, nobler life of the spirit” (Woods, p.110).
- d. “That these to whom the gospel was preached were not the same as those contemplated in 1 Pet. 3:19,20, follows from the fact that those who were the objects of Noah’s preaching rejected that patriarch’s warnings and perished in disobedience in the flood; whereas, these who were the objects of the preaching to which Peter refers had accepted the gospel, and, though dead, had the approbation of God in the spirit realm” (ibid.).

B. 1 Peter 4:7-11: Admonitions to Christian Living.

1. Verse 7: “But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.”
 - a. Sports champions have good control over their coordination and balance; great architecture requires soundness in structure and balance, if it is to be safe and beautiful. The same is true with a Christian. To be spiritually strong and pleasing (to God), we must have the proper balance in knowledge, faith, and obedience. The apostle Peter addressed this principle in the context.
 - b. Peter states that “the end of all things is at hand.” We know that he was not saying that the second coming of Christ was imminent. He was writing by inspiration; since Christ did not come, then the apostle’s comments here never said or implied the coming was impending. John the Baptizer stated that kingdom of heaven was *at hand* (Matt. 3:1-2). He meant that the kingdom was at the threshold; it was ready to be established very soon. Eighty-four preachers in all announced the nearness of the establishment of the kingdom.
 - 1) Matthew 3:1-2: “In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
 - 2) Matthew 4:17: “From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
 - 3) Matthew 10:7: “And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (The twelve disciples were to preach this message).

- 4) Luke 10:9: “And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.” [This instruction was given to the seventy disciples).
- c. Whatever the “all things “ in the context are, these things were soon to be accomplished. As noted above, it is obvious that Peter did not mean the second coming of Christ and the end of the world. To say that the apostle thought that the Lord would return during the first century is to charge him with believing and teaching an error—for in point of fact the Lord did not come! No inspired man could teach error.
- d. Some today try to meet this objection by alleging that in God’s timetable, it has only been “two days” since the first century! This is a foolish misinterpretation of 2 Peter 3:8-11: “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.”
- 1) The context shows that the apostle’s point in this last passage is to show that God will do whatever he promises, regardless of how much or how little time passes; the passing of time has no effect on the reliability of God’s promises.
- 2) This view of the passage (2 Pet. 3:8-11) is obviously correct, which is seen by a simple reading of the verses.
- e. The statement of our present text was given as a motivation for the saints then living to conduct them-selves properly. “Moreover, the words of the text served as a basis and ground for the exhortation which follows, and hence must be determined in harmony with man’s relation to time, and not God’s” (Woods, p.111).
- f. It is apparent that some of the Thessalonians had the mistaken idea that the second coming of Christ was at hand, but Paul wrote the second epistle to them to correct their misunderstanding (2 Thess. 2:1ff). Paul showed that the coming of the Lord would not be until after the great apostasy had taken place, an event that did not develop fully until many years after the end of the first century. Therefore, the second coming of Christ was not imminent then. No man can know when that day will come: “But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is” (Mark 13:32-33).
- g. What is the meaning of the clause, “The end of all things is at hand”? The book of 1 Peter was written about the year 65 A.D., just a short time before the persecution directed by Nero and the invasion, siege, and destruction of Jerusalem (70 A.D.). The phrase, “at hand,” in Matthew 3:2 referred to an event about three and a half years in the future; here, it refers to an event about four or five years in the future (i.e., the destruction of Jerusalem).
- 1) The Jewish religious system had come to an end when the Savior died on the Cross.
- a) Colossians 2:14: “Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”
- b) Ephesians 2:14-15: “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.”
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- c) Matthew 5:17: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.”
 - d) The books of Galatians and Hebrews furnish a full discussion of the end of the Mosaic Law.
 - 2) The Jewish civil system continued until the Romans demolished the temple and Jerusalem. The Jews practiced the regular religious forms until the Romans came, but with the destruction of the temple, together with the elaborate records and genealogical tables, and slew or scattered the priesthood and civil rulers, the civil aspect of Judaism came to a sudden halt. These momentous events had been foretold in some detail by Christ (Matt. 24:1-35; Luke 19:41-44). Luke 21:20-22 is also a good commentary on our present text: “And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. **For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.**”
 - h. The point of emphasis in the verse is the second part: Be sober and watch unto prayer. To be of a sober mind is to have a sound mind; if one is of a sound mind, he has his right mind; he is under self-control; he is ruled by his mind, which has been educated by God’s word. To watch unto prayer is to have an active life of prayer. “A sound mind and a sober disposition prompting to regular and persistent prayer would best avail them in the midst of the dangers with which they were soon to be assailed” (Woods, p.112). Prayer is one of the most influential helps in life.
 - 1) 1 Thessalonians 5:17: “Pray without ceasing.”
 - 2) Ephesians 6:18: “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”
 - 3) Philippians 4:6: “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”
 - 4) 1 Timothy 2:1-3: “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.”
 - 2. Verse 8: “And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.”
 - a. In view of the approaching troublous times which would accompany the overthrow of Judaism, the apostle admonishes the saints to be fervent in love. The word translated “fervent” speaks of straining or stretching (as a string on a musical instrument). Their love was to be intense and earnest. Fervent love for each other would greatly assist them in facing the problems.
 - 1) 1 Peter 1:22: “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.”
 - 2) John 13:34-35: “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”
 - b. Under ordinary circumstances, there are occasions when friction develops between brethren. Under the extraordinary circumstances to which the apostle has referred, they might be many
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such occasions. The solution is fervent love. In those cases where sin results from this conflict between brethren, forgiveness (which is produced by love) will hide a multitude of sins.

- 1) Christian love is sufficiently strong to forgive the penitent: “Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him” (Luke 17:3-4).
 - 2) Forgiveness cannot be extended to one who is impenitent; love cannot be stretched to encompass or overlook sin or religious error. God does not forgive the impenitent, and he does not expect (or permit) us to forgive one who refuses to repent. We are to stand ready to extend forgiveness (Mark 11:25), but only when repentance is forthcoming (cf. Luke 17:3-4).
 - a) Mark 11:25: “And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.”
 - b) Luke 17:3-4: “Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.”
 - 3) The forgiveness that we offer to a penitent saint is not the actual forgiveness of sin; it is God who releases one from the guilt of sin; the forgiveness we offer means that the offense no longer stands between us and the offending party—repentance removes that obstacle.
 - 4) If we desire God to forgive us, we must be willing to forgive those who sin against us: “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses (Matt. 6:14-15).
 - c. Love will cause us to be long-suffering with our fellow-Christians, giving them the benefit of the doubt (cf. 1 Cor. 13:5: “Love thinketh no evil”). Love causes us to rebuke others who fall into sin, yet with tenderness (Galatians 6:1: “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted”). Thus, love, even by rebuking, can cause a multitude of sins to be covered (i.e., forgiven).
 - d. Our present text is similar to James 5:19-20, and both have a connection with Proverbs 10:12: “Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.”
 - 1) 1 Peter 4:8: “And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.”
 - 2) James 5:19-20: “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”
3. Verse 9: “Use hospitality one to another without grudging.”
- a. Hospitality has reference to friendliness and kindness toward strangers. This practice is one of the attributes of Christianity. During that time of persecution and hardship directed against Christians, hospitality was sorely needed. Due to opposition, it would be necessary for the brethren to move from place to place; they would need help.
 - b. Under ordinary travels, proper accommodations might be hard to find; perhaps they could not afford the cost; perhaps wickedness at the inn would be more than the saint could endure; perhaps the door of hospitality would be closed against them because they were Christians. For one reason or another, it was essential that Christians should extend hospitality to other Christians.
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- c. Travel is often difficult and tiring—under good circumstances. It is significant that the English word “travel” derives from the English word “travail.” In older times, criminals could be encountered along the way, even at some inns; danger might still be experienced today.
 - d. Showing hospitality is a great blessing to those in need of it, but it is even a greater blessing to those who show it. In our modern society, when thieves and murderers operate under the guise of religion and need, we must exercise caution for the safety and well-being of our family; but there are many occasions in which hospitality may be safely practiced.
 - 1) Hebrews 13:2 speaks of some entertaining angels unawares. In certain Biblical cases, there were some who entertained angels without being aware of their identity. This was true in the case of Abraham (Gen. 18) and Lot (Gen. 19). We have no reason to believe that angels travel about the country in human form today, testing God’s people about their hospitality. But in the miraculous age of the first century, such might have been possible. For us, there may be pleasant surprises and blessings obtained [especially in eternity] by being hospitable.
 - a) Matthew 10:42: “And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.”
 - b) Hebrews 6:10: “For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.”
 - c) Galatians 6:9-10: “And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.” Modern transportation and accommodations have removed many of the usual opportunities that might otherwise be given us to show hospitality. “Doing good” includes hospitality.
 - d) The Mosaic Law required the Israelites to be hospitable: “*But* the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I *am* the LORD your God” (Lev. 19:34).
 - e) Elders are required to be hospitable (1 Tim. 3:2). Every Christians has an obligation to be hospitable: “Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality” (Rom. 12:13). It is God’s will that this practice should continue to be exercised.
 - e. The Bible has much to say about hospitality.
 - 1) Matthew 25:35: “For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in.”
 - 2) Romans 12:13: “Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.”
 - 3) 1 Timothy 3:2: “A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach.”
 - 4) Titus 1:8: “But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate.”
 - 5) Hebrews 13:2: “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”
 - f. The apostle cautions that our practice of hospitality is not to be done grudgingly; it is to be done without murmuring. We are to gladly do what we can to help our fellow saints, and do so without showing or maintaining feelings of displeasure. While there are some who might take advantage of our hospitality, those who need it most are not likely to do so; the offensive kind can be identified. Our obligations to help others do not extend to those who will not work: “For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work,
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- neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread” (2 Thess. 3:10-12).
- g. “To guard the hospitality-minded against imposition by unworthy people, the letters of commendation mentioned by Paul (2 Cor. 3:1) came into use” (Woods, p.113). “Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you?” (2 Cor. 3:1).
 - h. “Hospitality must have been a necessary, and often a costly, duty in the early ages of the Church. There was no public provision for the poor. Christians traveling from place to place would find no suitable shelter except in the houses of Christians. They would be obliged to avoid the public houses of entertainment, where they would be exposed often to danger, always to temptation; only the private houses of Christians would be safe for them. Hence the use of the ‘letters of commendation,’ mentioned by Paul (2 Cor 3:1). Those who brought such letters were to be received in Christian homes. The well-known ‘Teaching of the Twelve Apostles’ [uninspired material—bw] speaks of this right of hospitality, and gives cautions against its abuse. The apostle is not speaking of ordinary social gatherings; they have their place and their utility in the Christian life, but they do not, as a rule, afford scope for the higher self-denials of Christian charity (comp. Luke 14:12,13)” [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 2001 by BibleSoft].
4. Verse 10: “As every man hath received the gift, *even so* minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”
 - a. The key to understanding this verse is to identify the “gift” indicated. First, the King James Version speaks of this gift as some particular gift (*the* gift); the American Standard Version translates it as *a* gift. We need to keep in mind that this passage (1 Peter 4:7-11) deals with various admonitions which apply to the conduct of Christians. Each verse deals with a different subject.
 - b. The reference could be to one of the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10: “For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues.” If these gifts are meant, then the one who possessed the gift was to use it. Paul gave detailed instructions regarding the exercise of the spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12-14. Verse eleven of the text may lend support to the view that the gift here is a spiritual gift.
 - c. The reference could be to some other gift obtained from God, which could be used in assisting other Christians—with their physical needs or their spiritual requirements.
 - d. “Whatever the nature of the gift—means by which to identify it not being available—it was a gift of grace and designed to be used in the interests of others. In the administration of such gifts the saints were to be ‘good stewards’ (literally, beautiful stewards, *kalos*) of the manifold grace of God. The word ‘manifold’ (*poikile*), here descriptive of the grace of God, signifies that which exists in varied content, and suggests that widespread bestowal of such gifts in the apostolic age” (Woods, pp.113f).
 5. Verse 11: “If any man speak, *let him speak* as the oracles of God; if any man minister, *let him do it* as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”
 - a. The point of emphasis of this verse is the offering of glory to God through Jesus Christ. That
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is the ultimate point of all Christian activity.

- 1) Matthew 5:16: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 10:31: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."
- b. God is glorified through Christ. Therefore, no one is able to bring glory to him through some other name, regardless of how worthy that name might be.
- 1) Acts 4:11-12: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."
 - 2) Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
- c. God is glorified when men speak as the oracles of God speak. The inspired preachers of the first century were divinely guided in their preaching; all others have to study and learn God's word. In both cases, the preacher (or teacher) is to present what God has said.
- d. The Greek word translated "oracles" [*logia*] was used by the ancients in reference to the utterances issuing (supposedly) from the pagan idols. This word is used in the New Testament in reference God's word. The term is found in our text, and also in these passages:
- 1) Acts 7:38: "This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us." [The word here is used of the Mosaic Law].
 - 2) Romans 3:2: "Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God." [The word is here used of the Mosaic Law].
 - 3) Hebrews 5:12: "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat."
- e. The apostle states that if any man speaks (presenting a spiritual lesson), he is to speak in harmony with the oracles of God. When an inspired man spoke, what he said was to be the oracles of God. If any man today speaks (presenting a spiritual lesson), his message is to be in accord with the inspired Scriptures. No glory is brought to God when men speak a message of their own choosing, or speak to please other people. One who has the ability to speak, let him speak what God has ordained, and thus will he glorify God. Many warnings are given in the Scriptures against adding to, taking from, or to pervert God's word in some other way.
- 1) 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other" (ASV).
 - 2) Galatians 1:6-9: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."
 - 3) 2 John 1:9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil

deeds.”

- 4) Revelation 22:18-19: “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”
- f. Peter makes the same point regarding the exercise of a gift of ministering [serving]. The one serving is to use whatever gift he has been supplied by God. In the verse, the apostle summarizes the whole duty of Christians under the two headings of *speaking* and *servicing*. God supplies the message of the speaker and gives the means by which the server does his duty. God is glorified when one of his followers does his duty. God gives the ability and gifts (spiritual gifts to man in the first century; talents and opportunities to everyone) which can be used to aid others and to glorify God. Those who have the ability to minister (to serve in whatever capacity) are to do so.
- g. “The concealments of the Bible are as Divine as its revelations. Infinite wisdom was required as much to determine of what man should be ignorant as what man should know. Indeed, since, in regard to all matters connected with the unseen spiritual world, man is entirely dependent upon Divine revelation, the limits of what revelation must necessarily mark out also the domain of human ignorance, as the shores of a continent become the boundaries of a trackless and unfathomed ocean. Hence it is, that the silence of the Bible is to be revered equally with its teachings, and that to intrude into things not seen and not revealed, evinces the vanity of a fleshly mind as much as to misinterpret and pervert the express statements of the Scriptures” (*Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, Vol. 1, p.351).

C. 1 Peter 4:12-19: Suffering as a Christian.

1. Verse 12: “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.”
 - a. Throughout this epistle, Peter has discussed suffering for the cause of Christ. In this passage, he deals with the subject in a practical manner by showing the good things that result from suffering for righteousness’ sake.
 - b. The apostle bluntly states that the fiery trials of suffering for the sake of the gospel is not to be thought of as strange; in fact, strife and persecutions are the common outgrowth of the Christian life.
 - 1) 2 Timothy 3:12: “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”
 - 2) John 15:18-21: “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.” [Christ is here speaking directly to his apostles].
 - c. This illustrates how far men have gone from God. There are many who will strike out in hatred against those who try to live a godly life. The “Ugly Duckling” was hated by his siblings; the odd colored member of a wolf-pack is attacked by the others; the child with some unusual feature in looks or clothing is rejected and bullied by his peers. Sinful men are often highly resentful of the godly lives of the followers of Christ.
 - d. Hardship and persecution were essential for the Lord’s church in the first century to be made

- strong so as to endure. Without the terrible affliction our brethren endured then, the faith would not have been as firmly established in the world. Without opposition today, our faith is not apt to be strong. Struggle develops strength, in our physical bodies and in our spirits.
- e. “The figure here used is that of gold ore cast into a crucible for the purpose of separating the worthless dross from the precious metal. The illustration is a frequent one in the Bible” (Woods, p.116).
 - 1) Job 23:10: “But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”
 - 2) Psalms 66:10: “For thou, O God, hast proved us: thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.”
 - 3) Proverbs 27:21: “As the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; so is a man to his praise.”
 2. Verse 13: “But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.”
 - a. When a Christian suffers for righteousness' sake, he is partaking of the similar kind of painful ordeal our Lord endured. Of course, his suffering were far more severe than ours; and we are not literally crucified, but we also endure agonizing trials, as he did. Evil men hated him because he exposed their sinful conduct by his teachings and by his pure life; the same is true with us.
 - b. Our Lord gave utterance to a thought similar to the one here expressed by Peter: “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you” (Matt. 5:10-12).
 - c. Blessings result if we are able to endure persecutions patiently:
 - 1) Mark 10:30: “But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.”
 - 2) 2 Timothy 4:6-8: “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”
 - 3) Revelation 2:10: “Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”
 - 4) Romans 8:18: “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”
 - d. The “revelation of his glory” is a reference to his second coming at the end of time. Following the resurrection of the dead and the changing of the living, all of us will be brought before him in the Judgment of the last day (Matt. 25:31-46).
 - 1) Eternal life will be presented to the righteous, and eternal punishment will be meted out to the unrighteous (Matt. 25:46; 2 Thess. 1:6-10).
 - 2) The great rewards of eternal life before the throne of God will create indescribable joy within the hearts of all the redeemed. The sufferings of this present time will seem as nothing! The hardship we now suffer for the cause of Christ may be taken as a token of the tremendous honors and awards to be granted to us in eternity!

- e. 1 Peter 1:3-9: “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.”
3. Verse 14: “If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye*; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.” “If ye are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are ye; because the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God resteth upon you” (ASV).
 - a. The apostle has virtually affirmed that they would indeed suffer reproaches for the name of Christ, so the statement here does not suggest a doubt.
 - b. To be reproached is to be slandered, reviled, and blasphemed. This type of opposition is common to all periods of time; the very least that the enemy will do against the saints is to speak reproachfully. The Roman writer, Tacitus, says that Christians were "a class of men hated on account of their crimes." Their “crimes” were imaginary.
 - c. The sufferings and reproaches Peter has in mind are those which come as a result of the faithfulness of the brethren; they were persecuted for righteousness’ sake—they were hated and opposed for their adherence to the Savior. But the apostle states that a state of happiness was upon them because of this. The word translated “happy” is the same word used in the beatitudes (Matt. 5:3-12).
 - d. The “Spirit of Glory” and the “Spirit of God” refer to the Holy Spirit. [The ASV capitalizes the word “*spirit*”]. Miraculous gifts were bestowed upon certain members of the church during the first century; and the Holy Spirit abides in faithful Christians (when the gospel is the guiding principle of their lives). There has been great controversy regarding how the Holy Spirit indwells the saints, but it seems clearly to be a representative means when these passages are considered:
 - 1) Ephesians 5:18-19: “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.” [The responsibility of being filled with the Spirit is placed upon the individual].
 - 2) Colossians 3:16: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” [The responsibility of letting the word of Christ dwell in us is an individual obligation].
 - 3) Peter states that these suffering saints have the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God resting upon them. The fact he affirms regarding this condition was intended to cause them to appreciate their state of blessedness; the persecutions would be lightened by their having this awareness.
 - e. The latter part of the verse is omitted by the ASV. The KJV contains the statement that Christ is evil-spoken of by their tormentors, but he is glorified by the suffering saints.
 4. Verse 15: “But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.”
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- a. There is no advantage to the soul for suffering for some crime or some sinful activity. There are struggles which we must endure because we live in an imperfect world; these same struggles are faced by everyone; we all are subject to accidents and diseases; we all grow old and suffer the infirmities brought on by age; but these are not the kind of hardships which the apostle is addressing. As he will say in the next verse, he has in mind the sufferings which come upon us because we are Christians. [Of course, we may use the ordinary struggles of life as a means of increasing our spiritual strength in patience, faith, etc.].
 - b. The admonition of this verse is intended to prevent Christians from ever committing murder, or being a thief, or getting caught up in some wicked act; further, we are warned against being a busybody in the affairs of other people.
 - c. The suffering blessed by the Lord is that which is endured for righteousness' sake. Of course, when we endure patiently the common troubles of life, we will gain greater spiritual strength. "But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing" (1 Pet. 3:14-17).
 - d. Notice the terms the apostle uses:
 - 1) Murder. Human life was viewed as cheap then; it is becoming cheap in our time. Abortion and euthanasia are gross examples of how valueless many view human life today. It is also seen in the light sentences which are frequently handed out for murder, while other crimes are much more severely punished.
 - 2) Thief. Man has the right to own property, or else how could anyone be a thief? An individual's ownership of property means it does not belong to someone else. Even in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had to work (they were required to dress and keep the garden—Gen. 2:15). When people will not work, they are denying God's precepts; and when someone takes what belongs to another, that act is both criminal and sinful.
 - a) Ephesians 4:28: "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."
 - b) 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12: "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread."
 - 3) Evildoing. This is a broad term, including criminals and all breakers of the law—inclusive of civil lawbreaking and spiritual violations.
 - 4) Busybodies and meddlers. "The entire phrase—'a meddler in other men's matters'—is translated from the Greek word, *allotriopiskopos*, compounded from *allotrios*, belonging to another, and *episkopos*, the usual word for bishop or overseer in the New Testament; thus, literally, *a bishop or overseer over other men's matters!* The word forbids all intrusion into those things which do not concern us, all interference in the affairs of others" (Woods, p.118). Compare: "Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me" (John 21:21-22).
 5. Verse 16: "Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." "But if a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify
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God in this name” (ASV).

- a. To suffer as a Christian is to suffer for being a Christian; this is put in contrast to suffering for murder, stealing, doing evil, or meddling.
- b. If we are called on to suffer because we are Christians, this must not be a source of shame for us, but a cause for glorifying God. “And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ” (Acts 5:41-42).
- c. The word “Christian” is used three times in the Bible:
 - 1) Acts 11:26: “And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”
 - 2) Acts 26:28: “Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.”
 - 3) 1 Peter 4:16: “Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.”
- d. Acts 11:26 reports that the disciples were *called* Christians first at Antioch. Some do not like the name Christian, so they allege that the enemy was the source of this new name. But the word "called" is used nine times in the New Testament, and in every case it has reference to some act of God, unless this verse is the exception:
 - 1) Matthew 2:12: "And being **warned** of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod...."
 - 2) Matthew 2:22: "But when he heard the Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his father, Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being **warned** of God...."
 - 3) Luke 2:26: "And it was **revealed** unto him by the Holy Ghost."
 - 4) Acts 10:22: "And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was **warned** from God by a holy angel...."
 - 5) Acts 11:26: "And the disciples were **called** Christians first in Antioch."
 - 6) Romans 7:3: "So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be **called** an adulteress...."
 - 7) Hebrews 8:5: "...For, See saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern **showed** to thee in the mount."
 - 8) Hebrews 11:7: "By faith Noah, being **warned** of God...."
 - 9) Hebrews 12:25: "...Much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that **speaketh** from heaven."
- e. The "Watch Tower Witnesses" claim that the name "Christian" was given in derision by the enemies of the church. They have to take this wild view because they assert that "Jehovah's Witnesses" is the proper name for God's people. This claim is as baseless and false as all of their other peculiar doctrines. In view of the other uses of *chrematizo* ("called"), it is clear that God was the source of this name. Thayer gives this definition of the Greek term: "To give a response to those consulting an oracle, to give a divine command or admonition, to teach from Heaven; to be divinely commanded, admonished, instructed; to be the mouthpiece of divine revelations, to promulgate the commands of God" (p.671).
- f. Old Testament prophecies gave information ahead of time regarding this new name:
 - 1) Isaiah 56:5: "Even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name, that

shall not be cut off." Although we are not told here what that name is, the name "Christian" fits the details predicted.

- a) It was given in God's house, the church (1 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 2:11-22). It was to the members of the church that the name Christian was given (Acts 11:26).
 - b) It was a better name than that of sons and daughters, for from the human perspective, the name can die out and the relationship cease. But this new name would be never-ending—God knows those who are his, even though they have been dead for many centuries! (Cf. 2 Tim. 2:19).
- 2) Isaiah 62:2: "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name."
- a) After the righteousness that is of the gospel was revealed to the Gentiles, God would supply a new name. It was after the first Gentiles became followers of Christ that the name Christian was given. Acts 10; Acts 11:19-26.
 - b) In some fashion, kings would be involved in connection with the giving of the new name. Christ said that Paul was "a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel" (Acts 9:15). It was after Paul was brought to Antioch, where large numbers of Gentiles had obeyed the gospel, that the name was given. And this same apostle was the "chosen vessel" to bear Christ's name before kings. His later history reveals several cases where Paul stood before kings and other rulers, in defense of the gospel. Soon after his conversion in Damascus, he had encountered King Aretas (2 Cor. 11:32-33).
 - c) The new name was one which would be supplied by the Lord, not by some enemy.
- 3) If "Christian" is not the new name, what is the new name? Has it been given yet? If not, why not? Paul was to bear the name of Christ before men; the name of Christ is the prime ingredient of *Christian*; the name means "follower of Christ." We conclude, without the slightest doubt, that "Christian" is the new name, and that it was coined by the mind of God.
- g. "The etymology and derivation of the word 'Christian' contain an amazing epitome of the root, the growth, and spread of the religion which he whom the name honors established. The meaning is of Hebrew origin; it appears in the New Testament in Greek form, with a Latin termination; and points, like the inscription which Pilate caused to be placed on the cross to the world-wide empire which he established" (Woods, pp.118f).
- h. Barnes offers the following:
- 1) "He is to regard his religion as every way honorable, and all that fairly results from it in time and eternity as in every respect desirable. He is not to be ashamed to be called a Christian; he is not to be ashamed of the doctrines taught by his religion; he is not to be ashamed of the Saviour whom he professes to love; he is not to be ashamed of the society and fellowship of those who are true Christians, poor and despised though they may be; he is not to be ashamed to perform any of the duties demanded by his religion; he is not to be ashamed to have his name cast out, and himself subjected to reproach and scorn. A man should be ashamed only of that which is wrong. He should glory in that which is right, whatever may be the consequences to himself.
 - 2) "Christians now, though not subjected to open persecution, are frequently reproached by the world on account of their religion; and though the rack may not be employed, and the fires of martyrdom are not enkindled, yet it is often true that one who is a believer is called to 'suffer as a Christian.' He may be reviled and despised. His views may be regarded as
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bigoted, narrow, severe. Opprobrious epithets, on account of his opinions, may be applied to him. His former friends and companions may leave him because he has become a Christian. A wicked father, or a frivolous and worldly mother, may oppose a child, or a husband may revile a wife, on account of their religion. In all these cases, the same spirit essentially is required which was enjoined on the early Christian martyrs. We are never to be ashamed of our religion, whatever results may follow from our attachment to it....

- 3) “[But let him glorify God on this behalf] Let him praise God that he is deemed not unworthy to suffer in such a cause. It is a matter of thankfulness: (1) that they may have this evidence that they are true Christians; (2) that they may desire the advantages which may result from suffering as Christ did, and in his cause” [Biblesoft, *ibid.*].
6. Verse 17: “For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God?”
- a. The time of which the apostle here speaks was even then upon his readers. Since nearly two thousand years have since passed, it is obvious that the day of Judgment was not the judgment Peter had in mind. The context is filled with references to suffering which the saints would encounter. They had already faced opposition, but the “fiery trial” which was about ready to gush forth would be much more severe.
 - b. The judgment Peter describes was to begin “at the house of God.” It would first begin “at us.” That being the case, what a dreadful prospect the disobedient would have! God takes care of his own; he protects, sustains, and assists us. With these great advantages and helps, since the saints were about to undergo a severe trial, how much more difficult would be the troubles of the disobedient population!
 - c. The house of God is the church, God’s family, Christians, saints, the kingdom of God.
 - 1) 1 Timothy 3:15: “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”
 - 2) Matthew 16:18-19: “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”
 - 3) Colossians 1:13-14: “Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”
 - 4) Ephesians 1:22-23: “And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”
 - d. What will *the end* be for the disobedient ones! The “end” refers to the doom awaiting those who had not obeyed the gospel. Paul speaks of the final Judgment in 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, when he affirms that those who know not God and obey not the gospel of Christ will be consigned to eternal punishment in hell. But Peter is not discussing the final Judgment.
 - e. The point of the passage: If the family of God, which has the providential care of the Almighty ever upon them, is going to suffer harsh trials, what will the end be for those who have not obeyed the gospel! The misery and hardship will be even more severe on them, for they do not rely on the Lord, do not have the hope faithful Christians have, and will not have the comforting assurances enjoyed by the saints. God’s purpose of these judgments and trials on his people was to strengthen them, and give the church the hardiness, resolve, and the foundation to enable them to continue. It would also “weed out” the insincere and

uncommitted.

- 1) Hebrews 12:5-11: “And ye have forgotten the exhortation which reasoneth with you as with sons, My son, regard not lightly the chastening of the Lord, Nor faint when thou art reproved of him; For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, And scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. It is for chastening that ye endure; God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father chasteneth not? But if ye are without chastening, whereof all have been made partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed good to them; but he for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness. All chastening seemeth for the present to be not joyous but grievous; yet afterward it yieldeth peaceable fruit unto them that have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness” (ASV).
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 11:32: “But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world” (ASV).
- f. Notice: Those who obey not the gospel are not the house of God. Those who obey not the gospel will not receive God’s help during this period of trial forthcoming and will be severely punished in the last day when they stand before God in the final Judgment (2 Thess. 1:7-9; Matt. 25:46).
7. Verse 18: “And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?”
- a. The righteous are those of the house of God, those who have obeyed the gospel. These live their lives in harmony with the teachings of the gospel. These are the ones who are the faithful of God.
 - 1) Matthew 7:21-23: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” [This passage speaks of the final Judgment; those who will be blessed in the final Judgment are the obedient; those who will be assisted during the judgment Peter describes are also the obedient].
 - 2) 1 John 2:4-5: “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.”
 - 3) 1 John 1:5-10: “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”
 - 4) 1 Peter 1:18-23: “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have

purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”

- 5) 2 Peter 1:3-11: “According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” [Those who live a spiritually-growing life will be providentially assisted in life, and will be blessed in the final Judgment].
- b. If the righteous scarcely will be saved from the impending fiery trial, what of the ungodly and sinner? If, in the afflictions which then loomed large on the horizon, the righteous man was scarcely saved, how infinitely worse the lot of the lost, and impossible the salvation of the ungodly and sinner. “‘Scarcely’ (*molis*) denotes that which is accomplished only with great difficulty. It does not suggest doubt as to the outcome; only wonder that such a thing is possible!” (Woods, pp.119f).
 - 1) In the final Judgment, we are clearly told in 2 Peter 1:11, the righteous will receive an abundant entrance into Heaven. To paraphrase the statement there, the gates of Heaven will be swung wide to give us entrance! But in the judgment of our text, the righteous will scarcely be saved. That is, there would be great difficulty involved in this deliverance. This factor establishes as fact that the judgment of the passage is not the final Judgment.
 - 2) To anticipate our conclusion, the salvation here is of a material nature. With difficulty, the saints would be kept alive to come through the present judgment. The terrible ordeal of those tumultuous times could not be limited to only a selected class of the population, or to a local area only. The wrath of the Roman might fell upon the rebellious Jews. At the same time, persecution was directed against Christians throughout the Empire.
 - 3) The horrendous effects of the brutalizing of such a great portion of the population, would necessarily have harsh effects on the rest of the citizens—in varying degrees. The economic consequences would be severe and widespread. The rebellious and unbelieving Jews would be receiving just punishment for their insurrection against imperial Rome, as well as due payment for rejecting the Messiah.
 - 4) Christians would be suffering because of their faith. There would be painful consequences to be felt by society in general, in the economic hardships, in the losses and privations war brings upon society, and in the fears produced by these turmoils. If God’s people were to be subjected to the evil treatment indicated, how awful would be the retribution with which God would punish the offenses of their wicked tormentors!
 - c. The ungodly man and the sinner are the same; the single definite article (*the*) used in the Greek text indicates that these are the same person. The sinner is an ungodly man; the ungodly man

is a sinner. The ungodly man has no reverence toward God; the sinner devotes his life to serving sin. "In the Greek text the article appears before the word 'ungodly' only, thus indicating that the term 'sinner' is to be understood as an additional description of the 'ungodly' man, and that both terms refer to the same individual. Impiety, irreverence, leads irresistibly into positive sin" (Woods, p.120). Since it would be the case that the righteous would only with great difficulty survive the judgment Peter has in mind, then the outcome for the ungodly and sinful man would be in much greater doubt!

- d. What is the judgment of which the apostle speaks? Obviously, it is not the final Judgment, for that will take place at the end of time, following the return of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and changing of the living. Since these great events have not transpired, the final Judgment is not the judgment of the passage. The judgment was on the verge of being accomplished when the apostle penned these words. Peter spoke earlier in the chapter that "the end of all things is at hand" (vs. 7). This judgment and the end of all things are manifestly identical.
 - 1) As noted under verse seven, the epistle of First Peter was written about 65 A.D., about four or five years before the Romans invaded Palestine and destroyed the Jewish system. The phrase "at hand" unquestionably means that the events depicted were very soon to take place.
 - 2) In verses seventeen and eighteen, we are told that the time had come for the *judgment* to begin. This judgment was then impending and imminent. The time factor verifies that the judgment of this passage is not the final Judgment.
- e. Peter's statements are parallel with the Lord's descriptions in Matthew 24 of the destruction of the temple, Jerusalem, and the Jewish system. Consider these two verses:
 - 1) Matthew 24:13: "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." [The salvation here is physical survival].
 - 2) Matthew 24:22: "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." [The Roman siege of Jerusalem was cut short, enabling the Christians in the city to escape without the loss of single life among the saints. We have historical records that show the Roman army withdrew temporarily, which gave Christians the opportunity to leave the city. The Jews remained throughout the siege, and more than a million of them died, under some of the most awful circumstances imaginable].
 - 3) The war against the Jews brought severe hardship on the church and had evil effects necessarily on the whole civilized world, to some extent. The time-frame of which Peter wrote included the destruction of the Jewish state and the general persecutions under Nero. "Fiery trials" aptly describes the upcoming persecutions and sufferings.
- f. Matthew 24:21-22: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."
 - 1) Notice that the time when this great tribulation was to occur is the same as when the abomination of desolation came and when the saints were to flee from Judea and Jerusalem. We know that this great tribulation is not something that is to occur at the end of time because of the information preceding its mention and by the limiting statement of verse 34. There is no reason for taking the statement of verse 21 as a figure of speech. Jesus said plainly that the suffering of that period of time was unparalleled in history. It had greater suffering than that which was experienced during Noah's flood (those people died quickly, in a relatively painless way); it was greater than when God destroyed Sodom

and Gomorrah (their death was not preceded with any long period of agony); it was greater than the suffering felt by those who died in either of the Atomic explosions in Japan (for those mostly died instantly).

- 2) In fact, when Josephus' record is consulted, we have much reason to understand it literally. Josephus gave the following reports:
 - a) 1,100,000 Jews died at Jerusalem during the siege and fighting, and another 97,000 were captured and placed in slavery. How foolish the Jewish bravado of Matthew 27:25: "His blood be on up, and on our children."
 - b) Women ate their own babies, men broke into houses and stole food from children's mouths, and neighbor robbed neighbor for the food they had.
 - c) Rich Jews swallowed gold, deserted to the Romans, hoping to get away with some of their wealth. When the soldiers discovered the scheme, they began killing those who surrendered, ripping open their bodies in search of the coins. Thousands died in this fashion, two thousand in only one night.
 - d) Many were beaten and tortured by the Roman soldiers; thousands were crucified in various bodily positions as jests. This was done until all of the wood had been used as crosses, and even places to erect crosses were filled!
 - e) By actual count, 115,880 bodies were carried through one gate in three months; there were 600,000 in all thus disposed of. When the bodies could no longer be thrown outside the city, they were stored in large houses within the city.
 - f) Thousands of the captives were later forced to fight beasts and each other in arenas; this for the enjoyment of spectators.
- 3) Jerusalem was overthrown and the temple was utterly destroyed; Matthew 24:2 was literally fulfilled. When the Romans broke into the city, Josephus said, "...They slew whomsoever they found, without distinction, and burned the houses and all the people who had fled into them; and when they entered for the sake of plunder, they found whole families of dead persons, and houses full of carcasses destroyed by famine, then they came out with their hands empty. And though they thus pitied the dead, they had not the same emotion for the living, but killed all they met, whereby they filled the lanes with dead bodies. The whole city ran with blood, insomuch that many things which were burning were extinguished by the blood" (Wars, Book VI, chap. 8,5; chap. 9,3).
- 4) God mercifully shortened the tribulation.
 - a) 1 Peter 4:15-19: "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."
 - b) "History records that Titus determined to reduce Jerusalem by famine, a long and destructive mode of conquest, and for this purpose he surrounded it with a wall and ditch. After completing his preparation for this attack on the city, he received news from Rome which urged him to hasten to Rome. He changed his plan and pressed the city by assault, that he might return to Rome, where his presence was greatly needed; hence, 'those days had been shortened.' The overruling providence of God shortened

these days 'for the elect's sake.' 'The elect' has reference to the Christians who were among the Jews at that time. This elect group were to be preserved in order that the gospel might be handed down to future ages" (H. Leo Boles, *Commentary on Matthew*, Gospel Advocate Company, pp.466f).

- 5) "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. 24:30). The mourning would be the outgrowth of the terrible things included in this great tribulation. All the Jewish people, not only those who were present to face the terrible ordeal, but those who were living in many places throughout the Empire (Acts 2:5), would mourn over the evil which was befalling their nation. The consequences of this great tribulation would also have effects on other people and nations. The suffering and the resulting sorrow of such a tremendous tribulation, in which well over a million people died under the most horrible of circumstances during a 3-5 five month span, would certainly cause terrible mourning on the part of many. The word "earth" of this clause can be either earth or land, including the occupied earth in the former case, or the land of Palestine in the latter. Those mourning would include especially those who were enduring the suffering and death, and extend to all the others who were sympathetic to them, or who also had to endure the consequences of Israel's great plight.
8. Verse 19: "Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator."
 - a. In view of the foregoing fearful facts, the apostle called on the brethren to commit themselves to the keeping of God. There would be special need for God's help during those frightful times.
 - b. Peter is speaking to faithful saints, those who would be suffering in keeping with the will of God. He is not addressing the ones who were to suffer for their own sinful conduct.
 - 1) Matthew 26:24-25: "The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said."
 - 2) Matthew 23:36-39: "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."
 - 3) Luke 23:27-30: "And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us."
 - c. Those who suffer for righteousness' sake are told to commit their souls to God. To commit carries the idea of "to deliver a deposit" (Woods, p.121).
 - 1) 1 Peter 2:23: "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."
 - 2) 2 Timothy 1:12: "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that

which I have committed unto him against that day.”

- 3) Luke 23:46: “And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.”
 - d. God is a faithful Creator. He is ever faithful. He can always be trusted. He will never abuse his awesome powers. He will always keep his word.
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I PETER 5

A. 1 Peter 5:1-4: Duties of Elders.

1. Verse 1: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed."
 - a. No worthwhile enterprise can operate successfully without proper leadership and organization. This is true in the military and with business; it is no less needed in the Lord's operations. Under the Mosaic Law, God saw fit to set up an orderly arrangement of organization.
 - 1) In the spiritual aspects of the Law, the High Priest presided over twenty-four courses of priests, each of which had its chief priest.
 - 2) In the civil aspects of the Law, Moses was God's appointed leader. Each tribe had its leaders, the elders of the various families. There was a council of seventy men who served under the leader-ship of Moses.
 - b. The Lord's church, also known in the New Testament as the Kingdom of God, has its organization. Christ is the head of the church (in the kingdom concept, he is the King); each local congregation of his people is to be served by a plurality of elders, with each meeting the qualifications set forth in the Scriptures (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-11). In the case of a congregation which does not have enough men to qualify as elders, no eldership can be appointed until scripturally-qualified men have been developed. A congregation can exist scripturally without elders until such time as men are qualified to serve, but it is not a completely organized church until it has elders: "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed" (Acts 14:23).
 - 1) The Lord has authorized no other organization in the Lord's church greater than the local congregation. Each congregation is under the oversight of their own local elders; these elders are answerable directly to Christ (cf. Heb. 13:17).
 - 2) Each Christian is to follow the directions of the elders, who teach and apply the Scriptures to those under their oversight. In the final analysis, each Christian must answer directly to Christ:
 - a) 2 Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."
 - b) Romans 14:10-12: "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."
 - 3) The Lord used great wisdom in thus organizing his church. If he had given a world-wide, or area-wide organization, then false doctrine could penetrate this superstructure and destroy the entire church. But with each congregation operating independently, it is more difficult for error to infiltrate. The situation is like throwing a rock through a plate-glass window as opposed to throwing the rock through the same size window which has been divided into multi-panes.
 - c. Peter bases the admonition of this passage on the premises that he is also an elder, a witness of the Lord's sufferings, and a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. He addresses these remarks to the elders who serve the various congregations of the Lord's people. In verse two, the apostle will direct the elders to feed (to tend) the flock over which they serve as overseers.

- d. The apostle identifies himself as a fellow-elder. He could have made his appeal to them based on his authority as an apostle of Christ. It was more in keeping with the Holy Spirit to describe himself as an elder, instead of as an apostle. [See the detailed outline following the comments on this section for more information about elders].
- 1) The word “elder” is translated from the Greek term *presbuteros* [a presbyter). Originally, it had reference to age, but in later times it came to be the most common designation of those having the oversight of local congregations.
 - 2) Each congregation is to have a plurality of men overseeing the flock:
 - a) Acts 20:28: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”
 - b) Acts 14:23: “And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.”
 - c) Titus 1:5: “For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.”
 - d) Philippians 1:1: “Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.”
 - 3) They were appointed by the Holy Spirit.
 - a) Acts 20:28: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”
 - b) The Holy Spirit revealed to the inspired men of the first century the qualifications of elders; he directed their appointment. Since the Spirit does not operate directly or miraculously today, we are given the inspired written word, which provides all the information we need regarding the qualifications of elders, as wells as the work they are assigned to do.
 - 4) They are to feed the flock over which they serve:
 - a) Acts 20:28: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”
 - b) 1 Peter 5:2: “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.”
 - 5) They are to administer discipline: “And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you” (1 Thess. 5:12). Discipline includes teaching and correcting.
 - 6) They watch for the souls of the members: “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you” (Heb. 13:17).
 - 7) They are also called “bishops” (Acts 20:28) and “pastors” (Eph. 4:11), and “presbyters” (1 Tim. 4:14).
 - a) Acts 20:28: “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”
 - b) Ephesians 4:11: “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.”
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- c) 1 Timothy 4:14: “Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.”
 - e. Peter speaks of himself as an elder, which implies other clear facts.
 - 1) Since an elder is to have a wife (1 Tim. 3:2), Peter was a married man. We read elsewhere of his having a mother-in-law (Matt. 8:14), and that he had a wife (1 Cor. 9:5).
 - 2) Since an elder is to have one or more believing children (Tit. 1:6), then Peter had one or more children.
 - 3) Consider what these two simple truths do to the Catholic theory that the so-called successors to Peter cannot be married or have children. They have exalted Peter to a position of supremacy he did not seek and never occupied; he is not more authoritative than any of the other apostles of Christ. The claims they make in behalf of their “popes” as successors to Peter’s office falls very short of proof; indeed, there is much evidence in the Scriptures that he never had the supremacy they ascribe to him. Further, he refused the homage men tried to give him (Acts 10:25-26). There are many other confusions between Catholic claims and biblical truth.
 - f. Peter exhorts (a term of persuasion) to move the elders to fulfill their duties. As noted above, the apostle based his appeal on the fact that (1) he is an elder, (2) that he is a witness of the Lord’s suffering, and (3) he shared with the saints the hope of glory in eternity.
 - 1) We have already discussed the significance of his being an elder.
 - 2) He states that he had witnessed the sufferings of Christ, and, although not stated directly here, he had also seen the resurrected Lord. He and the other apostles were directly chosen to be witnesses of the Lord’s resurrection. This was given only to a few hand-picked individuals. They were enabled to bear testimony to this great truth—and confirm their testimony by supernatural signs.
 - a) Acts 10:38-42: “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.”
 - b) Hebrews 2:3-4: “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?”
 - c) Acts 1:8: “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”
 - d) Acts 4:33: “And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.”
 - 3) Peter and the faithful brethren to whom he wrote shared in the glory that is in store for all the redeemed at the end of time. This is a very strong motivation to faithfulness.
 - 2. Verse 2: “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.”
 - a. The word “feed” is translated from the Greek term *poimaino* [“to shepherd”]. The verb form
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is used here, while the noun form is used in Ephesians 4:11 (where it is translated “pastors”).

- 1) Thus, the elders are to pastor [shepherd] the flock. As we will see, the terms “elders” [presbyters], “bishops” [over-seers], and “pastors” [shepherds] are used interchangeably in the New Testament. All three terms are used in this passage (1 Peter 5:1-2).
- 2) To “feed” the flock is to “tend” the needs of the flock. The duties of a literal shepherd to his flock have their counterpart in the duties of the pastors (elders, bishops) to their flock. The shepherd guides, protects, feeds, disciplines, and superintends the flock; so do the elders (pastors, bishops). Elders see to it that their flock is fed (taught the word of God); they guide and protect the flock; they discipline unruly members of the flock; to superintend the affairs and work of the flock.
- 3) The work of elders has much in common with that of the literal shepherd:
 - a) Psalms 78:70-72: “He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance. So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.” [David served as shepherd over Israel in the sense that he was their king; he guided and protected them under the authority of God’s will].
 - b) Jeremiah 23:1-4: “Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD. Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD. And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.” [These shepherds were the duly-appointed teachers of ancient Israel; they were charged with instructing Israel in God’s word, but they more interested in serving themselves].
- b. Notice that Peter calls the flock “God’s flock.” The elders were given responsibility of tending to the affairs of the flock; since the flock actually belonged to God, the elders would have to answer to God over the way they exercised their oversight. Think of the awesome responsibility! They must give account to the Chief Shepherd when he appears.
 - 1) Hebrews 13:17: “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”
 - 2) Many elders in this time of apostasy have allowed their flocks to be taken over by spiritual wolves in sheep’s clothing. Many times, the elders themselves were the wolves. Many congregations have been stolen from the Lord, and re-directed into the service of Satan. Woe to these foolish shep-herds! They will not be held guiltless!
- c. Peter exhorts the elders to take the oversight of the congregation (their flock). To take the oversight is to exercise oversight. “Oversight” is the word translated as “bishop” or “overseer” in other places. A bishop is an overseer. Here, the elders are to take the oversight of (i.e., take care of) the congregation. Elders are the pastors; they oversee the congregation.
- d. These elders are to take the oversight willingly—not by constraint. No man should be forced into the eldership. The first qualification of an elder is to have the “desire” for the work (1 Tim. 3:1). No one can properly function as an elder without an abundant desire to do the work; the only way it can be done is as a “labor of love.” The discouragements and heartaches of discharging the office of an elder can overwhelm one who is merely doing the work as an

office-holder or forced laborer.

- e. These elders are to take the oversight, not for filthy lucre, but from a ready mind. “Filthy lucre” is a reference to financial gain obtained through dishonorable means.
 - 1) “It is noteworthy that the term used to describe the character of money obtained in this manner is that which the Greek writers commonly used of one who sought gain in a sordid way. Thus an elder (or, for that matter, any spiritual teacher) who obtains money as the result of the misuse of his position is as base and disreputable as the extortioner, the trafficker in the bodies of women, and the seller of slaves. Then, as now, some turned religion into a trade and commercialized the gospel of Christ, ‘supposing that godliness is a way of gain.’ (1 Tim. 5:5). In contrast with all such is the faithful elder who serves with a ‘ready mind,’ his service being a willing one, i.e., eagerly and with earnest desire to please the Father” (Woods, pp.124f).
 - 2) In the first century, there were elders who were supported financially by the congregations they served. This was in keeping with the apostle Paul’s inspired pronouncement in 1 Timothy 5:17: “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.” These elders, wherein possible, were to be given *double honor*. The exact meaning of this phrase is difficult in itself, but seen in the context, the significance becomes apparent. The apostle has just finished a rather lengthy discussion of the church supporting those who are widows indeed. The double honor here would naturally involve giving financial support to those elders who rule well.
 - a) Elders are to receive honor from all of the members of the congregation; they are to be respected for their work's sake. But Paul's statement about double honor does not mean that a good elder is to be accorded double the honor that others are to receive. To provide a good elder with financial support for him and his family would free him to do even more work for the Lord, thus to honor and assist him.
 - b) The apostle clearly implies that the elder indicated may be remunerated. Further evidence for this conclusion, is seen in the two quotations Paul gives [in the context of 1 Timothy 5]: The Israelites were forbidden to muzzle the ox that was used to tread out the grain; and, the worker is worthy of his hire.
 - c) Deuteronomy 25:4: "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out *the corn*."
 - d) 1 Corinthians 9:9: "For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen?"
 - e) Matthew 10:10: "Nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat." [The Lord expected that these disciples would have their needs met by those they taught].
 - 3) Elders are to serve the flock from a ready mind. They are eager to serve; they do not serve because they are forced, but because they want to serve. [The apostle is speaking about elders, but the principle can be applied to others (i.e., preachers, deacons, teachers, members). Visiting the sick is a Christian duty; it applies to all saints. In the perverted thinking of some today, it is only the job of the preacher to visit the sick. The preacher visits the sick, but not because he is a preacher; it is because he is a Christian. What kind of comfort could anyone offer the afflicted if he visits them only because he is paid to visit them?]
3. Verse 3: “Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.”
 - a. Elders are warned against allowing their authority to cause them to become highhanded, arrogant, domineering, and autocratic. Such attitudes and practices are strictly forbidden by

the Lord:

- 1) Matthew 20:25-28: “But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”
 - 2) Luke 22:24-26: “And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.”
 - 3) Mark 9:34-35: “But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who should be the greatest. And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.”
 - 4) Matthew 23:8-12: “But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.”
- b. The word translated “heritage” is from the Greek term *kleros* [which means a lot or a portion]. The English word “clergy” is derived from this Greek word. As used by Peter, the word has reference to that part of the Lord’s church which is placed under the local elders. The sectarian world has ignored the New Testament in setting up their own religious systems. The Lord used the *kleron* [the plural for *kleros*] to describe the members of the church; sectarians have twisted the word into a special designation for preachers. They have made an unscriptural division between the “clergy” and the ordinary people [the “laity”]. The word [from which “clergy” is derived] is used of those over whom the elders exercise oversight; but men have used the term as a means of exalting themselves. In the Lord’s arrangement, all the members are equals: “But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren” (Matt. 23:8).
- c. Instead of “lording it” over the flock, elders are to be ensamples to the flock. The word “ensamples” is from *tupos* (type). They are to serve as models for the saints to emulate. In verse two and the first part of verse three, Peter cautions elders against abusing their authority; in the second part of verse three, he calls on them to exercise their authority.
- d. This does not suggest that elders have no authority. The following passages clearly present the fact that elders have authority. Their having oversight of the congregation directly implies they have authority to exercise that oversight; oversight would have no meaning at all without authority to express that oversight.
- 1) 1 Timothy 3:4-5: “One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?).”
 - 2) 1 Timothy 5:17: “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.”
 - 3) Titus 1:9-11: “Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths

- must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.”
- 4) Hebrews 13:7: “Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.”
 - 5) Hebrews 13:17: “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”
 - 6) 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13: “And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.”
4. Verse 4: “And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”
- a. The Chief Shepherd clearly refers to Christ.
 - 1) The coming of what prominent personage is announced in the Scriptures? Christ, of course.
 - 2) Christ is spoken of as the Good Shepherd: “I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine” (John 10:14).
 - 3) Hebrews 13:20 describes him in similar language: “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.”
 - b. When Christ returns, it will be then that faithful elders (and all other faithful Christians) will receive the crown of glory that fades not away.
 - 1) When will the crown of glory be given? When the Lord returns. This fact is also stated in 2 Timothy 4:8: “Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”
 - 2) The crown of glory, the crown of righteousness, and the crown of life (Rev. 2:10) are identical; they refer to eternal life, with all of its glorious benefits.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT ELDERS

- A. This is a Bible theme, and is thus deserving of studying.
1. Without a grasp of the New Testament pattern for the organization of the local church, we would be operating in the dark.
 2. The organization of a local congregation in the New Testament was very simple and functional, and vastly different from the usual denominational practice.
 - a. Philippians 1:1: "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons."
 - b. Ephesians 5:17: "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."
 3. In studying any Bible theme, it is essential that we eliminate all preconceived ideas, and allow God's word to instruct us.
 - a. Acts 10:34-35: “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no

respector of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”

- b. Romans 2:11: “For there is no respect of persons with God.”
 - c. 1 Timothy 5:21: “I charge *thee* before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.”
4. The trend is to reorganize, to eliminate elders and deacons, and substitute boards, committees, and leaders. There is an unwillingness on the part of some members to acknowledge the authority God has given to elders. But God's laws are immutable. What the Bible says on the subject of elders and deacons is as binding as any other truth it affirms.
- a. 1 Corinthians 4:6: "Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other" (NKJ).
 - b. 2 John 9: "Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son" (NKJ).

B. Some observation concerning the eldership.

1. Often, in times of departure from the truth, those who are charged with teaching and defending the truth are inclined to "tread softly" because of fear.
 - a. Galatians 1:10: "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ."
 - b. Galatians 4:16: "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"
2. The qualifications of elders are clearly set forth in the Bible:
 - a. 1 Timothy 3:1-7: "This *is* a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."
 - b. Titus 1:5-11: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."
3. To appoint men to the "office" of elder does not of itself *make* them elders. One is an elder only if he meets the qualifications and is appointed to the work. Many unqualified men have been given the position; these men often are the source of discord within the congregation.
 - a. Some who desire the "office" of elder are mere "office-seekers." They are not dedicated to the great purpose of tending to the flock of God.
 - b. Some are in the eldership who do not even qualify as faithful Christians, and are surely not fit for the work of elder. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the

which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20:28-31).

- c. For a congregation to call a man an elder, does not make him an elder. For a man to call himself an elder does not make him an elder. To call a dog's tail a leg does not give the dog five legs. One could call himself the governor of the state, but that does not make him the governor. Following the 2000 presidential election, Al Gore and some of his supporters called him the real president, but that did not make him the president.
- d. Men have been chosen to be elders for unscriptural reasons. Just because a man has wealth, or has been successful in business, or has been a Christian for many years, or has natural leadership abilities, or has a wonderful family, does not mean that he is qualified to be an elder.
- e. Elders are made by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28). The Holy Spirit makes elders by providing all the qualifications and describing the duties; this he does through the inspired word. The Holy Spirit baptizes us into Christ (1 Cor. 12:13) by giving all the information and motivation in the inspired word, which guides us into submitting to the requirement. The Holy Spirit does not baptize or make a man an elder by a miraculous or direct operation.

C. Some observations on the term "elder."

1. *Elder* is translated from the Greek word *presbuteros*, which primarily describes one who is *older*. In the context in which it is used in this study, the word designates one who is qualified for and does the special work ordained for elders. Regardless of the qualifications, no one is an elder who does not do the work of an elder.
 - a. The first mention of the term in the singular is in Genesis 10:21: "Unto Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder, even to him were *children* born."
 - b. The first mention of the word in the plural is in Genesis 50:7: "And Joseph went up to bury his father: and with him went up all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his house, and all the elders of the land of Egypt."
 - c. The word is used with respect to the nation of Israel. "Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover" (Exod. 12:21).
2. The term is later used to designate "overseers."
 - a. Note Jethro's advice to Moses: "And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening. And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even? And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to enquire of God: When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws. And Moses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people

able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves" (Exodus 18:13-26).

- b. Not all the old men of Israel were overseers (officers). "And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee" (Num. 11:16).
3. The use of the term in the New Testament.
 - a. The elders are mentioned as distinct from the apostles. "When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question....And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them....And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter" (Acts 15:2,4,6).
 - b. As indicated in Acts 15, the church at Jerusalem had elders, and Acts 6:1-6 shows that they also had deacons. The word "deacon" designates one who serves; these seven men served the church, and thus may be correctly called "deacons." The organization of the church at Jerusalem included both elders and deacons (cf. Phil. 1:1). Some have argued that the seven men of Acts 6 were not deacons since the qualification for deacons were not given until Paul wrote 1 Timothy 3. However, there were elders serving congregations prior to the time of 1 Timothy 3, where their qualifications are revealed. The truth is, information could be revealed in oral form years before that material was put in written form.
 - c. Elders are first mentioned in Acts 11:30: "Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul." It is apparent that they had been in the church for some time, even though their appointment is not recorded.
 - d. Titus was commissioned to see to it that elders were appointed "in every city" (Titus 1:5). From Acts 14:23, it is clear that every congregation was to have elders. "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed" (Acts 14:23). Each congregation had a plurality of elders.
 - e. The church at Ephesus had elders.
 - 1) Acts 20:17: "And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church."
 - 2) Acts 20:28: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."
 - f. The church at Philippi had elders. "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (Phil. 1:1).
 - g. Conclusion: The eldership is a permanent office (work), intended for all times and places. God has always had some means of government among his people.
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D. There are various terms used in reference to this same group of men.

1. Elder or presbyter is from the Greek word *presbuteros*.
 - a. The word literally designates an older man.
 - b. Wisdom is acquired at different rates by age and experience; no specific age can determine whether a man is sufficiently wise to serve as an elder. Some might have gained enough wisdom by the age of forty, while others at the age of sixty would still be lacking.
 - c. Not every old man is eligible for the eldership. Sufficient time in the church, knowledge of the Bible, ability and wisdom, in company with the other qualifications, identify his fitness.
2. Bishop or overseer is from the Greek word *episkopos*.
 - a. This word is used interchangeably with *elder*.
 - 1) Acts 20:17,28: "And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the **elders** of the church.... Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you **overseers**, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."
 - 2) Titus 1:5,7: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain **elders** in every city, as I had appointed thee.... For a **bishop** must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre."
 - 3) 1 Peter 5:1-4: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."
 - 4) The word bishop means "overseer."
 - b. Pastor or shepherd means "to feed, tend." These terms are used interchangeably with "elder" and "bishop," clearly showing that these words are all used in reference to the same men.
 - 1) Acts 20:17,28: "And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the **elders** of the church.... Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you **overseers, to tend, to feed** [verb form of *pastor*] the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."
 - 2) 1 Peter 5:1-2: "The **elders** which are among you I exhort, who am also an **elder**, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: **Feed** the flock of God which is among you, **taking the oversight** *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind."

E. Additional remarks.

1. Scriptural elders are assigned to an important work, ordained of God. They should be highly respected as special servants of God, and should conduct themselves so as to demand proper respect.
 2. Men should strive to prepare themselves for the work of elders. They should be chosen only according to qualifications.
 3. Perfection should not be expected of elders, except in meeting the physical qualifications; there is always room for growth in the spiritual qualifications. [This information is gleaned and adapted from an outline by Roy J. Hearn, founder and long-time director of Memphis School of Preaching].
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F. 1 Peter 5:5-9: A Christian's Spiritual Clothing.

1. Verse 5: "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."
 - a. Much discussion has taken place whether the "elder" of this verse is a reference to the elders (bishops, shepherds) of the local congregation or as the simple reference to older ones in the church. The two words (younger and elder) are in the plural form in the Greek text.
 - 1) The word "likewise" draws a comparison between this passage and the passage preceding. If that is the case, and it seems to this writer to be so, then the elder of this verse is a reference to older members; the point then is, the younger members are to be submissive to the older members.
 - 2) This is the pattern in society down through the ages, that the younger people show respect for the wisdom of the older generation. It makes good sense to listen to those who have lived long, been observant in life, and have obtained insight and wisdom by study and experience.
 - 3) The Bible teaches that older people are to be honored: "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the LORD" (Lev. 19:32).
 - b. The apostle now adds the injunction that each Christian is to be subject to each other; that is, each is give the other saint precedence.
 - 1) "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Phil. 2:4). This passage does not say that we ought to ignore our own needs. It is both natural and right that each individual tend to his own necessities, but we are not to ignore the welfare of others, and neither are we to be busybodies in other men's affairs.
 - 2) The Bible teaches us to be interested in ourselves and others.
 - a) Mark 12:31: "And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."
 - b) Romans 12:3: "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."
 - c) 1 Corinthians 10:24: "1 Corinthians 10:24 Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbor's good" (ASV).
 - d) 1 Corinthians 13:5: "Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil."
 - 3) We are to seek opportunities to serve each other. The strong are to bear the infirmities of the weak, and we are to aid each other in bearing burdens.
 - a) Romans 15:1-3: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."
 - b) Galatians 6:1-5: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden."

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- c. We are next told to clothe ourselves with humility.
 - 1) Regarding the Greek term translated “clothe” [“gird” in ASV], Woods makes these interesting remarks: “The noun from which it is derived (*kombos*) signifies a knot; and the noun form means to tie with a knot. From this noun, the verb of our text, denoting the garment thus tied on, is derived. It was used at the beginning of the Christian era of the white scarf or apron which slaves wore tightly fastened around the waist to distinguish them from freemen. Used figuratively here, the meaning is, ‘Tie on humility like a slave’s apron.’ The saints were to array themselves in humility; to tie it on securely like a garment so that it might never fall away. So arrayed, they were to regard no service as too menial or lowly, no task too small for them to perform” (pp.128f).
 - 2) On the occasion of the Last Supper, our Lord girded himself with a towel, and washed the feet of the apostles: “He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded” (John 13:4-5).
 - d. We are told in the closing part of the text that God stands opposed to the proud. The apostle uses a military term in painting this graphic picture—God has his forces in battle array, ready to do battle with those who are haughty. Compare:
 - 1) Proverbs 3:34: “Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly.”
 - 2) Proverbs 16:18: “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.”
 - 3) Proverbs 29:23: “A man’s pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.”
2. Verse 6: “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.
- a. The “hand of God” is used to depict the all-powerful might possessed by God. His power is irresistible; no material force can stand against him; nothing on earth or in the spiritual realm can even begin to equate the omnipotence of the Almighty. But we can place our complete trust in him. A child or a deranged person with a loaded gun is to be feared; they are not able to control their faculties and do not comprehend the extreme danger represented by the weapon. A nuclear weapon in the hands of a terrorist is greatly to be feared! God, however, possesses all power, but he never uses his power in any dangerous manner. He never acts arbitrarily or thoughtlessly.
 - b. We may safely put our trust in him. Our humble trust will never be a source of danger or regret. There is a great exaltation in store for those who humbly submit to his will. In the words of the apostle, “in due time” we will be exalted.
 - 1) Matthew 23:12: “And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.”
 - 2) James 4:6-7: “But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”
 - 3) Mark 10:28-30: “Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel’s, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.”
3. Verse 7: “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”
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- a. Because of God's genuine concern for us, we are admonished to cast all of our cares upon him. The word care has reference to worry, anxiety, uneasiness, and fretfulness.
 - 1) Psalms 55:22: "Cast thy burden upon Jehovah, and he will sustain thee: He will never suffer the righteous to be moved."
 - 2) Matthew 6:25-34: "Therefore I say unto you, be not anxious for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the food, and the body than the raiment? Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value then they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto the measure of his life? And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Be not therefore anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Be not therefore anxious for the morrow: for the morrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."
 - b. "If we suffer heavy trials; if we lose our friends, health, or property; if we have arduous and responsible duties to perform; if we feel that we have no strength, and are in danger of being crushed by what is laid upon us, we may go and cast all upon the Lord; that is, we may look to him for grace and strength, and feel assured that he will enable us to sustain all that is laid upon us. The relief in the case will be as real, and as full of consolation, as if he took the burden and bore it himself" [Barnes, *ibid.*].
 - c. "The word 'casting' is derived from a term which means to *deposit*, and is in the aorist tense here, thus signifying a once-for-all act by which one rids himself forevermore of all anxious care by depositing it with the Lord!....One may, with complete confidence, cast his anxiety on the Lord for the reason that he cares for his saints, and will not forsake them in their time of need" (Woods, p.129).
4. Verse 8: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."
 - a. This is a word of necessary caution appended to the previous admonition. While we are to cast our cares upon the Lord, since he cares for us, yet we are to keep alert for the assaults of our enemy—the devil. The Lord aids us in our struggles, but he does not fight all of our battles for us. "An 'adversary' is, technically, an opponent in a lawsuit; here, it is used to identify Satan as the one on the opposite side of a trial for life or death. He is the 'devil,' because he is a calumniator, one who deliberately and knowingly makes false charges against the saints of God; and he is called 'a roaring lion,' because of the fierceness with which he stalks, and if possible, runs down the saints" (Woods, p.130).
 - b. To be sober is to maintain self-control, to be calm in our minds. To be vigilant is to be alert and watchful. We are to be calm in our assurance of the Lord's help, but we are to be attentive to dangers. And we are to be ready lest the Lord's coming should catch us unprepared.
 - 1) Mark 13:35-37: "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."
 - 2) Matthew 26:40-41: "And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith
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- unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”
- c. Although we have the Lord on our side, we still have a powerful adversary. The meaning of *Satan* is “adversary, opponent.” *Devil* means “slanderer, accuser.” Satan is forced to use mediums through which he exerts his evil influence.
 - 1) When he enticed Eve to violate the God-given edict forbidding the eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the tempter did not exert direct, mind-on-mind, miraculous influence. Rather, he offered his temptations by the medium of words. And since there were no other human beings to do his evil work for him, he operated through the wily serpent.
 - 2) When the devil wanted to tempt the Savior, he used the medium of words which was addressed to the natural appetites of the fleshly body and the pride of life (Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13). Even though he approached Christ in person (evidently), he still had to use a medium to offer the temptations. "Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:15-17). When he tempts us today, he does so indirectly through the same three avenues: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. For agents he uses false teachers, sinners, situations that develop, and the natural weaknesses of the flesh.
 - 3) In the case of Ananias and Sapphira, the devil was the source of their temptation: "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and keep back part of the price of the land?" (Acts 5:3). But in the next verse Peter asked, "Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart?" The passage does not teach that Satan miraculously placed the temptation into their minds; rather he used the medium of their own greed and pride to entrap them!
 - d. The devil is pictured as a roaring lion, who is walking around, seeking prey. When the Bible warns of his subtlety, it depicts him as a serpent; in the present case, in presenting his strength and ferocious nature, he is described as a lion. He walks about, persistently seeking out his victims; he is ever on the prowl.
 - e. The word “devil” means “accuser” or “slanderer.” The word “Satan” means “adversary.” Research shows that 70 of the 83 references in the Scriptures to our enemy he is called either “Satan” or “the Devil” (ISBE).
 - f. It is commonly believed that “Lucifer” (Isa. 14:12) is another name for Satan, but the context shows that the individual described is the King of Babylon. Carefully read the passage.
5. Verse 9: “Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.”
- a. Despite his being powerful, subtle, and well-armed with the means to tempt us, we can still resist him successfully. “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (Jas. 4:7). He cannot overpower us against our will.
 - b. “The means by which to withstand Satan are, (1) stedfastness in faith; (2) recognition that the suffering to which the saints are subjected is not peculiar to them; and (3) that the same suffering has been undergone by the brethren before them” (Woods, p.130).
 - c. Knowing that we are not alone in our struggle against Satan, furnishes a measure of inner strength to keep up the battle. “Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Tim. 3:12).
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Names and Descriptions of the Devil

Matthew 4:5	The Tempter
Matthew 13:39	The Enemy
2 Corinthians 6:15	Belial
Revelation 12:3	The Dragon
John 8:44	The Father of Lies
Zechariah 3:1	Resister, Adversary
Mark 3:20-30	Beelzebub, Prince of Demons
John 12:23-33	Prince of this World
2 Corinthians 4:1-4	God of this World
2 Corinthians 11:3	Serpent
Ephesians 2:1-3	Prince of the Power of the Air
1 John 2:13	Wicked One
Revelation 12:3-17	The Devil, Deceiver, Accuser
1 Peter 5:8	Roaring Lion

G. 1 Peter 5:10-14: Conclusion.

1. Verse 10: “But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle *you*.”
 - a. God is the source of all grace. He is the source of every good and perfect gift (Jas. 1:17). He is the God of all comfort (2 Cor. 1:3). Peter reminds the brethren of the gracious nature of God in order to strengthen their resolve to endure their pressing tribulations.
 - b. God called them from their former lifestyles to partake of eternal glory. Before they obeyed the gospel, they lived in sin, and were separated from God. They were called from that sin-filled condition by the gospel (2 Thess. 2:13) into the godly lifestyle of Christianity.
 - c. But that calling brought upon them the opposition and persecution of those who rejected Christianity. There was a grand purpose behind these hardships: that they might be perfected, established, strengthened, and settled.
 - 1) **To be perfected** was to repair the deficiencies of their character. The same word [*katartidzo*] is used in Mark 4:21 of fishermen who were repairing their nets. The hardships the saints faced, if successfully endured, would bring them into greater spiritual condition, making them more useful to the Lord and prepare them for their eternal reward. The struggles we encounter in life today are not in the form of cruel persecution, nevertheless they can repair our imperfections, making us more useful and better prepared for our eternal reward.
 - 2) **To be established** denotes the “fixity and immobility of those who rely on the Lord” (Woods, p.132). This word was used by the Lord when he spoke with Peter on a notable

occasion: “And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, **strengthen** thy brethren” (Luke 22:31-32). The hardships our brethren faced would give them stability; our struggles can provide stability for us.

- 3) **To be strengthened** is to have the vigor to resist assaults. This word [*sthenoo*] is only found at this place in the New Testament.
 - 4) **To be settled** is to be grounded, to have a firm foundation. This bespeaks of soundness to withstand whatever trial or hardship that may fall upon us.
- d. Each of the four items just discussed God will do in behalf of his saints. For a little child to develop strength, stamina, and ability, he must experience the rigors of life. For muscles to be developed, work must be done; to obtain stamina, strenuous activities are necessary; to cultivate skill, experience is required. The same is true in both the spiritual and physical sides of life.
- e. Notice that Peter describes the persecutions as being only for a “while” [“little while” in the ASV). The trials would not be unending. After faithfully enduring them, they would discover that God has indeed perfected, established, strengthened, and settled them. Under the worst of circumstances, the sufferings of this present life is only temporary.
- 1) 2 Corinthians 4:16-18: “For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”
 - 2) Romans 8:18: “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”
 - 3) All in God’s good time, he will reward the faithful. The “eternal glory” God is able to bestow will make any of this life’s struggles to be mild and insignificant—in comparison!
2. Verse 11: “To him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”
- a. The paramount duty of man is to ascribe glory to God. He is the Creator and Sustainer—he deserves it; we are his offspring—we gladly tender to him his due.
 - 1) Matthew 5:16: “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 10:31: “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”
 - 3) Ecclesiastes 12:13-14: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”
 - 4) Compare: “The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created” (Rev. 4:10-11).
 - b. God deserves our worship.
 - 1) He is our Creator:
 - a) Genesis 1:26-27: “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the

earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”

- b) Zechariah 12:1: “The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.”
- c) Hebrews 12:9: “Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?”

2) God is Great.

- a) Psalms 86:9-10: “All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name. For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone.”
- b) Psalms 90:1-2: “Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.”
- c) Isaiah 6:1-5: “In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”

3) God is our Father: by creation and procreation; and by virtue of the fact that he is the spiritual Father of the redeemed.

- a) Genesis 1:26-27: “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”
- b) Zechariah 12:1: “The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him.”
- c) Hebrews 12:9: “Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?”

4) God has purchased us with the precious price of his Son’s blood.

- a) 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.”
 - b) 1 Peter 1:18-19: “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”
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- c. God desires our worship.
- 1) From the experiences of Abel onward through the Bible, this is shown. Those who had God's approval in the Bible were worshipers of the Almighty.
 - a) Abraham built an altar at Bethel and called upon the name of the Lord: "And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD" (Gen. 12:8).
 - b) When Noah exited the ark, he built an altar unto the Lord: "And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar" (Gen. 8:20).
 - c) Isaac built an altar at Beersheba and called upon the name of the Lord: "And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well" (Gen. 26:25).
 - 2) The Father seeks such to worship him today: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23-24).
- d. He demands our worship [any worship we offer must be directed to him]. Sincere, scriptural worship greatly benefits the worshiper.
- 1) Exodus 20:1-5: "And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me."
 - 2) Matthew 4:10: "Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."
 - 3) Revelation 22:8-9: "And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God."
- e. He has designated how we are to worship him: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).
- 1) To worship God in spirit is to do so with the whole heart. It must be genuine and sincere, not merely paying lip-service to him: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:8-9).
 - 2) To worship God in truth is to do so in accord with God's word, which is the truth (John 17:17).
- f. A Christian who has been perfected, established, strengthened, and settled will gladly ascribe such praise and worship to God; he does not have to be coerced or tricked into worship; he happily pours out his heart's praise to the majesty of God! One cannot worship God accidentally or without his heart being directly involved. Sitting in a chicken house does not make one a rooster; and merely sitting in a church house during the hour of worship does not make one either a Christian or a worshiper of God.
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3. Verse 12: “By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.” The ASV gives this rendering: “By Silvanus, our faithful brother, as I account him, I have written unto you briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand ye fast therein.”
 - a. Silvanus [Silas] was either the secretary or the postman. Paul often used a secretary to transcribe his epistles, at the end of which he appended a section in his own hand. All the material was inspired; it was not essential for the writer personally to write the letter. Apparently, Peter used Silvanus for just such a purpose.
 - 1) Romans 16:22: “I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord.” Tertius says here that he was the person who actually penned the words of the epistle, but the Holy Spirit gave the message to Paul. The apostle did not usually write the letters; he stated in Galatians 6:11 that he had written that epistle, but indicates that that was a departure from the usual. He did sometimes pen the closing salutations (1 Cor. 16:21; 2 Thess. 3:17). Nothing beyond this verse is known of Tertius. The name is Roman, and means *third*.
 - 2) Galatians 6:11: “Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand.” The apostle is about to address some pointed remarks to the Judaizing teachers who were corrupting the churches of Galatia. His statement here declares that the epistle is authentic, that it was from the apostle Paul.
 - a) Compare: “The salutation of *me* Paul with mine own hand” (1 Cor. 16:21). “The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace *be* with you. Amen” (Col. 4:18). “The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write” (2 Thess. 3:17).
 - b) Since each person's handwriting differs from that of others, a notable difference could be seen by those who read this letter. Paul used the large Greek letters called “uncials.” He calls attention to the larger letters he used in writing his part than those which his amanuensis used. The original has the plural *letters* instead of the singular *letter* as in the KJV. The Greek term [*gramma*] used here is not the same as “epistle” [*epistole*]. *Gramma* refers to the characters (or letters) of the alphabet (Vine, Vol. 2, pp.332f). The part of the epistle Paul personally wrote probably continues to the end of the message.
 - b. The expression “I suppose” does not indicate doubt on the part of Peter, but means, as given in the American Standard Version, “I account him.” The word does not suggest doubt, as our modern word does, but means “to reckon, conclude, impute, consider.” The point the apostle is making is that he accounts Silvanus as a faithful brother in Christ.
 - 1) Romans 8:18: “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 11:5: “For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chieftest apostles.”
 - 3) The apostle is saying of Silvanus, that he is fully persuaded of his faithfulness, he has no doubt of it. “Peter evidently had no doubt on this point, but he probably could not speak from any personal knowledge. He had not been with them when Silas was, and perhaps not at all; for they may have been ‘strangers’ to him personally—for the word ‘strangers,’ in 1 Peter 1:1, may imply that he had no personal acquaintance with them. Silas, however, had been much with them, (compare Acts 15:17-31,) and Peter had no doubt that he had shown himself to be ‘a faithful brother’ to them” [Barnes, Biblesoft].
- c. Concerning Silvanus [Silas], notice the following:
 - 1) Passages:
 - a) Acts 15:22: “Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send

- chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren.”
- b) Acts 15:32: “And Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them.”
 - c) Acts 15:40: “And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.”
 - d) 1 Thessalonians 1:1: “Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - e) 2 Corinthians 1:19: “For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.”
 - f) Acts 18:5: “And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.”
- 2) Silvanus was with Paul in Corinth (53 A.D.), was active in the church at Jerusalem (Acts 15:22), and was a prophet (Acts 15:32).
 - 3) Jews commonly changed their names while traveling in Gentile lands. Paul was known among the Jews as Saul. Silvanus was evidently the name by which Silas was known when among the Gentile population.
- d. Peter states that he has written “briefly” [in few words] to them. Much more could have been penned, but this was sufficient to fulfill his purpose. His emphasis has been one of exhorting and testifying regarding the true grace of God. “The purpose of the apostle was to supply indisputable evidence of the soundness of the faith which they possessed. This was the true grace of God which had been bestowed upon them, and in it they were to continue. It was theirs; they were experiencing and enjoy-ing its blessings; hence, their obligation to ‘stand fast therein’” (Woods, pp.133f).
4. Verse 13: “The *church that is* at Babylon, elected together with *you*, saluteth you; and *so doth* Marcus my son.”
 - a. NKJ: “She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you; and so does Mark my son.”
 - b. The American Standard Version translates this verse as: “She that is in Babylon, elect together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Mark my son.” The margin of the ASV adds this: “That is, The church, or The sister.” The words “church that is” are supplied by the translators. Some scholars think that the feminine phrase could be in reference to the church or to some unnamed sister in Christ. It is clear that the one (or ones) referred to are “elected together with you” (thus were members of the Lord’s church). [Brother Woods thought the reference was to Peter’s wife. Cf. 1 Corinthians 9:5].
 - c. The following comments are from well-known scholars:
 - 1) “Wall, Mill, and some others, suppose that the reference is to a Christian woman, perhaps the wife of Peter himself. Compare 2 John. But the Arabic, Syriac, and Vulgate, as well as the English versions, supply the word ‘church.’ This interpretation seems to be confirmed by the word rendered ‘elected together with’—*suneklektee* (NT:4899). This word would be properly used in reference to one individual if writing to another individual, but would hardly be appropriate as applied to an individual addressing a church. It could not readily be supposed, moreover, that any one female in Babylon could have such a prominence, or be so well known, that nothing more would be necessary to designate her than merely to say, ‘the elect female’” [from Barnes’ Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright

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- 2) “The word is not in the Greek, but is supplied with the feminine definite article *hee* (NT:3588). There is, however, a difference of opinion as to the meaning of this feminine article. Some suppose a reference to Peter's own wife; others, to some prominent Christian woman in the church. Compare 2 John. The majority of interpreters, however, refer it to the church” [Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].
- d. Mark's name is added to the concluding salutation. This is the same Mark who had incurred Paul's displeasure when he did not continue with him on the first missionary journey, and was therefore not his choice to be part of the second missionary effort (cf. Acts 13:5,13; 15:36-41). By the time Paul wrote 2 Timothy, he had regained the apostle's favor (2 Tim. 4:11; Col. 4:10). Peter refers to him as his son, in the same way that Timothy was spoken of as Paul's son (Phil. 2:2; 1 Tim. 1:12).
 - e. Regarding Babylon:
 - 1) Some scholars think that Babylon is used here in a figurative sense, in reference to some other city, such as Jerusalem or Rome. But there is amply reason in the passage to take the meaning as the literal city on the Euphrates River. A passage is always to be understood as literal unless there is strong evidence to demand a figurative interpretation. There is no demand in the passage to take “Babylon” in anything but a literal reference to the ancient city. Further, since the Mark is clearly a reference to a real person, then the city must also be so understood.
 - 2) See Albert Barnes' lengthy discussion at the end of the chapter for a fuller discussion on this matter.
 - f. Some have suggested that Old Testament Babylon could not be the city in Peter's view, on the basis that that city had long-since ceased to exist.
 - 1) “At the time of Strabo (born 60 BC) Babylon was a perfect desert...” [Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament: New Updated Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1996 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.].
 - 2) But the following information gives more evidence about Babylon: “Nabopolassar founded the Neo-Babylonian dynasty, and his son Nebuchadnezzar II expanded the kingdom until it became an empire embracing much of southwest Asia. The imperial capital at Babylon was refurbished with new temple and palace buildings, extensive fortification walls and gates, and paved processional ways; it was at that time the largest city of the known world, covering more than 1,000 hectares (some 2,500 acres). The Neo-Babylonian Empire was of short duration. In 539 bc, Cyrus the Great captured Babylon and incorporated Babylonia into the newly founded Persian Empire. Under the Persians, Babylon for a time served as the official residence of the crown prince, until a local revolt in 482 led Xerxes I to raze the temples and ziggurat (temple tower) and to melt down the statue of the patron god Marduk. Alexander the Great captured the city in 330 BC and planned to rebuild it and make it the capital of his vast empire, but he died before he could carry out his plans. After 312 bc, Babylon was for a while used as a capital by the Seleucid dynasty set up by Alexander's successors. When the new capital of Seleucia on the Tigris was founded in the early 3rd century BC, however, most of Babylon's population was moved there. The temples continued in use for a time, but the city became insignificant and almost disappeared before the coming of Islam in the 7th century ad. [Encarta © 1993-2003 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved]. The city of Babylon still existed many years after the close of the first century.

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- g. Roman Catholics, in an attempt to place Peter in Rome, view the Babylon of this passage as a figurative reference to the city of Rome. But the context does not promote a symbolic use of the word (as noted earlier).
5. Verse 14: "Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace *be* with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen."
- a. A common greeting in that ancient day was by the exchange of a kiss. In modern times, the common greeting in the western world has been a handshake. In recent years, hugging has become fairly common. In the New Testament, regulations of the kiss of greeting were given, specifying that this kiss was to be of a holy nature.
- b. Kissing was an ancient means of greeting or parting. Jesus reminded a certain Simon that he had not greeted the Lord with a kiss when he entered his house (Luke 7:45); Judas betrayed Christ with a kiss (Matt. 26:49); Joab slew Amasa by deceiving him by feigning a kiss: "And Joab said to Amasa, Art thou in health, my brother? And Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him. But Amasa took no heed to the sword that was in Joab's hand: so he smote him therewith in the fifth rib, and shed out his bowels to the ground, and struck him not again; and he died. So Joab and Abishai his brother pursued after Sheba the son of Bichri" (2 Sam. 20:9-10).
- c. The New Testament speaks of more than one method of greeting. An embrace without any mention of a kiss is found in Acts 20:1; giving the right hand of fellowship is mentioned in Galatians 2:9. Since the Bible cites several ways of greeting, we may know that it did not bind the kiss as the exclusive method.
- 1) Acts 20:1: "And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto *him* the disciples, and embraced *them*, and departed for to go into Macedonia."
- 2) Galatians 2:9: "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we *should go* unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision."
- d. What is bound by Paul in Romans 16:16 is the holy kiss. Since a greeting might be by the exchange of kisses, the apostle says the kiss must be holy. There is such a thing as an unholy kiss; such is not to be practiced by Christians. Some might want only to kiss the opposite sex; that would show the intent.
- 1) Kissing was a common greeting in ancient days, and still is in some societies. But in our nation, handshakes are used. Paul was not binding the kiss as the only proper greeting, but was regulating the kind of kiss that was to be given, if any was given: the kiss was to be holy (not unholy).
- 2) If the statement here is bound as a law, then both men and women are duty-bound to greet each other with a kiss. We would have no right to use another procedure. In our society, we are facing a tremendous problem with immorality; requiring a kiss as the greeting would make that problem even greater, humanity being what it is.
- 3) However, kissing was the common custom in Paul's day. Rather than forbidding the saints the right to practice this usual greeting, the apostle placed a restriction on it: "Salute one another with an holy kiss.
- e. Peter here speaks of the "kiss of love." Brother Woods comments on this as follows:
- 1) "Greeting, by means of a kiss, appears to have been a common practice in the early church, and to have been followed for some centuries after the beginning of the Christian era. The custom is mentioned by Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Chrysostom, Augustine, and numerous other early writers; and references thereto are frequent in the New Testament. (Rom. 16:16;
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- 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:26.)
- 2) “According to the historians of the early church, the abuses to which the practice would ordinarily lead were avoided by the separation of the sexes when the church assembled for worship—an arrangement inherited from the synagogue. The ‘Constitutions of the Holy Apostles,’ believed to have been written between A.D. 300 and 400, contains the following injunctions: ‘Then let the men give the men, and the women give the women, the Lord’s kiss.’ (Book 2, 57, page 422, Vol. 7, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*.)
 - 3) “Clement of Alexandria, who died about A.D. 220, wrote, under the heading, ‘Love and the Kiss of Charity,’ these words: ‘And if we are called to the kingdom of God, let us walk worthy of the kingdom, loving God and our neighbor. But love is not proved by a kiss, but by kindly feeling. But there are those that do nothing but make the churches resound with a kiss, not having love itself within. For this very thing, the shameless use a kiss, which ought to be mystic, occasions foul suspicions and evil reports. The apostle calls the kiss holy.’ (‘The Instructor,’ Ch. 12, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 2, page 291)” (page. 136).
- f. Again, the New Testament does not make kissing the required method of greeting. It simply regulated the custom that was already in vogue, requiring that the kiss was to be holy, and an expression of genuine Christian love.
- g. The apostle closes this epistle by affirming his desire that peace should be upon each member of the Lord’s body. True peace can only be enjoyed in Christ.
- 1) Ephesians 5:1: “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children.”
 - 2) Philippians 4:6-7: “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”
 - 3) John 14:27: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”
 - 4) Ephesians 2:14: “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.”
 - 5) Galatians 3:27: “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”
- h. Those in the world who apparently have not a single care or concern, though they may appear to have perfect peace, are in reality only deceived. But the faithful saint has nothing to be worried about, either here or in the Judgment.
- 1) Galatians 6:7-8: “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 5:10: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”
 - 3) 1 John 4:17-18: “Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.”
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The Babylon of First Peter 5:13

Albert Barnes

On this point also there has been no little diversity of opinion. The only designation of the place where it was written which occurs in the Epistle is in 1 Peter 5:13: "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you." From this it is clear that it was written at Babylon, but still there has been no little difference of opinion as to what place is meant here by Babylon. Some have supposed that it refers to the well-known place of that name on the Euphrates; others to a Babylon situated in Lower Egypt; others to Jerusalem or Rome, represented as Babylon. The claims of each of these places it is proper to examine. The order in which this is done is not material.

(1) The opinion that the "Babylon" mentioned in the Epistle refers to a place of that name in Egypt, not far from Cairo. This opinion was held by Pearson and Le Clere, and by most of the Coptic interpreters, who have endeavored to vindicate the honor of their own country, Egypt, as a place where one of the books of Scripture was composed. See Koppe, *Prolegomena*, 12. That there was such a place in Egypt, there can be no doubt. It was a small town to the northeast of Cairo, where there was a strong castle in the time of Strabo, (I. 17, p. 807,) in which, under Tiberius, there were quartered three Roman legions, designed to keep the Egyptians in order. But there is little reason to suppose that there were many Jews there, or that a church was early collected there. The Jews would have been little likely to resort to a place which was merely a Roman garrison, nor would the apostles have been likely to go early to such a place to preach the gospel. Compare Basnage, *Ant.* 36, num. xxvii. As Lardner well remarks, if Peter had written an Epistle from Egypt, it would have been likely to have been from Alexandria. Besides, there is not, for the first four centuries, any notice of a church at Babylon in Egypt; a fact which can hardly be accounted for, if it had been supposed that one of the sacred books had been composed there—Lardner, vol. vi. 265. It may be added, also, that as there was another place of that name on the Euphrates, a place much better known, and which would be naturally supposed to be the one referred to, it is probable that if the Epistle had been composed at the Babylon in Egypt, there would have been something said clearly to distinguish it. If the Epistle was written at the Babylon on the Euphrates, so well known was that place that no one would be likely to understand that the Babylon in Egypt was the place referred to; on the other supposition, however, nothing would be more likely than that a mistake should occur.

(2) Others have supposed that Jerusalem is intended, and that the name was given to it on account of its wickedness, and because it resembled Babylon. This was the opinion of Capellus, Spanheim, Hardouin, and some others. But the objections to this are obvious:

(a) There is no evidence that the name Babylon was ever given to Jerusalem, or so given to it as to make it commonly understood that that was the place intended when the term was employed. If not so, its use would be likely to lead those to whom the Epistle was addressed into a mistake.

(b) There is every reason to suppose that an apostle in writing a letter, if he mentioned the place at all where it was written, would mention the real name. So Paul uniformly does.

(c) The name Babylon is not one which an apostle would be likely to give to Jerusalem; certainly not as the name by which it was to be familiarly known.

(d) If the Epistle had been written there, there is no conceivable reason why the name of the place

should not have been mentioned.

(3) Others have supposed that Rome is intended by the name Babylon. This was the opinion of many of the Fathers, and also of Bede, Valesius, Grotius, Cave, Whitby, and Lardner. The principal reasons for this are, that such is the testimony of Papias, Eusebius, and Jerome; and that at that time Babylon on the Euphrates was destroyed. See Lardner. But the objections to this opinion seem to me to be insuperable.

(a) There is no evidence that at that early period the name Babylon was given to Rome, nor were there any existing reasons why it should be. The name is generally supposed to have been applied to it by John, in the book of Revelation, Rev 16:19; 17:5; 18:10,21 but this was probably long after this Epistle was written, and for reasons which did not exist in the time of Peter. There is no evidence that it was given familiarly to it in the time of Peter, or even at all until after his death. Certain it is, that it was not given so familiarly to it that when the name Babylon was mentioned it would be generally understood that Rome was intended. But the only reason which Peter could have had for mentioning the name Babylon at all, was to convey some definite and certain information to those to whom he wrote.

(b) As has been already observed, the apostles, when they sent an epistle to the churches, and mentioned a place as the one where the Epistle was written, were accustomed to mention the real place.

c) It would be hardly consistent with the dignity of an apostle, or any grave writer, to make use of what would be regarded as a nickname, when suggesting the name of a place where he then was.

(d) If Rome had been meant, it would have been hardly respectful to the church there which sent the salutation—"The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you"—to have given it this name. Peter mentions the church with respect and kindness; and yet it would have been scarcely regarded as kind to mention it as a "Church in Babylon," if he used the term Babylon, as he must have done on such a supposition, to denote a place of eminent depravity.

(e) The testimony of the Fathers on this subject does not demonstrate that Rome was the place intended. So far as appears from the extracts relied on by Lardner, they do not give this as historical testimony, but as their own interpretation; and, from anything that appears, we are as well qualified to interpret the word as they were.

(f) In regard to the objection that Babylon was at that time destroyed, it may be remarked that this is true so far as the original splendor of the city was concerned, but still there may have been a sufficient population there to have constituted a church. The destruction of Babylon was gradual. It had not become an utter desert in the time of the apostles. In the first century of the Christian era a part of it was inhabited, though the greater portion of its former site was a waste. See the notes at Isa 13:19. Compare Diod. Sic., ii. 27. All that time, there is no improbability in supposing that a Christian church may have existed there. It should be added here, however, that on the supposition that the word Babylon refers to Rome, rests nearly all the evidence which the Roman Catholics can adduce that the apostle Peter was ever at Rome at all. There is nothing else in the New Testament that furnishes the slightest proof that he ever was there. The only passage on which Bellarmine relies to show that Peter was at Rome, is the very passage now under consideration. "That Peter was one time at Rome," he says, "we show first from the testimony of Peter himself, who thus speaks at the end of his First Epistle: "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you." He does not pretend to cite any other evidence from Scripture than this;

nor does any other writer.

(4) There remains the fourth opinion, that the well-known Babylon on the Euphrates was the place where the Epistle was written. This was the opinion of Erasmus, Drusius, Lightfoot, Bengel, Wetstein, Basnage, Beausobre, and others. That this is the correct opinion seems to me to be clear from the following considerations:

(a) It is the most natural and obvious interpretation. It is that which would occur to the great mass of the readers of the New Testament now, and is that which would have been naturally adopted by those to whom the Epistle was sent. The word Babylon, without something to give it a different application, would have been understood anywhere to denote the well-known place on the Euphrates.

(b) There is, as has been observed already, no improbability that there was a Christian church there, but there are several circumstances which render it probable that this would be the case:

1. Babylon had been an important place; and its history was such, and its relation to the Jews such, as to make it probable that the attention of the apostles would be turned to it.
2. The apostles, according to all the traditions which we have respecting them, traveled extensively in the East, and nothing would be more natural than that they should visit Babylon.
3. There were many Jews of the captivity remaining in that region, and it would be in the highest degree probable that they would seek to carry the gospel to their own countrymen there. See Koppe, Proleg., pp. 16-18. Jos. Ant., b. xv., chapter ii., Section 2; chapter iii., Section 1. Philo. Do Virtut., p. 587.

These considerations make it clear that the place where the Epistle was written was Babylon on the Euphrates, the place so celebrated in ancient sacred and profane history. If this be the correct view, then this is a fact of much interest, as showing that even in apostolic times there was a true church in a place once so distinguished for splendor and wickedness, and so memorable for its acts in oppressing the ancient people of God. Our information respecting this church, however, ceases here. We know not by whom it was founded; we know not who were its pastors; nor do we know how long it survived. As Babylon, however, continued rapidly to decline, so that in the second century nothing remained but the walls (compare the notes at Isa 13:19), there is no reason to suppose that the church long existed there. Soon the ancient city became a heap of ruins; and excepting that now and then a Christian traveler or missionary has visited it, it is not known that a prayer has been offered there from generation to generation, or that amidst the desolations there has been a single worshipper of the true God. See this subject examined at length in Bacon's Lives of the Apostles, pp. 258-26" [Barnes' Notes, Introduction to 1 Peter, Section 2].

Overcoming Temptation

I. INTRODUCTION.

A. The world's greatest and ugliest problem is sin.

1. Sin contaminates every accountable person:
 - a. Ecclesiastes 7:20: "For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."
 - b. Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
2. Sin is very broad in scope.
 - a. It includes any act which violates God's word in some overt way.
 - 1) 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
 - 2) 1 John 5:17: "All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death."
 - b. It extends to words.
 - 1) Matthew 12:36-37: "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."
 - 2) Ephesians 4:29: "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."
 - c. It includes evil thoughts and motives.
 - 1) Matthew 5:27-28: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."
 - 2) Matthew 15:18-20: "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are *the things* which defile a man: but to eat with uncashed hands defileth not a man."
 - d. An action that violates our conscience is sinful: "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23).
 - e. And even religious tenets that are taught or practiced without divine approval is sinful.
 - 1) Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."
 - 2) 2 John 1:9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."
 - f. Sin is also done by an omission of our God-given duty.
 - 1) James 4:17: "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin."
 - 2) Ezekiel 3:17-19: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked *man* shall die

in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul."

- 3) Luke 12:47-48: "And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more."
 - 4) John 9:41: "Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." ["Their profession, 'We see,' thus became a perpetual barrier to their other sins and increased their responsibility. Their claim to superior knowledge compounded their guilt. Thus, their sin was against the truth by which alone they could be led into the light, and their words became witnesses against them! (Matt. 23:31.)...The Lord's solemn affirmation, 'Your sin remaineth,' is a fearful pronouncement of the effects of the real, spiritual blindness which had possessed them and which kept them from realizing and accepting the truth" (Guy N. Woods, *Commentary on John*, p.202)].
 - 5) John 13:17: "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." [But what if they did not do those things?].
 - 6) John 15:22: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin." ["Here is clear and unmistakeable evidence of the fact that men are to be judged in proportion to the opportunities they enjoy. The greater the opportunity, the greater the guilt, and the greater the guilt the greater the punishment awaiting them. (Matt. 11:21-28; Heb. 10:25-28)" (Woods, *ibid.*, p.333)].
 - 7) James 3:1: "My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation." [This passage implies there is a stricter standard for those who know the most. "And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" (Luke 12:47-48).
3. Sin deceives.
 - a. Romans 7:11: "For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew *me*."
 - b. 2 Corinthians 11:3: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."
 - c. 1 Timothy 2:14: "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."
 - d. Hebrews 3:13: "But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."
 4. Sin spreads.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 5:5-6: "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying *is* not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?"
 - b. David's sin affected not only himself and Bathsheba, but Uriah, the infant, David's entire family, and the nation of Israel (2 Kings 11-18).
 5. Sin has awful consequences on a nation that is afflicted with it.
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- a. Psalms 9:17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, *and* all the nations that forget God."
- b. Proverbs 14:34: "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin *is* a reproach to any people."
6. Sin has an awful penalty for those who die guilty of it.
 - a. Matthew 25:46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."
 - b. John 5:28-29: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."
 - c. Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
 - d. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9: "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."
- B. The awfulness of sin exemplifies the gravity of this study on "Overcoming Temptation."
 1. The best answer to sin is to avoid it completely, never to fall victim to it. But since this is impossible for accountable people, another response is needed.
 - a. The gospel is God's remedy for the guilt, the practice and the consequences of sin.
 - 1) Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith."
 - 2) 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."
 - 3) 2 Peter 1:3-11: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."
 - b. But to avoid future sin, one must learn to overcome temptations as they present themselves to us.
 2. While none of us can live above sin, the gospel provides the guidance and help to conquer temptations.
 - a. Mark 14:38: "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly *is* ready, but the flesh *is* weak."
 - b. 1 John 1:7-10: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one

with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

II. DISCUSSION.

A. To understand sin, we need to know the process by which sin is committed.

1. Sin is the transgression of God's law (1 John 3:4). Its definition is "to miss the mark." *Sin* was used originally to describe what an archer did when his arrow failed to hit the target.
2. James 1:13-15 gives the technical process by which sin is committed: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."
 - a. God is not the instigator of sin; rather the lust of man lies at the heart of every sin. Many of the appetites of our fleshly beings have God-given methods of gratification, but when they are appeased by unlawful means, or when they are given priority above spiritual requirements (Matt. 6:33), sin is the result. But many appetites we develop have no sinless means of satisfaction (gambling, drinking, killing, etc.).
 - b. Our lust is allowed to come to the forefront; it is enticed by some situation or development; when we succumb to the enticement, we transgress God's will; at that point, we are separated from God. "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear" (Isa. 59:1,2).
 - c. When sin has run its ultimate course, and we die still in its grasp, we are consigned to the Devil's Hell, forever separated from God (Matt. 25:30-46; Rev. 20:12-15).
3. The key to overcoming temptation is to identify and subdue the lusts (the strong desires) of the mortal part of us. "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. 26:41).

B. To understand temptation, we need to know the paths by which it can come.

1. Temptations approach us through three different avenues: "Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:15-17).
 - a. They can come by means of the lust of the flesh. These are appeals made through the desires which arise from the evil appetites of the flesh, and find expression through the flesh. *Flesh* is used here, not in reference to skin, muscle, bone, and tissue, but to the lusts which are gratified by means of the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21).
 - b. They can come by means of the lust of the eyes. These are desires which are aroused through the appeal of objects by the way they look. We lust for them because they are very appealing to us in appearance.
 - c. They can come by means of the pride of life. These are evil desires for worldly honor; they appeal to our vanity. Evil actions are often produced because of our desire for the praise of men, to have something that will cause others to honor us or be jealous of us.
 2. Eve was tempted through these very avenues: "And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did
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eat" (Gen. 3:6).

- a. She saw that the forbidden fruit was good for food, and she thought that she *just had to have it!* There was more than enough food in Eden to satisfy her hunger, and God had warned them against eating from this tree. Her hunger was not sinful, but her desire to eat this fruit certainly led her astray.
 - b. She was tempted through the lust of the eyes. She saw that the forbidden fruit was pleasant to the sight. Prohibited things often are pleasant to see. Beer commercials portray this "Beelzebub's Brew" as very desirable. They do not show the alcoholic in the gutter, the mangled bodies of the victims of a drunk driver, the shattered life of the imbiber, or the ruined homes of his innocent family.
 - c. She was tempted through the pride (vainglory) of life, the desire to be as wise as God. But what a lie the devil had told her!
3. Christ was tempted through these same three avenues (Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13).
- a. When the Lord completed his fasting, Satan enticed him to turn stones into bread. But he prefaced his directive with the doubt-inducing thought, "If thou be the Son of God...." To obey the command of Satan would be sinful; to misuse supernatural powers would be wrong; hence, Jesus reproved the injunction with a reference to Scripture. This was an appeal to the lust of the flesh, an appeal that could not be satisfied by the means propounded by the devil.
 - b. Satan then brought the Lord to a pinnacle of the temple, and directed him to cast himself down, for God had promised in the Scriptures that nothing untoward would happen to him. Christ replied that to tempt God (to put the Father to the test) was wrong, and cited the Old Testament reference to prove it. This was an appeal to the lust of the eyes, and could not be gratified without violating the will of God. It would look mighty good to jump from a great height and not be hurt! Think of the great notoriety this ostentatious display would have produced for him! But this kind of notice was opposite of what the Lord wanted.
 - c. The Devil took him up into a high mountain, and showed him the kingdoms of the world, promising that he would give all these to the Lord if he would worship him. Christ replied that it was God who was to be worshipped and served, not Satan, and again cited the proper scriptural authority. This was an appeal to the pride of life, and could not be accomplished without committing sin.

C. To meet temptation, we need to know the specific appeals to which it can be made.

1. One of the most common temptations today is through appeals to our sexual appetites.
 - a. All sorts of sexual conduct (really, misconduct) is promoted by movies, songs, magazines, television programs, advertisements, television commercials, current fashions, and perhaps in a host of other ways.
 - b. Lustful desires must be controlled: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:27-28).
2. A desire for wealth and the things that money can buy is prominent in our worldly society. Money is required to provide the things essential to life and comfort, but contentment does not necessarily accompany a big bank account. The pitiful end of Howard Hughes clearly illustrates this fact. [It has been reported that Hughes' grandfather was a gospel preacher].
 - a. 2 Corinthians 12:10: "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."

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- b. Philippians 4:11-13: "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."
 - c. Money itself is not evil, but the love of money is sinful:
 - 1) 1 Timothy 6:6-1: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."
 - 2) 1 Timothy 6:17-19: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."
 - 3. A craving for political or social influence and the power that comes thereby, can lead unsuspecting souls into sin and perdition. Seeking the praise of men or preeminence over men has been the cause for many to forfeit the glories of heaven.
 - a. John 12:42-43: "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."
 - b. 3 John 9-11: "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth *them* out of the church. Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God."
 - 4. Vainglory has led many of our brethren from the highway of holiness. Why is it that some want to have elaborate church buildings and boast about huge offerings and large gatherings? While we would not judge the motives of anyone, it is clear that pride is apt to be the motive of some. "I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim. 4:1-5).
 - a. When preachers, elders, and Christians are willing to accept any kind of compromised "gospel" because their "numbers" will be enhanced thereby, we can know their real motive is not to please God and save souls; it is a means of self-gratification!
 - b. Many bulletins contain "great swelling words" of boasting about the size of their crowds, the dimensions of their buildings, the number of baptisms, and the amount of their contributions. Is this not self-aggrandizement?
 - c. Without the support of truth, such achievements are utterly without meaning, for the Moslems can put anybody to shame if only numbers and dollar signs are considered. God
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is glorified only if we follow his will!

- d. By following God's requirement to develop and maintain humility, this evil disposition can be overcome.
 - 1) Matthew 5:3: "Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
 - 2) Philippians 2:3-8: "*Let nothing be done* through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."
 - 3) James 4:10: "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."
 5. Many are led astray from holiness by anger, malice, hatred, and resentment.
 - a. Ephesians 4:26-27: "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil."
 - b. Colossians 3:8: "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth."
 - c. 1 Peter 2:1-2: "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."
 6. Many fall victim to temptation because they have not learned to subdue their tongues: "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (Jas. 1:26; cf. 3:1-12).
 7. Many fall into sin due to trials and hardships. The loss of a spouse can be devastating, especially in the case of a decades-old marriage. Ill health, a severe or crippling injury, a fire, the death of a child, the loss of a job, or the traitorous work of a supposed friend, can be enough to overturn our spiritual equilibrium.
 - a. Hebrews 12:6: "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."
 - b. Hebrews 13:5-6: "*Let your conversation be* without covetousness; *and be* content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord *is* my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."
 - c. Revelation 3:19: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."
 8. An evil habit can lead to a thoughtless practice of sin. The best solution is never to develop such a habit. But when one has fallen into the routine of drinking, smoking, using profanity, thinking evil thoughts, embellishing the truth, gossiping, backbiting, etc., it is with great difficulty that such a practice is broken; but with diligence on your part, the encouragement of your Christian friends, and with the help of God, you can beat it!
 - a. Romans 15:1-2: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification."
 - b. Ephesians 3:20-21: "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."
 - c. 1 Thessalonians 5:14: "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all *men*."
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D. We need to know that temptations can be successfully met.

1. An understanding of the danger involved, if we are successfully tempted, will help us overcome enticement. Depending on the nature of the sin involved, we stand to lose our happiness, our health, our family, our spouse, our job, our friends, and our souls! Nothing is worth an eternity in Gehenna! No pleasure or earthly advantage is worth obtaining at the cost of heaven!
 - a. Matthew 16:26: "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"
 - b. Luke 12:4-5: "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him."
2. We need to understand what we will miss if we fall victim to temptation.
 - a. Psalms 16:11: "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence *is* fulness of joy; at thy right hand *there are* pleasures for evermore."
 - b. Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
 - c. Revelation 21:4: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."
3. We must be able and willing to recognize temptation for what it is: an allurements of the devil to entice us away from our Savior. Temptation is presented in such a pretty package that we often fail to see it for what it is. Or in the heat of a moment of anger or passion, we act wickedly before we take thought.
 - a. Genesis 4:8: "And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him."
 - b. 2 Samuel 11:1-4: "And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth *to battle*, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem. And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman *was* very beautiful to look upon. And David sent and inquired after the woman. And *one* said, *Is* not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite? And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him, and he lay with her; for she was purified from her uncleanness: and she returned unto her house."
 - c. Genesis 3:1-6: "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."
 - d. 2 Corinthians 2:11: "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."
 - e. 2 Corinthians 11:3: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his

- subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."
- f. 1 Timothy 2:14: "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."
 4. We must have a desire to overcome the temptation. We are not apt to defeat the devil's allurements accidentally. And it is certain that we cannot meet a real temptation without wanting to overcome it.
 - a. Daniel 1:8: "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself."
 - b. 1 Timothy 5:22: "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure."
 5. We must believe what God has said in his word. If we do not believe the Bible, we will think there is no reason to flee from temptation. In our mind, we would say there is no such thing as sin or the penalty for sin. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences" (2 Cor. 5:10,11).
 6. We must know the Bible if we want to be fully equipped to defeat temptations. The Lord used the word of God to put Satan to flight (Matt. 4:1-11).
 - a. Psalms 119:11: "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."
 - b. 1 John 2:1: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."
 7. We must pray with regularity to avoid temptation. How many of our troubles could have been eluded if more prayers had been offered? How many problems have been averted because we did pray?
 - a. Matthew 6:13: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."
 - b. Mark 14:38: "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly *is* ready, but the flesh *is* weak."
 8. We need the support and encouragement of our fellow-saints to overcome many of our temptations. If we seek their company, and keep away from unsavory people, places, and situations as much as possible, much less temptation will befall us; and with the influence of our brethren to hearten us, we are more apt to remain loyal.
 9. We need to worship regularly with the saints, so that the greatest depth of strength may be developed within us. No one can worship God sincerely and scripturally, and not receive strength. The songs will build us up; studying God's word together will supply us with resources with which to do battle with Satan; giving will develop a spirit of sacrifice so that we are better prepared to forego some of the desires which could otherwise lead us into sin; in eating the Lord's Supper, we are reminded of his tremendous gift and our relative unworthiness, and thus inspire us to loyalty; and prayers to God cannot but help us.
 10. We need to trust God to live up to his promise to help us in temptation. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:13).
 - a. He reminds us that we are not the only one to face temptations. From the Garden of Eden to the end of time, Satan busily does his evil work! Christ faced every kind of temptation, and did not falter (Heb. 4:15). Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, the
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prophets, the apostles, and all of the New Testament saints, faced temptations.

- b. God is faithful to his promises.
 - 1) 2 Peter 2:9: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."
 - 2) Hebrews 6:10: "For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."
- c. Each person has his own special strengths and weaknesses, and we all have a breaking point. An aged person does not face the same temptations as a young person; ambition and sins of the flesh may assail the young, and the old may have to overcome cynicism, loneliness, and resentment. Satan will attack us at our weakest point. Often, our weak points are counter-balanced by strengths.
- d. God will make a way of escape. He does not say he will remove the temptation, but will make a way to escape. The escape might be through flight (2 Tim. 2:22); it might require fighting (Jas. 4:7); prayer will be needed (Matt. 6:13; 26:41).

III. CONCLUSION.

A. When we are overcome by temptation, God has provided the remedy.

1. For the alien sinner, one who has never known God, the requirements are plain.
 - a. Hear the gospel of Christ.
 - 1) Mark 16:15: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."
 - 2) Acts 15:9: "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."
 - 3) Acts 16:32: "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house."
 - 4) Romans 10:17: "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."
 - b. Believe the gospel.
 - 1) Mark 16:16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - 2) John 8:24: "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins."
 - 3) Acts 8:36-37: "And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."
 - 4) Hebrews 11:6: "But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."
 - c. Repent and turn from the practice of sin.
 - 1) Luke 24:47: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."
 - 2) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - 3) Acts 17:30: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."
 - 4) 2 Corinthians 7:10: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be

repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."

- 5) 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
- d. Confess faith in Christ.
- 1) Matthew 10:32-33: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."
 - 2) Acts 8:37: "And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."
 - 3) Romans 10:9-10: "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."
- e. Be baptized into Christ for the remission of sins.
- 1) Mark 16:16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - 2) Acts 2:38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
 - 3) Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."
 - 4) Romans 6:3-4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."
 - 5) Galatians 3:27: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."
- f. Remain faithful. Christians are to realize that they cannot live above an occasional stumble into sin, thus need all the help they can get.
- 1) Matthew 10:22: "And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."
 - 2) Romans 15:1-3: "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."
 - 3) 1 John 1:7-10: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."
 - 4) Revelation 2:10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."
2. For the erring Christian, the requirements are plain.
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- a. Repent of the evil that has been done. "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).
 - b. Confess the fault.
 - 1) James 5:16: "Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."
 - 2) 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - c. Pray for forgiveness.
 - 1) Acts 8:22: "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."
 - 2) Acts 8:24: "Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me."
 - 3) James 5:16: "Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."
3. Temptation is not a sin of itself; it is the occasion for sin to develop.
 - a. Our Lord was tempted on many occasions, but that did not make him sinful. It is the yielding to temptations that is sin.
 - b. The devil does not spend much time on those already securely in his clutches; he is after those who are holy to some degree. Therefore, when temptations come, that may indicate that Satan needs to work on you some more; you are not yet under his control.
- B. Some illustrations may help us appreciate the information we have studied.
1. "Don't Pay Too Much For The Whistle." Benjamin Franklin, well-known American writer, scientist, and diplomat, wrote of a childhood experience that deeply affected him. One holiday when he was seven years old, his friends filled his pockets with coins. He immediately started for the toy shop, but on the way he was distracted by the sound of a whistle. Franklin was so intrigued by the sound of the whistle that he offered its owner all of his money for it. With great excitement he ran home to tell his family about his purchase, but they laughed at him and explained that he paid four times what the whistle was worth. Franklin's joy soon turned to bitter tears; but he often remembered the lesson in later life when he was tempted to buy some unnecessary object, and would think, "Don't pay too much for the whistle."
 - a. Unfortunately, many of us are paying too much for the whistle when it comes to sin. It looks so alluring to us, and presents such a grand picture, but we seldom stop to look at the actual cost.
 - 1) Sin costs us our serenity. It robs us of our peace of mind. In Isaiah 57:20-21 the writer pictures the wicked "like the tossing sea which cannot rest." David knew the cost of sin with Bathsheba. Night after night what he had done reverberated in his consciousness. He could not forget it, and in Psalm 51:3 he says, "My sin is ever before me."
 - 2) Sin costs us our self respect. Sin fills our lives with bitter memories and regrets. Imagine the apostle Paul as he went to worship with the saints in Jerusalem. Perhaps he saw children whose parents he had imprisoned, or a widow whose husband he had killed. Although he felt the forgiveness of God, he also remembered the pain of that sin.
 - 3) Sin ultimately costs us our soul. Adam and Eve paid the price of their sin by being separated from God. Romans 6:23 promises that sin still demands the same price.
 - b. No pleasure that sin can give is worth what it costs. "Don't pay too much for the whistle." [Ron Stough].
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2. It was almost 1:00 in the morning when the phone rang in the Winters' home. Dr. Leo Winters, the highly acclaimed Chicago surgeon, was awakened with a start. Tonight it was a young boy, they said, tragically mangled in a late night accident. Could not someone else handle it? Not this time. This time his hands were possibly the only ones in the city, or maybe even in the whole region, which were skilled enough to save.
 - a. The quickest route happened to be through a rather rough area, but with time being a critical factor, it was worth the risk. He almost made it through the worst of the neighborhood. Almost. Then, at a stop light, his door was jerked open by a man in a grey hat and a dirty flannel shirt. "I've got to have your car!" the man screamed, pulling him from his seat. Winters tried explaining the gravity of his situation, but the man was not listening.
 - b. The doctor wandered for over 45 minutes looking for a phone. When the taxi finally got him to the hospital, over an hour had passed. He burst through the doors and into the nurses' station, but the nurse on duty only shook her head. Too late. The boy had died just about 30 minutes earlier. "His dad got here just before he died," the nurse told him. "He is in the chapel. Go see him. He is awfully confused. He could not understand why you never came."
 - c. Without explaining, Dr. Winters walked hurriedly down the hall and quietly entered the chapel. At the front knelt the huddled form of a weeping father—in a grey hat and dirty flannel shirt. Tragically, he had pushed from his life the only one who could save.
 - d. I have the strange feeling that I have known that same father. With his marriage coming apart, he just could not find the time for the Lord. With his business on the rocks, he will have to put off his decision about Jesus. Tragically, he is pushing from his life the only One who can save. [Jay Utley].
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