

AN OUTLINED COMMENTARY ON

# 2 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 2 PETER

### A. Author.

1. The author is affirmed to be the apostle Peter: 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 chieftest 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.
    - a. Matthew 17:1-2: "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth
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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 (not counting 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 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 scriptural 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. Hope, the keynote of the first epistle, was needed in view of the impending persecution. In the second epistle, knowledge is the keynote. False teachers were springing up all around the saints, many from among their own midst. The apostle presented information to expose the foolishness of these false teachings.
  2. There were many who were denying the return of the Lord, a false doctrine that would have overthrown the faith of the brethren if they had accepted it. Peter revealed some inspired knowledge to counteract this
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error.

3. The key to living the successful Christian life is knowledge—a practical grasp of the truth of God’s will.
  - a. 2 Peter 1:2: “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.”
  - b. 2 Peter 1:3: “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.”
  - c. 2 Peter 1:5: “And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge.”
  - d. 2 Peter 1:6: “And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness.”
  - e. 2 Peter 1:8: “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.”
  - f. 2 Peter 2:20: “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.”
  - g. 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.”

#### 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. 2 Peter 3:1: “This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance.”
4. The recipients were Christians, from both Jewish and Gentile backgrounds.

#### D. The Date of the Letter.

1. The date of the first 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. The second epistle was written soon after the first (see comments on 3:1).
2. The apostles places himself in “Babylon” when the first 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. "It is not possible to determine, with any degree of certainty, either *when* or *where* the second epistle of Peter was written. The letter itself contains no date sufficient to reach a definite conclusion regarding these matters" (Woods, p.145).
  - b. “No certain intimation of the PLACE where this Epistle was written is given in the Epistle itself. It is probable that it was at the same place as the former, as, if it had not been, we may presume that there would have been some reference to the fact that he had changed his residence, or some local



allusion which would have enabled us to determine the fact” (Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].

- c. It is possible that the place Peter was when he penned this letter was also *Babylon*.
  - 1) Catholics view Babylon as a reference to Rome. This is uncertain at best.
  - 2) Others have speculated that some place in Egypt called Babylon is meant.
  - 3) 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.
  - 4) If one is to take Babylon as a figurative representation of some other place, then Jerusalem seems to be the logical location. Jerusalem had been the center of persecution the church 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 2 Peter.

- 1. Chapter One.
    - a. Introduction—2 Peter 1:1-4.
    - b. The Christian Graces—2 Peter 1:5-7.
    - c. The Christian Graces and Eternal Life—2 Peter 1:8-11.
    - d. The Source of Spiritual Knowledge—2 Peter 1:12-21.
  - 2. Chapter Two.
    - a. Warnings Against False Teachers—2 Peter 2:1-11.
    - b. Condition and Destiny of False Teachers—2 Peter 2:12-22.
  - 3. Chapter Three.
    - a. The Second Coming of Christ and the End of the World—2 Peter 3:1-13.
    - b. Concluding Remarks—2 Peter 4:14-18.
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## 2 PETER 1

### A. 2 Peter 1:1-4: Introduction.

1. Verse 1: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."
  - a. NKJ: "Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ."
  - b. The author identifies himself in the first verse as Simon Peter; in the first epistle, he called himself Peter. His name at the time he was called to follow Jesus was Simon; Peter is the name the Lord gave him. "And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone." (John 1:42). The Greek word for "stone" is *petros*. Our English name *Peter* is the anglicized form of the Greek term.
  - c. Peter describes himself as a servant of Jesus Christ. Among other things, this shows that he had severed his ties with the Law of Moses; he is no longer a follower of Moses, but of Christ. Those who assert that they have succeeded Peter are so unlike the apostle that there is scarcely any resemblance. While the apostle speaks of himself as a servant of Christ, the popes are pompous, rich, and powerful political rulers. While they profess humility, their pomposity demonstrates the opposite. A pope was showing a famous visitor through the Vatican several centuries ago; among the impressive sights the visitor was shown was the vast stores of gold and silver. The pope stated that he could not say what Peter had said to the lame man, "Silver and gold have I none" [Acts 3:6]. The visitor replied, "And you cannot say, 'In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk'" [Acts 3:6]. There are no living apostles on earth today.
  - d. Peter also identified himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ. This office carried great significance; it gave those selected to that great work special authority, power, and responsibility. John 14-16 gives a lengthy presentation of the powers the apostles would receive when the Holy Spirit came upon them. The following passages provide additional details:
    - 1) Matthew 19:28: "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."
    - 2) 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."
    - 3) 2 Corinthians 5:18-20: "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."
    - 4) 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." [Acts 1:26 shows that the power was given only to the apostles].
    - 5) Acts 8:18: "And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money." [Only an apostle could confer miraculous gifts; no other man could do so].
    - 6) 2 Corinthians 12:12-14: "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. Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.”
- e. While Peter was a genuine apostle of Christ, he was also a servant of Christ. One is a servant only if he serves.
- 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) 1 Corinthians 4:1-2: “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.”
  - 3) Acts 5:27-33: “And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.”
  - 4) Acts 5:41-42: “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.”
- f. Peter next speaks of those who have obtained “like precious faith with us.” Peter writes from the point of view of a Jewish Christian; the pronoun *them* obviously has reference to Gentile Christians. During the first century, from the Biblical perspective, there were two great classes of people: Gentiles and Jews. This was God’s classification. Through the centuries from the time of Moses, his people followed his law; the Gentiles followed religious systems of their own choosing. There were a goodly number of Gentiles who adopted Judaism; there were others who followed certain moral principles enunciated in the Mosaic Law. The Gentiles are frequently called “Greeks” in the New Testament.
- 1) Romans 1:16: “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.”
  - 2) Romans 2:14-15: “For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another).”
  - 3) Ephesians 2:11-13: “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.”
  - 4) Acts 15:9: “And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.” [The word faith is preceded by the definite article “the” in this passage, thus showing that it is the gospel that is meant].
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- 5) In time, Gentiles far out-numbered Jews in the membership of the church: "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).
- g. The gospel was first offered to the Jews and proselytes (Acts 2); it was later extended to the Gentiles, when the time was right (Acts 10). All Christians shared in the same "precious faith." The word faith is used by Peter here, as it is frequently used elsewhere in the New Testament, to refer to the gospel system, which is to be in effect until the end of time: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once [i.e., for all time] delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).
- 1) Titus 1:4: "To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour."
  - 2) Galatians 1:23: "But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed."
  - 3) 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."
  - 4) 1 Timothy 1:2: "Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord."
  - 5) 1 Timothy 4:1: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."
  - 6) 1 Timothy 5:8: "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."
  - 7) 1 Timothy 6:10: "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."
  - 8) 1 Timothy 6:21: "Which some professing have erred concerning the faith...."
  - 9) 2 Timothy 3:8: "Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith."
- h. The Gentiles Christians had "obtained" along with the Jewish Christians "like precious faith." It appears natural to understand the "us" to be in reference to the Jewish Christians, with Gentile Christians being the counterpoint. However, whether the reference is to the Jewish believers, to the apostle Peter, or to all the apostles of Christ, the point is still the same: both groups had become participants in the precious faith.
- i. Robertson: Of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ. *tou Theou heemoon kai sooteeros Ieesou Christou*. So the one article *tou* with *Theou* and *sooteeros* requires precisely as with *tou kuriou heemoon kai sooteeros Ieesou Christou* (of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ), one person, not two, in 2 Peter 1:11 as in 2 Peter 2:20; 3:2,18. So in 1 Peter 1:3 we have *ho Theos kai pateer* (the God and Father), one person, not two. The grammar is uniform and inevitable (Robertson, Grammar, p. 786), as even Schmiedel (Winer-Schmiedel, Grammatik, p. 158) admits: "Grammar demands that one person be meant." .... The use of Theos by Peter as a predicate with Jesus Christ no more disproves the Petrine authorship of this epistle than a like use in John 1:1 disproves the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel and the same use in Titus 2:13 disproves the genuineness of Titus. Peter had heard Thomas call Jesus God (John 20:28) and he himself had called him the Son of God (Matt 16:16).
- j. Christians have obtained the precious faith in or through the righteousness of God. "The righteousness
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of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: This, of course, is the foundation of the entire ethical universe. It is not a theoretical and juridical righteousness only, but a warm, loving, providential righteousness embracing God's entire redemptive plan" [Wycliffe Bible Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1962 by Moody Press]. The apostle's statement in this phrase evidently addresses the plan by which God makes fallen man to be righteous, as in the following passages:

- 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) 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."
  - 3) 1 John 3:7: "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."
  - 4) 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."
  - 5) Acts 15:9: "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." [Again, this is a reference to *the faith*, the gospel].
- k. Regarding the phrase *our God and our Saviour Jesus Christ*:
- 1) Since the definite article does not appear before the reference to Christ, some have concluded that only one person is indicated, that this passage is speaking of Christ as God. But Barnes gives an important comment on this point: "[God and our Saviour Jesus Christ] Margin, 'our God and Saviour.' The Greek will undoubtedly bear the construction given in the margin; and if this be the true rendering, it furnishes an argument for the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Middleton, Slade, Valpy, Bloomfield, and others, contend that this is the true and proper rendering. It is doubted, however, by Wetstein, Grotius, and others. Erasmus supposes that it may be taken in either sense. The construction, though certainly not a violation of the laws of the Greek language, is not so free from all doubt as to make it proper to use the passage as a proof-text in an argument for the divinity of the Saviour. It is easier to prove the doctrine from other texts that are plain, than to show that this *MUST* be the meaning here" [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].
  - 2) Each member of the Godhead was involved in the salvation plan:
    - a) God laid the plans for the gospel: "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" (Rom. 16:25-26; cf. Eph. 3:1-11).
    - b) Christ carried out those plans: "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6:38; cf. John 17:4; Heb. 10:9-10).
    - c) The Holy Spirit revealed those plans: "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, throughly furnished unto all good works" ((2 Tim. 3:16-17; cf. 1 Cor. 2:9-13).
  - 3) The three divine beings are each referred to as *God*.
    - a) God the Father.
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- (1) Matthew 6:9: "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name."
  - (2) Ephesians 4:6: "One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all."
  - b) Christ the Son.
    - (1) 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."
    - (2) Colossians 2:9: "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."
    - (3) Hebrews 1:2-8: "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 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; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy kingdom."
  - c) The Holy Spirit.
    - (1) Genesis 1:1-2: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."
    - (2) Job 26:13: "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent."
    - (3) Psalms 104:30: "Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth."
    - (4) Acts 5:3-4: "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back *part* of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."
    - (5) 2 Peter 1:21: "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."
  2. Verse 2: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord."
    - a. The word grace was a common greeting among the Greeks; the word peace was a common greeting among the Jews. "The grace Peter desired for his readers was not however, the mere favor of men and the earthly joy which the Greek greeting signified; nor was the peace no more than the tranquil and serene life desired by the Hebrews. The grace here contemplated embraced abundant spiritual blessing, and the peace was the peace of God and of Christ, as well as peace with one's brethren. Moreover, it included peace in one's soul, peace that influenced and sweetened the entire life. Such the apostle desired to abound (be multiplied) in the lives of those whom he had addressed" (Woods, pp.23f, commenting on 1 Peter 1:2).
    - b. "'Knowledge' in the text is not translated from the ordinary Greek word for knowledge—*gnosis*—but is from *epignosis*, knowledge toward an object, ever maturing, but never matured. Grace and peace
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are multiplied—made to abound—in this knowledge. It involves much more than the possession of facts; it includes the idea of deep and loving contemplation of matters too profound for complete mastery. The word often occurs in the New Testament” (ibid., p148).

- c. The knowledge meant is the gospel. The gospel is God’s revealed knowledge: “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” (1 Cor. 2:9-13).
  - 1) It is not through emotion or intuition that we obtain information regarding God. The same is true with regards to salvation and hope. Just because someone has generated a feeling that they have been saved or that entrance into Heaven is assured for them does not make it so. Grossly misguided men have flown large aircraft into great buildings, killing themselves and thousands of others, all the while thinking that they are doing the will of God. Being sincere is essential, but so is being guided by the truth.
  - 2) The apostles and other saints of the first century were given the great work of saving souls. They accomplished this work by preaching and teaching the gospel of Christ.
    - a) Matthew 28:18-20: “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”
    - b) 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.”
    - c) Luke 24:47: “And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”
    - d) Acts 8:4: “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.”
    - e) Colossians 1:6, 23: “Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth....If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister.”
    - f) Romans 10:16-18: “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.”
  - 3) Without the impartation of knowledge to the minds of the prospects, there can be no conversions to Christ.
    - a) John 6:44-45: “No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me” (ASV).
    - 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.”

- c) Acts 8:4: “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.”
  - d) Acts 8:5-12: “Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city....But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.”
  - e) Acts 13:44-47: “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.”
  - d. Our store of knowledge of the gospel is increased as we continue to study and serve God. We never come to a complete mastery of the entire body of knowledge inculcated in the Bible.
    - 1) 1 Timothy 2:15: “Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety.”
    - 2) Ephesians 5:17: “Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.”
    - 3) 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.”
  - 3. Verse 3: “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.”
    - a. Other versions:
      - 1) 2 Peter 1:3: “Seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue” (ASV).
      - 2) 2 Peter 1:3: “As His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue” (NKJV).
    - b. This statement grows out of verse two. This verse affirms that God, by his divine power, has given something to us—he has granted to us life and godliness. The fountain of this life and godliness is the *knowledge* of Christ. The verse begins with the expression “according as.” The ASV has “seeing that.” Thus, in view of the fact that God has given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness, we may expect to enjoy grace and peace through the knowledge of God and Christ (verse 2).
    - c. It was by the *divine power* of God that these blessings have been granted. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (Jas. 1:17).
    - d. By his divine power, God has given [granted] to us all things that pertain to life and godliness. The
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word “pertain” was added by the translators to give clearer sense to the Greek statement, for the English reader. Peter affirms that everything that is connected to life and godliness has been granted to faithful Christians. Nothing that is an essential part of life and godliness has been omitted. We have been fully endowed with every aspect of life and godliness.

- 1) 2 Timothy 3:15-17: “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 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.”
- 2) James 1:25: “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.”
- 3) 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 discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”
- e. The “life” the apostle mentions is spiritual life. Separated from God, we are dead, just as our body is dead if it is separated from our spirit: “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (Jas. 2:26).
  - 1) Spiritual life is to be obtained in Christ, not out of him.
    - a) 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.”
    - b) Ephesians 2:11-13: “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.”
    - c) 2 Timothy 1:1: “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus.”
    - d) John 6:68: “Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.”
    - e) John 5:40: “And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”
    - f) John 11:25: “Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”
    - g) 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) Spiritual life in Christ is obtained by means of the Gospel of Christ.
    - a) 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.”
    - b) 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.” [In the fleshly body, life is in the spirit, not in the material part of the body; similarly, the spiritual life the soul (the spirit) obtains is by the word of Christ].
    - c) 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.”
    - d) 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.”

- 3) Spiritual life in Christ is obtained when we obey the Gospel of Christ.
- a) Acts 11:18: "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."
  - 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) 1 Peter 3:21: "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."
  - d) John 6:58: "This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever." [The Lord uses a figure of speech to describe the method by which we obtain life; he presented it as eating the "bread of life" (6:48). In the context, he stated that unless we partake of his flesh and blood (a figure of speech), we cannot have life (verses 53-57). This is not an allusion to the Lord's Supper; it denotes our obedience to the Gospel. Peter used a similar figure in 1 Peter 2:2-3: "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" ].
  - e) Galatians 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."
  - f) 1 John 2:1-6: "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. 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. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."
- f. God has also granted all things that pertain to *godliness*. Godliness refers to the conduct necessary to preserve and maintain life (Woods, p.148).
- 1) Godliness [*eusebeia* NT:2150], "from *eu*, 'well,' and *sebomai*, 'to be devout,' denotes that piety which, characterized by a Godward attitude, does that which is well-pleasing to Him' [Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (c)1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers].
  - 2) Godliness is God-like conduct. When we obey the gospel, we obtain spiritual life; we maintain and preserve that spiritual life by living godly lives.
    - a) 1 John 1:6-10: "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."
    - 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."
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- g. God has granted all things that pertain to life and godliness *through the knowledge of him* who called you to glory and virtue.
- 1) The one who did the calling was Christ. We obtain the blessings identified through his knowledge. That knowledge could only be the Gospel of Christ. “This verse is a clear affirmation of the sufficiency of God’s revelation to man, as well as an unmistakable assurance that every need of every kind will be supplied” (Woods, p.148).
  - 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) 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) Ephesians 3:3-5: “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.”
  - 5) 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 discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”
  - 6) 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. Verse 4: “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.”
- a. Using his divine power, God has granted unto us certain benefits; he grants to us all things that pertain to life and godliness; he grants these through the knowledge of Christ; the knowledge of Christ is the gospel. This verse affirms that by the gospel of Christ we are given exceeding great and precious promises. These great and precious promises encompass all the blessings made available to the faithful ones in Christ.
    - 1) 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) 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) 2 Timothy 3:15-17: “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 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.”
    - 4) 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 discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”
    - 5) 1 Peter 1:22-25: “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto
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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.”

### **THOSE IN CHRIST HAVE THESE BLESSINGS**

<b>BLESSING</b>	<b>REFERENCE</b>
In the Kingdom	Colossians 1:13
Redeemed by Blood of Christ	Colossians 1:14
Forgiven for Offenses	Ephesians 1:7; Acts 2:38; 22:16
Spiritually Alive	Ephesians 2:1-5; Rom. 6:3f; 2 Cor. 5:17
Near to God	Ephesians 2:13
Reconciled to God	Ephesians 2:16; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
Sanctified	1 Corinthians 1:2
New Creature (Creation)	2 Corinthians 5:17
Liberty	Galatians 2:4
Have Hope	1 Peter 1:3-5
Saved	2 Timothy 2:10

### **ADAM & EVE’S FALL and OUR RESTORATION**

SAVED CONDITION ☆ IN CHRIST ☆ STATE OF PURITY			
Lie Preached: Gen. 3:1-5		Truth Obeyed: Acts 2:36-47	
Lie Heard: Gen. 3:6		Truth Believed: Acts 2:36-37	
Lie Believed: Gen. 3:6		Truth Heard: Acts 2:36-37	
Lie Obeyed: Gen. 3:6		Truth Preached: Acts 2:1-36; Mark 16:15-16	
LOST ☆ SEPARATED FROM GOD ☆ TAINTED WITH SIN			



- b. "By availing themselves [Christians—bw] of these precious and exceeding great promises they are privileged to share in the divine nature—the holy character which God possesses. The chastening and disciplining to which children of God are subjected in this life is for the purpose of enabling them to be 'partakers of his holiness.' (Heb. 12:10.) Man was originally created in the image, and after the likeness, of God (Gen. 1:26); but this image and rational likeness was lost in the fall. It is restored to man in the transformation which occurs in conversion" (Woods, p.149).
- 1) 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."
  - 2) 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."
  - 3) Ephesians 2:11-13: "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."
- c. The immediate purpose of the gospel is to mold people back into the image of the Lord. When we obey the gospel (Rom. 10:16; Acts 2:36-41), our past guilt is removed (Acts 22:16); as we walk in the light of the gospel as faithful Christians (1 John 1:7), we become more and more like the Lord.
- 1) Genesis 1:26: "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."
  - 2) Romans 3:23: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."
  - 3) 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."
  - 4) 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."
  - 5) Hebrews 12:10: "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."
  - 6) Colossians 3:10: "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."
- d. Following the resurrection and Judgment, when we are ushered into Heaven, clothed with our new spiritual bodies, we shall be as immortal and pure as the Lord is.
- 1) Philippians 3:20-21: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."
  - 2) 1 Corinthians 15:50-57: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then
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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.”

- 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.”
- e. Faithful saints have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust; they no longer live as does the world.
  - 1) 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.”
  - 2) 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) 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) 1 Peter 4:1-3: “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; 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. 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.”

#### B. 2 Peter 1:5-7: The Christian Graces.

1. Verse 5: “And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge.” “Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge” (ASV).
  - a. In addition, or in view of, the foregoing truth, Peter admonishes the saints to give all diligence. The word in the original for “giving” means “to bring in by the side of.” God has provided great and precious promises; we are to bring in to the side of these a diligent effort to fulfill our part.
    - 1) “‘Diligence’ is from *spoude*, to hasten. All children of God are thus exhorted to hasten to bring in their part, though small and insignificant compared with what God does for us, in order that they may avail themselves of the blessings which the Father has made available to them” (Woods, p.150).
    - 2) Much effort is required to develop the traits of character which are listed in the following verses. No direct influence of the Holy Spirit is indicated (as the Holiness and Pentecostal folks think); these graces are developed only if we put forth the required effort. No one can learn to ride a bicycle or drive a car for me; I must acquire those skills personally. No one can be godly for me, or maintain self-control for me.

- a) 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.”
  - b) 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.”
  - c) Hebrews 6:10-12: “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. And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”
  - d) Acts 2:37-41: “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.”
- b. **Add to your faith.** Faith is the foundation upon which the Christian life is constructed. This is obedient faith, the faith that produces the new birth.
- 1) “It is not meant in this verse and the following that we are to endeavor particularly to add these things one to another ‘in the order’ in which they are specified, or that we are to seek first to have faith, and then to add to THAT virtue, and then to add knowledge to virtue rather than to faith, etc. The order in which this is to be done, the relation which one of these things may have to another, is not the point....The design of the apostle is to say, in an emphatic manner, that we are to strive to possess and exhibit all these virtues; in other words, we are not to content ourselves with a single grace, but are to cultivate ALL the virtues, and to endeavor to make our piety complete in all the relations which we sustain. The essential idea in the passage before us seems to be, that in our religion we are not to be satisfied with one virtue, or one class of virtues...” [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].
  - 2) Faith comes by hearing God’s word. To have faith is to take God at his word, as Abraham did when he left Ur of the Chaldees at God’s word (Gen. 12:1-3; Heb. 11:8ff) and when he consented to offer his son Isaac (Gen. 22; Rom. 4:17-21).
    - a) Romans 10:17: “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
    - b) Acts 15:7: “And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.”
  - 3) Faith is the firm, unshaken confidence and conviction that a given proposition is true. A fact exists; evidence exists that sufficiently supports that fact; that which is produced by the fact and evidence is faith. One can believe a lie (cf. 2 Thess. 2:10-12). This kind of faith is produced by a false fact and false evidence—this faith is a false faith. One having this false faith can have as much sincerity and zeal as one having genuine faith. Such a person is hard to change.
  - 4) Faith is essential to have Heaven’s approval:
    - a) 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.”
    - b) John 8:21,24: “Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall
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die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come....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.”

- c) Faith benefits the soul and is real when it obeys: “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” (1 Pet. 2:22-23; cf. Jas. 2:14-20).
- 5) Faith is both essential and powerful.
  - a) It purifies the heart when it obeys (Jas. 2:14-26; 1 Pet. 2:22-23): “And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith” (Acts 15:9).
  - b) It sanctifies: “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” (Acts 26:18).
  - c) We are to live by faith: “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” (Rom. 1:17).
  - d) We are justified by faith: “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1).
  - e) We are to stand by faith: “Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear” (Rom. 11:20).
  - f) We are to walk by faith: “For we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7).
  - g) We overcome the world by faith: “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:4).
- 6) The faith that avails the soul is the faith that obeys God. An obedient faith is required of alien sinners in order for them to be saved; an obedient faith is required of Christians to remain in the saved condition:
  - a) Mark 16:16: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
  - 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) 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.” [Abraham was a child of God; Rahab was an alien sinner; an obedient faith was required of each].
  - d) Galatians 5:6: “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.”
  - e) 2 Corinthians 5:7: “For we walk by faith, not by sight.”
- 7) The faith of our text is the foundation upon which the graces named are built. Faith here stands for our obedience to the gospel (the process by which we were forgiven, saved, and added to the church).
  - a) Acts 2:38, 47: “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



....Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

- b) 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.”
  - c) 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.”
  - d) Galatians 3:26-28: “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.”
- 8) The graces named do not exhaust the list of graces, just as Matthew 5 does not contain all of the beatitudes. Peter speaks of seven graces here; Paul identifies several fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). Romans 12 gives other traits of character which Christians are to cultivate and exercise.
- 9) The graces are to be added [supplied, ASV]. The word add (supply) is to be understood as each grace is mentioned. Each grace grows out of, and is produced by, the one which preceded it; each promotes the others. But the development of the Christian character is not piecemeal: one trait added this year and another the following year. These are to be cultivated, developed, and exercised as we go along, in order to have a well-rounded character. What good is accomplished if one has a great deal of knowledge if he does not control himself?

c. **Add virtue.**

- 1) “‘Virtue’ (*arete*) which faith supplies is courage and soul vigor, the manliness and the determination to do that which is right” (Woods, p.150).
- 2) The same Greek word is also found in:
  - a) 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.”
  - b) 1 Peter 2:9: “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the **praises** of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”
  - c) 2 Peter 1:3: “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**.”
- 3) It is from the same Greek word as G 730. Properly manliness (valor), excellence, praise, virtue.
  - a) Matthew 19:4: “And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them **male** and female.”
  - b) Luke 2:23: “(As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every **male** that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord).”
  - c) Galatians 3:28: “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.”
- 4) Virtue, in the sense it is used in the text, is illustrated in David’s fight with Goliath (1 Sam. 17). It is shown in the experiences of many Bible characters.
  - a) Joseph: “And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my

master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:7-9).

- b) Ruth: "And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me. When she saw that she was stedfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her" (Ruth 1:16-18).
  - c) Paul: "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness" (2 Cor. 11:24-27).
  - d) The other apostles: "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you. For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day? (1 Cor. 4:7-13).
  - e) Daniel and his three companions are great examples of courage under demanding pressures.
  - f) Our Lord is the greatest of all examples of courage under the most strenuous circumstances: "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: 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. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Peter 2:21-25).
- 5) Virtue is placed at a good position in Peter's list of graces. Without virtue (courage), many would not be willing to obey the gospel or remain faithful for long. Virtue is faith in action.
  - 6) During the French Revolution, Lafayette was dismissed from the army, declared to be an exile and a price was placed on his head. While trying to escape to America, he was captured and imprisoned in Germany. He was offered freedom if he would join in a plot against France. He was facing a long confinement, and was ill, but he boldly refused the offer: "Never! I am still Lafayette!"
  - 7) We show our virtue when we confess wrong-doing, when we resist temptation, when we defend the truth, when we speak up for Christ when it would be easier to remain silent, when we remain silent when our natural tendencies urge us to lash out.
- d. **Add knowledge.**
- 1) Zeal without knowledge is dangerous to the soul: "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" (Rom. 10:1-3). One who has natural courage and has developed a zeal for some false religious movement is doubly dangerous—to himself and to others.
- 2) Some with courage but without knowledge have persecuted and killed saints, and have otherwise opposed the truth.
    - a) John 16:2-3: "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me."
    - b) 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."
  - 3) Some have allowed their child to die because they thought blood transfusions were wrong; others have refused medical care after being bitten by snakes during serpent-handling religious services.
  - 4) We are called on to learn. It is not enough to know some religious words or to be able to quote verses; we must understand the meaning—which requires study.
    - a) 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."
    - b) 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."
    - c) 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."
    - d) Ephesians 5:17: "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."
  - 5) We obtain knowledge by studying the Bible with much diligence.
    - a) Psalms 119:104: "Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way."
    - b) Psalms 1:2: "But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night."
    - c) Psalms 119:97: "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day."
    - d) Proverbs 2:3-6: "Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding."
    - e) John 7:17: "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself" (ASV).
  2. Verse 6: "And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness."
    - a. **Add temperance.**
      - 1) The Greek term Peter used here literally means "one who holds himself in." "It denotes self-government, discipline, the ability of one to control his own life. It is acquired through the exercise
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of discernment, the knowledge by which one differentiates between right and wrong, and thus develops from it. One possessed of such knowledge and being thus equipped to identify evil is able to avoid it" (Woods, p.151).

- 2) Temperance (self-control) is required:
    - a) Acts 24:25: "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."
    - b) 1 Corinthians 9:25-27: "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."
    - c) Galatians 5:23: "Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."
    - d) Titus 1:8: "But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate."
    - e) Titus 2:2: "That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience."
  - 3) There are many Bible examples of people who were intemperate, including:
    - a) Eve (Gen. 3:1-6).
    - b) Achan (Josh. 7).
    - c) David: "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 enquired 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" (2 Sam. 11:2-4).
    - d) The Gentiles (Rom. 1:18-32).
  - 4) There are Bible examples of temperance, including:
    - a) Joseph: "And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:7-9).
    - b) Daniel: "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" (Dan. 1:8).
    - c) Paul: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27).
  - 5) Temperance in things that are sinful requires total abstinence (lying, stealing, gambling, drinking, cursing).
  - 6) We are to practice self-control in the use of our tongues:
    - a) Proverbs 5:1-3: "My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to my understanding: That thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge. For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil."
    - b) James 1:26: "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridled not his tongue, but
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deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.”

- c) James 3:1-2: “My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.”
- 7) We are to practice self-control over our temper:
  - a) Proverbs 14:29: “He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding; but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.”
  - b) Proverbs 16:32: “He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.”
  - c) 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.”
- 8) There are many reasons to practice temperance:
  - a) One who does not control himself is like a city whose walls are broken down—he is defenseless against the enemy: “He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls” (Prov. 25:28).
  - b) For the good of others: “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). Compare: “Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand” (Phil. 4:5).
  - c) For our own good: “For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 1:11; cf. 1 Cor. 9:25-29).
- b. **Add patience.**
  - 1) As brother Woods points out, patience is not a mere resignation to life’s struggles, but includes “the idea of positive resistance of evils and a stedfast bearing up under them” (p.151).
  - 2) The importance of patience [stedfastness, endurance] is shown in other Biblical statements:
    - a) Luke 21:19: “In your patience possess ye your souls.”
    - b) Romans 8:25: “But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.”
    - c) 1 Timothy 6:11: “But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.”
    - d) 2 Timothy 3:10-11: “But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.”
    - e) Hebrews 10:36-39: “For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”
    - f) Revelation 3:10: “Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”
  - 3) Commendation is offered to those who continue stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine [the gospel]:
    - a) Acts 2:42: “And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”
    - b) 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.”

- c) 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.”
  - d) Luke 10:16: “He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.”
  - e) 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.”
- 4) Other statements about patience:
- a) Romans 5:1-4: “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. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope.”
  - b) Romans 15:4: “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”
  - c) James 1:1-4: “James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting. My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”
  - d) 1 Peter 1:7: “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.”
- 5) Examples of patience:
- a) 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3: “We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father.”
  - b) 2 Thessalonians 1:4: “So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure.”
  - c) James 5:7-8: “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”
  - d) James 5:10-11: “Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”

**c. Add godliness.**

- 1) “‘Godliness’ (*eusebeia*) is humble reverence and deep piety toward God. Often unbelievers manifest a stoical patience toward the adversities of life, but without the motive which springs from respect and devotion toward God. Patience is approved only when it results in submission to the burdens of life for the sake of pleasing the Father. The desire to be godlike is the motive from which all our actions should originate, and without which there can be no acceptable service rendered to God” (Woods, p.151).

- a) 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."
  - 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."
  - 2) The importance of godliness is shown in many passages, including the following:
    - a) 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."
    - b) 1 Timothy 2:9-10: "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; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."
    - c) 1 Timothy 4:7-8: 'But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.'
    - d) 1 Timothy 6:6: "But godliness with contentment is great gain."
    - e) 1 Timothy 6:11: "But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."
    - f) 2 Timothy 3:1-5: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."
    - g) 2 Peter 1:3: "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."
    - h) Titus 2:11-12: "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."
    - i) 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."
  - 3) We are to exercise godliness in worship. One who talks, passes notes, sleeps, reads other material, during worship, shows no "humble reverence and deep piety" toward God. He is showing the very opposite.
  - 4) We are to exercise godliness in our daily life. Our actions, words, attitudes, and places we go are to demonstrate godliness; to practice godliness is to identify our Master.
  - 5) Godliness is profitable in this life and in eternity: "For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (1 Tim. 4:8).
3. Verse 7: "And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."
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**a. Add brotherly kindness.**

- 1) Since God is our Father, he is also the Father of all other faithful Christians. All faithful Christians are brothers and sisters in Christ. There must be a mutual kindness shown between us all— a warm-hearted love. “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” (1 John 5:1).
- 2) “Brotherly kindness” is translated from the Greek term *philadelphia*, which means “love of brethren.” This is the natural love and concern that each Christian has for all other Christians. Paul was greatly concerned over the welfare of his brethren during the tumultuous situation that arose in Ephesus, and would have rushed into a danger-filled gathering to aid them: “And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre. And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not” (Acts 19:29-30).
- 3) Hebrews 13:1: “Let brotherly love continue.”
- 4) Romans 12:10: “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.”
- 5) 1 Thessalonians 4:9: “But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.”
- 6) 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.”
- 7) 1 Peter 3:8: “Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous.”
- 8) Ephesians 4:32: “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

**b. Add love.**

- 1) Love is the “crowing jewel” of the Christian character. It includes love for the truth, love for righteousness, love for all people.
    - a) 1 Corinthians 13:13: “And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”
    - b) Colossians 3:14: “And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.”
    - c) Matthew 22:37-40: “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”
    - d) Mark 12:29-31: “And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.”
    - 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.”
    - f) Luke 6:31: “And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.”
  - 2) Love is to be extended even to our deadly enemies.
    - a) Matthew 5:43-48: “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. 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
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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) Galatians 6:10: “As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”
- c) 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.” [Since God’s love is extended to all, including enemies, our love must also extend to our enemies].
- d) 1 John 3:18: “My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.”
- e) Romans 13:10: “Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” [Here, love is defined negatively—love does harm to no one; therefore, positively, love is the doing or the willing of good to others].
- c. “The list of graces enumerated may be analyzed as follows: (1) Those which are necessary to form the Christian character: virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience; (2) that which reveals the follower of Christ to be a servant of God (godliness), a member of the family of God (brotherly kindness), and well disposed toward all men (love). From this we learn that no grace can stand alone...” (Woods, p.152).

#### C. 2 Peter 1:8-11: The Christian Graces and Eternal Life.

1. Verse 8: “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.” “For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ’ (ASV).
  - a. The word “if” is one of the smallest of English words, but it carries great importance.
    - 1) *If* Adam and Eve had not eaten the forbidden fruit....
    - 2) *If* Cain had offered the proper sacrifice....
    - 3) *If* people had repented at the preaching of Noah....
    - 4) *If* Nadab and Abihu had used the proper fire....
    - 5) *If* we will add these graces....
  - b. Peter points out the importance of possessing and exercising these graces. If they are in us and abound, if they are ours in abundance, then we will not be barren or unfruitful. We will not be “idle nor unfruitful” (ASV).
  - c. Barren: “*Argos* NT:692, denoting ‘idle, barren, yielding no return, because of inactivity,’ is found in the best mss. in James 2:20 (RV, ‘barren’; it is rendered ‘barren’ in 2 Peter 1:8, KJV, (RV, ‘idle’))” [Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (c)1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers]. This is the word used in Matthew 12:36 in reference to “idle” words: “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”
  - d. By having these Christian graces as our own, we will not be barren (or idle) and unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ. This knowledge is a discerning knowledge that produces the proper kind of life, works, words, and attitudes.
  - e. “The various graces of the Christian character, realized in the heart, will lead us on towards that fuller knowledge of Christ; if they are really ours, they will not allow us to be idle, they must bring forth the fruit of good works; and the life of righteousness by faith draws the Christian onwards in the knowledge of Christ...” [The Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 2001 by

Biblesoft].

- f. Compare:
  - 1) Philippians 3:9-10: "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death."
  - 2) Colossians 1:10: "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."
2. Verse 9: "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."
  - a. This verse begins with another small word—but—which draws a contrast with the preceding thought. [The ASV has "for" in place of "but"]. Peter's point is to show that spiritual blindness results from our not cultivating the graces.
  - b. If these spiritual qualities are not in us in abundance, we cannot see "afar off." We can only see what is close. This describes the condition of one who is only concerned with the present time and the material world around him; he does not see with the eye of faith. This certainly describes a man of the world; it also describes a worldly-minded Christian who has not progressed beyond his primary obedience to the gospel.
  - c. The one the apostle depicts is a weak and ignorant and apathetic Christian; he was once purged from his old sins, but he has closed his eyes to his spiritual status. He has made no progress—but has regressed. A spiritually-blind Christian brings condemnation upon his own soul, contributes to the spiritual demise of his family, and encourages the condemnation of many others by his example.
  - d. "The words 'seeing only what is near' are from the Greek *muopadzo*, and used of one who is able to see only by constantly blinking his eyes and keeping them partially closed. One so afflicted closes his eyes, not to keep from seeing, but in order that he may be able to see, his myopic condition rendering him unable to look directly into the light. Thus hindered in his vision, distant objects are to him indistinct, and he sees only what is near. In this figurative fashion Peter pictures for us the man deficient spiritually and hence able to see only the things about him—the world and its affairs—having lost the power to look into the future and see by faith beyond the gate of life eternal" (Woods, p.153).
  - e. "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. 4:18). There is such a thing as spiritual blindness. We are to look at those things which are not seen with the human eye. There are some earthly things which the human eye cannot see: electricity, air, gravity. But this is not the kind of objects the apostle means. Paul is indicating spiritual entities, places, and rewards which are not observed by human sight.
    - 1) Neither God, Christ, nor the Holy Spirit can be seen by the human eye.
      - a) 1 Timothy 6:16: "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."
      - b) Hebrews 11:27: "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible."
      - c) Although we cannot literally see God, yet there are undeniable and unmistakable evidences of God: "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Rom. 1:20; cf. Ps. 19:1).
    - 2) We cannot see heaven with our naked eye, but it is a real place.



- 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."
- 3) Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." "Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen" (ASV).
  - a) In this text, the apostle affirms that faith is the ground (the confidence and substance) of things for which we hope. The word translated "substance" ("assurance"—ASV) "has several shades of meaning, including the thought of *ground* that stands under a proposition; also, it means the *actual substance* as contrasted with the mere vision of a thing, this latter connotation making the passage mean that faith in the believer's soul actually brings reality into his existence, conveying the thought of an earnest, or pledge, of ultimate fulfillment" (Coffman, pp.249f).
  - b) Our English word *substance* is comprised of two words: **sub**, which means *under*, and **stance**, which means *to stand*, thus giving the meaning "to stand under, to support." This same meaning is found in the Greek term. Faith, therefore, stands under and lends support to those things we hope to obtain. These things we hope for include everything that comprises our inheritance.
- f. The cleansing from sin to which Peter alludes is clearly presented in the New Testament:
  - 1) Acts 2:36-38: "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."
  - 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) 1 Peter 3:21: "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."
  - 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."
- 3. Verse 10: "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall."
  - a. In view of what the apostle has just taught regarding the importance of developing and using the Christian graces, he admonishes his readers to give diligence. "'Diligence' here, as in verse 5, means 'to hasten,' and the exhortation is to more (*mallon*) haste, greater zeal and earnestness in the pursuit of those qualities essential to the Christian life" (Woods, p.153).
  - b. The calling and election we have received came from God; he called us by his gospel (2 Thess. 2:13-14); he elects only those who respond to his invitation. We respond by believing and obeying his word, the gospel of Christ.
    - 1) Matthew 7:21: "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."
    - 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) 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.”
- c. God’s grace can be declined, despite the claims of denominational theologians. Peter called on those who heard the gospel on Pentecost Day to be saved by obeying the gospel (Acts 2:36-41). God extends his gracious offer to save to all mankind, but he does not coerce their acceptance.
- 1) 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.”
  - 2) 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.”
  - 3) 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.”
  - 4) Acts 13:44-47: “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.” These people resisted and blasphemed the Holy Spirit.
- d. Peter’s statement in our text is directed to Christians, who are told that they can make their calling and election sure. Individuals are directly involved in securing their calling and election. This is done through obedience. The specific area of obedience discussed by the apostle here is acquiring, using, and developing the Christian graces.
- 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) 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) 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.”
  - 4) Galatians 6:5: “For every man shall bear his own burden.”
  - 5) 1 John 1:6-10: “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
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- 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.”
- e. By cultivating and exercising the Christian graces, we make our calling and election secure. If we sincerely and zealously develop these spiritual attributes, it is obvious we will be faithful in all other aspects of Christian duty—worship, work, teaching and defending the truth, etc. But if we do not add these graces [and otherwise, do our duty], what will result? We will fall!
    - 1) Galatians 5:4: “Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”
    - 2) 2 Peter 2:20-22: “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. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”
    - 3) 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.” *To fail of the grace of God is to fall from the grace of God.*
  - f. The calling directed toward us may be refused; the election we receive when we obey the gospel can later be repudiated. The election is neither unconditional nor irreversible, as Calvinism asserts. Ben Franklin, a great gospel preacher of the nineteenth century, was once about to engage in debate with a Calvinist on the subject of predestination [the erroneous view that God has programmed everything, and there is nothing any human can do to keep those things from happening]. Brother Franklin asked his opponent whether God had predestined the debate to occur, to which the man gave an affirmative answer. Ben left, and did not return. Thus, the “predestined debate” never came about. Those who think God has unconditionally chosen each and every soul either to go to heaven or to torment, and that he predestined everything to happen, are misguided.
4. Verse 11: “For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”
- a. One who develops and exercises the Christian graces (and otherwise remains faithful) will be granted an abundant entrance into the eternal kingdom—Heaven. If we supply the traits, God will supply the reward.
  - b. In spiritual matters, the word kingdom is used in two senses in the Bible. *Kingdom* sometimes is used in reference to the church.
    - 1) 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.” [Notice the interchangeable use of *kingdom* and *church*].
    - 2) Daniel 2:44: “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”
    - 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.”
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- 4) Hebrews 12:28: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."
  - c. *Kingdom* sometimes is used in reference to Heaven.
    - 1) 1 Corinthians 15:50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."
    - 2) Galatians 5:19-21: "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."
    - 3) 1 Corinthians 15:23-24: "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."
  - d. When we obey the gospel of Christ, the Lord adds us to the church (which is equivalent to translating us into his kingdom, which is the church):
    - 1) 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."
    - 2) Colossians 1:13: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."
  - e. After the Judgment, we will be privileged to enter Heaven, as this passage teaches.
    - 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) Matthew 25:21: "His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."
  - f. We enter the church (the kingdom) by means of the new birth (also known as obeying the gospel).
    - 1) 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."
    - 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) 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) Acts 2:38-41: "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."
    - 5) Acts 2:47: "...the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."
  - g. Those in the kingdom enter heaven [the eternal phase of the kingdom] by walking in the light of the gospel of Christ in this life.
    - 1) 1 John 1:5-10: "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that
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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.”

- 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.”

D. 2 Peter 1:12-21: The Source of Spiritual Knowledge.

1. Verses 12-13: “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.”
  - a. The apostle begins to give the grounds for their following the instructions written above. In this passage, Peter establishes the fact that the Scriptures are the grounds (the authority) by which we serve God and by which he gives us all things that pertain to life and godliness.
  - b. The apostle sought to put the brethren in remembrance of the things they had already been taught; he stood ready to always do so and would not be negligent in this important matter. Compare: “This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts” (2 Pet. 3:1-3).
  - c. Christ gave the apostles the power of the Holy Spirit, partly to overcome the human frailty of forgetting. With the power supplied by the Spirit, they would be able to remember inerrantly the instructions the Lord had previously given them; another reason was to reveal the things previously unrevealed.
    - 1) John 14:26-27: “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. 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.”
    - 2) 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.”
  - d. There is a great need for Christians of every generation to be continually reminded of the information in the Bible. Our great work involves (1) getting the necessary information into the minds of the lost so that they can obey in order to be saved, and (2) to keep the ones saved informed and reminded of the truths of the word.
  - e. Apostasy is a thread that has followed the human family down through the ages from the beginning.
    - 1) Adam and Eve disobeyed the will of God and lost the Paradise of Eden.

- a) 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.”
  - b) Genesis 3:6: “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.”
  - c) Genesis 3:24: “So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”
  - 2) Israel apostatized after Joshua and the elders who served with him had died: “And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel....And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim” (Judges 2:7,10-11).
  - 3) Apostasy in the church spread rapidly after the apostles and the first generation of Christians passed from the scene; in fact, the apostasy had already gotten started before the apostles died.
    - a) 1 Timothy 4:1-3: “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.”
    - b) 2 Timothy 4:1-5: “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.”
    - c) 2 Thessalonians 2:1-7: “Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 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; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.”
  - 4) The second generation of Christians in the Restoration Movement in America began an apostasy by introducing instrumental music into the worship and adopting the missionary society (to do the work God assigned to the church). The underlying problem was an unwillingness to adhere to the authority of the New Testament.
  - 5) In our generation, many congregations (primarily, large in number) have appointed elders, hired preachers, and adopted activities which are bringing about another apostasy. The greatest preachers of the preceding generation would not be allowed to preach in these congregations today.
  - f. We must teach every generation the same great truths of the gospel which we learned when we were
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taught the Bible. The church is no farther from apostasy than one generation; if we leave untaught just one generation of the church, apostasy will be the inevitable consequence.

- 1) A heavy responsibility rests on the shoulders of elders, preachers, teachers, and other Christians in every generation to insist on faithful preaching and teaching of the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:20,27) and strict adherence to its precepts and commands. Only by implanting God's will in the minds, hearts, and lives of the members, and keeping them reminded of these truths, can apostasy be forestalled. If we allow the younger generation to grow up improperly taught, apostasy will be a foregone conclusion!
  - 2) The nature of man is such that he soon forgets the lessons of the past; truth once received and held in high esteem can become dim with time and be obscured by the perversions of false teachers. "The only guarantee against apostasy is ceaseless vigilance against error and constant instruction of those who have received the truth" (Woods, p.155).
  - g. Peter maintained a continuing determination to put the brethren in memory of the truths of the gospel. He thus stirred them up. As long as he abode in "this tabernacle" he had this obligation. The tabernacle he referred to was his physical body. A tabernacle is a tent, a temporary and imperfect house.
    - 1) "The 'tabernacle' to which he refers is used figuratively of his fleshly body. By implication, the word suggests the immortality of the soul, the transient nature of this earthly existence, and the ease with which the spirit throws aside at death its tenement of clay" (Woods, p.156).
    - 2) The real Peter inhabited the tent (his fleshly body), and at death would leave it for another world. The real person is not the tabernacle of flesh, but that which lives therein in this life. Some may have the idea that if their physical body is strong and healthy, that their soul is strong and sound; others may think their souls must be beautiful because their physical bodies are beautiful.
  - h. How did Peter "stir" them up?
    - 1) Not by oratory.
    - 2) Not by loud words.
    - 3) Not by pounding on the pulpit.
    - 4) Not by compromising the truth.
    - 5) Not by using psychological tricks.
    - 6) Not by entertainment.
    - 7) But by reminding them of the truth.
  - i. The materialists [Watchtower Witness, Adventists, etc.] are wrong about the nature of man, failing to see the truth that the body is the mere abode of the spirit (soul) in this life.
    - 1) 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."
    - 2) Ecclesiastes 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."
    - 3) 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."
    - 4) James 2:26: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."
    - 5) Genesis 35:18: "And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin."
    - 6) Acts 9:36-41: "Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. And it came
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to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber. And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them. Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them. But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive.” [Note: Her body was present, but she was not there].

2. Verse 14: “Knowing that shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me.” “Knowing that the putting off of my tabernacle cometh swiftly, even as our Lord Jesus Christ signified unto me” (ASV).
  - a. To “put off my tabernacle” is a poetic way to describe death. Peter was “getting along in years.” He was no longer a young man. He could know that the time of his departure from earth was not far in the future; he could also understand, from what the Lord had told him years earlier, that his death could be sudden (i.e., a violent death).
  - b. Christ said something to Peter shortly before his return to Heaven: “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” (John 21:18-19).
    - 1) This showed Peter that he would live to be an old man, but that in his old age, he would be under the direct, physical control of others. The Lord related this control to the manner in which the apostle would die, clearly implying his death would be by violence—undoubtedly, a martyr’s death.
    - 2) There is no scriptural proof that Peter was ever in the city of Rome. Tradition, which must be not be blindly accepted, alleges that Peter was crucified, upside down at his own request, deeming it improper to die in the same way as did Christ.
  - c. Since Peter knew that he would live to be an old man, and die a martyr’s death, then he did not believe or teach that Christ would come or the end of the world would occur during his lifetime. The premillennialists assert that Peter, Paul, and other inspired men taught that the coming of Christ was then imminent. No inspired man ever taught that. No one knows when the coming of Christ will be.
    - 1) Mark 13:32-33: “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.”
    - 2) Nevertheless, Premillennialism says the Lord’s return is imminent even today. Since the Bible does not give us any knowledge about when he will come again, we cannot know when. No one on earth can know even the millennium of the second coming; it is certain that no one can know the century, the decade, the year, the month, the week, the day, or the hour of his return.
3. Verse 15: “Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.”
  - a. Peter shows in these words his concern for the spiritual welfare of the saints. He was not only wanting to put them in mind of the truth right then, but to so arrange it that they would be able to have these truths in mind after he was gone from the earth. This he did by leaving an inspired record of this instruction for their continual edification even after his death.
  - b. We have the same benefit today. But before the record can benefit us, we must study, learn, and apply

its message. As Peter gave diligence to leave us this record, so we must give diligence to make the proper use of it. As he related in verse ten above, we are to give diligence so that we may make our calling and election sure.

- c. What the apostles says in this verse about the rest of his epistle, can be said with equal force about the other parts of God's word: "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 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" (2 Tim. 3:15-17).
4. Verse 16: "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."
  - a. This passage is an inspired affirmation of the truthfulness, reliability, and trustworthiness of the Biblical Record. Peter denies that he (or any of the other inspired men) had followed cunningly devised fables regarding the power and coming of Christ. Instead, they were eyewitness of his majesty.
  - b. Many think that the Bible is not the word of truth that it claims to be—many of these even claim to be gospel preachers. Several years ago, seven thousand Protestant preachers responded to the following questions in a shocking way [these statistics may be worse today]:
    - 1) "Do you believe in Jesus' literal resurrection?"
      - a) Fifty-one percent of the Methodist preachers said no.
      - b) Thirty percent of the Episcopal preachers said no.
      - c) Thirty-five percent of the United Presbyterian preachers said no.
      - d) Thirty-three percent of the Baptist preachers said no.
      - e) Thirteen percent of the Lutheran preachers said no.
    - 2) "Do you believe in the Virgin Birth of Christ?"
      - a) Sixty percent of the Methodist preachers said no.
      - b) Forty-four percent of the Episcopal preachers said no.
      - c) Forty-nine percent of the United Presbyterian preachers said no.
      - d) Forty-four percent of the Baptist preachers said no.
      - e) Nineteen percent of the Lutheran preachers said no.
    - 3) "Do you believe the Bible is inspired of God?"
      - a) Eighty-two percent of the Methodist preachers said no.
      - b) Eighty-nine percent of the Episcopal preachers said no.
      - c) Eighty-one percent of the United Presbyterian preachers said no.
      - d) Fifty-seven percent of the Lutheran preachers said no.
  - c. Christianity is based on truth, not myths, legends, or fables.
    - 1) John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."
    - 2) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
    - 3) John 6:69: "And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."
    - 4) Acts 17:1-4: "Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the

- devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.”
- 5) Acts 9:17-22: “And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.”
  - 6) 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.”
  - 7) 1 Thessalonians 2:13: “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”
  - 8) Luke 1:1-4: “Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.”
  - 9) The many evidences of Biblical inspiration demand the conclusion that it is the word of God, thus inspired, inerrant, all-sufficient, and fully authoritative.
- d. “In the verses immediately preceding this, Peter wrote of the things which he was doing; here, he passes from the singular ‘I’ to the plural ‘we’ as he describes matters which involved not only himself, but the other apostles, James and John. (Matt. 17:1-8; Mark 9:2-9; Luke 9:28-36). The verb ‘follow’ in the text, from the compound *ex-akolouthéo*, means to take the lead and follow the direction of another; and as here used with the negative, is highly significant in that in it the writer clearly disavows secondhand sources of information regarding that about which he was testifying, affirming instead that he and those with him were eyewitnesses” (Woods, p.157).
- e. Peter’s reference to the power and coming of the Savior addresses the Second Coming. His first coming was not with power (except the Virgin Birth aspect, the timing, the circumstances, and the place). His Second Coming will be with the most awesome display of power that men will ever see.
- 1) Matthew 25:31-32: “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.”
  - 2) 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: “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.”
  - 3) 2 Peter 3:10-13: “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
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- 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.”
- f. “Coming” is from *parousia* (“presence”). The Watchtower Witnesses try to make this word support their invisible coming of Christ. The word derives from roots which suggest “being with.” It denotes a coming for the purpose of being with someone. “The Greek word ‘parousia’ means presence, and refers to the invisible presence of the Lord...” (Rutherford, *Harp of God*, p.221—Rutherford was head of the Jehovah Witness cult for many years). But...
- 1) Matthew 24:15-22 describes conditions associated with the impending destruction of Jerusalem. In connection therewith, lest anyone claims that Christ had returned, he said, “For as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen (from *paino*, to shine) even unto the west; so (*housos*, in the same manner) shall be the coming (*parousia*) of the Son of man” (Matt. 25:27 ASV). This very passage is designed to show that no one will need to be informed of the Lord’s coming; it will be universally evident.
  - 2) 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 discusses the coming (*parousia*) of Christ. In evidence on that day will be a shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God—someone has called this the noisiest verse in the Bible. It clearly denies any invisible, secret return of Christ. Second Thessalonians 1:7 discusses the same occasion and uses “revelation” (*apokalupsis*, to uncover) as the means of describing the Lord’s return.
  - 3) 2 Peter 3:10 describes the Second Coming of Christ as the day of the Lord; it is used in connection with the *parousia* (verse 4). He will come unexpectedly (as a thief) in which the heavens shall pass away with **great noise**. There will be no secret, invisible coming of Christ.
  - 4) The apostle John says that at his *parousia*, Christ “shall be manifested” (1 John 2:28). Manifested (from *phaneroo*) which when used in the passive voice, as here, means “show or reveal oneself, be revealed, appear to someone.”
    - a) Colossians 3:4: “When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.”
    - b) 1 Peter 5:4: “And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”
  - 5) The apostles beheld [*theaomai*, to see, to look at] Christ’s departure from the earth when he ascended back to Heaven; so in like manner [*tropos*, in the same way] would he come again: “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” (Acts 1:11).
  - 6) As Jesus was visible during his first “appearing” [*epiphaneia*] on earth (2 Tim. 1:10), so he will be visible when he appears at his Second Coming (1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 4:1,8; Titus 2:13).
    - a) 2 Timothy 1:10: “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.”
    - b) 2 Timothy 4:22: “The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.
    - c) 1 Timothy 6:14: “That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
    - d) 2 Timothy 4:1: “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.”
    - e) 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.”
    - f) Titus 2:13: “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our
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Saviour Jesus Christ.”

- 7) Of the final coming of Christ, it is said that he “shall appear [*horao*, become visible) a **second time**” (Heb. 9:28).
- g. Peter next addressed the Lord’s majesty, to which he and others were eyewitnesses. The next verse identifies the occasion as the Transfiguration Scene.
  - 1) This great scene is described in the gospel accounts:
    - a) Matthew 17:1-8: “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. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.”
    - b) Mark 9:2-9: “And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid. And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves. And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.”
    - c) Luke 9:28-36: “And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.”
  - 2) This majestic scene was witnessed by Peter, James, and John. The reliability of their testimony is strengthened and verified by the fact that they were willing to die rather than recant. The same is true with regard to their testimony about his resurrection. Many credible eyewitnesses beheld the Lord following his resurrection (cf. 1 Cor. 15:1-8).
  - 3) The testimony of witnesses in a court of law is accepted; many suspects have been found guilty and condemned to prison or to death, based on that testimony. The written record of their testimony is kept on file; it is accepted by others who read that record years later. So it is with the

record of the eyewitness of the Lord's transfiguration, resurrection, and ascension. The testimony of these witnesses was under the divine control of inspiration. Truly, we do not follow cunningly devised fables, but rather the inspired word of Almighty God!

5. Verse 17: "For he 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."
  - a. The apostle directly connects his statements here with the transfiguration. It was on that occasion that God's voice sounded forth from on high, acknowledging Jesus as his beloved Son in whom he was well pleased. Verse eighteen will pinpoint the location of this event as being on the holy mount. This shows that the reference was not to the baptismal scene, when God also spoke from Heaven. [We have no reason to believe that Peter was present on that occasion; also, no mount is indicated at the place the Lord was baptized—Matthew 3:13-17].
  - b. God declared this love for his Son, in whom he was well-pleased.
    - 1) Christ is God's Son in the sense that he is under the Father's greater authority; he is not a Son because he was created by the Father. Christ is a Divine Being [Deity] in his own right; it is not possible for a Divine Being to have either a beginning or an end.
      - a) 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."
      - 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."
    - 2) Christ made his entrance into the world by a wondrous process—the Virgin Birth. He made his exit from the tomb in which his body had been placed at death by a marvellous means—the resurrection from the dead. He made his departure from the earth back into Heaven by a spectacular operation—the Ascension. At the Transfiguration scene, he was manifested in his eternal glory, in a demonstration that was forevermore engraved on the minds of the three apostles who saw it. The glory was given in the transformation he underwent when his face shone above the brightness of the sun. The same word is used in Romans 12:2, being translated as *transformed*: "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" (Rom. 12:1-2).
    - 3) The Father was always pleased in his Son.
      - a) Matthew 26:39: "And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."
      - b) Romans 15:3: "For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me."
      - c) 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."
      - d) John 12:27-30: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes."
    - 4) In the transfiguration, God honored Christ in the oral statement he made from Heaven.
    - 5) Included in the heavenly testimony was a declaration of the deity of Jesus, his relationship to the

Father, the intimacy which obtained between God and his Son, and the good pleasure the Father had in the Son. “The tense of the verb in the latter clause [*In whom I am well pleased*] in this verse emphasizes that this pleasure had existed from all eternity. [Cf. Matt. 3:17; 12:18.]” (Woods, p.158).

- a) Matthew 3:17: “And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”
  - b) Matthew 12:18: “Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.”
  - 6) This acknowledgment was from God’s excellent glory [Majestic Glory—ASV]. “In the Greek translation of Deut. 33:26, God is described as ‘the majestic One of the firmament.’ The Voice which was heard was God speaking, and it came from his divine presence” (Woods, p.158).
6. Verse 18: “And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.”
- a. Peter, James, and John were privileged to hear the majestic voice of the Almighty on the holy mount—the mountain where the transfiguration took place.
  - b. This earthly location is called *the holy mount*, not because there was something sacred about that spot of ground. It was holy because of the transfigured Christ who was there, and because of the sacred events there transpiring—what the apostles saw and heard were marvelous indeed!
    - 1) The place where Moses beheld the burning bush was described as “holy ground.” Why? Because God’s divine presence was being manifested there (Exod. 3).
    - 2) The hill of Zion, where the temple stood, was called holy [Ps. 15:1], not because there was something sacred about that particular spot, but because that was where God had recorded his name; it was in the Most Holy Place of the temple that God met with the High Priest, on the day of Atonement.
  - c. The location of the mount upon which the transfiguration occurred is not known for certain. Tradition claims it was on Mount Tabor. In the context of Matthew’s account, Jesus was near Mount Hermon a short time before the transfiguration (Matt. 16:13; 17:1). McGarvey has some interesting comments regarding this:
    - 1) “We climbed to the top of Mount Tabor by a zigzag pathway so steep in many places as to try the strength of our horses. From the plains below, and from surrounding heights, the mountain’s sides and top have a rounded appearance; but when you reach the top you find an almost level area about half a mile in extent in every direction. Tradition, at an early period, fixed on this as the Mount of the Transfiguration, and consequently the Greeks and the Latins have each a monastery here, and each building covers the exact spot where the transfiguration took place! The conclusion reached by all scholars of the present day, that this grand event occurred, not on Mount Tabor, but on Mount Hermon, disturbs not in the least the tranquillity of these stupid monks, nor the faith of the superstitious pilgrims who go to these convents to pray” (*Lands of the Bible*, p.521).
    - 2) “Farther to the east are two monasteries, the Latin on the south and the Greek on the north, about 200 yards apart, with a new stone wall separating their premises. These have both been erected since Robinson’s visit in 1838...and they are intended to commemorate the transfiguration, which, from the time of Jerome in the fourth century until within the last few years, was supposed to have occurred on this mountain. It is said that three churches were built here during the Christian period of Palestine to commemorate the three tabernacles proposed by Peter. Mark and Luke say that Peter knew not what to say, because he was frightened, when he proposed these tabernacles, and it is quite evident that those who built the three churches knew not what to do; their folly far exceeded that of Peter, and they had not half so good an excuse for it. Many other structures were



alternately built and thrown down during the conflicts between the Christians and Saracens” (*ibid.*, pp.305f).

7. Verse 19: “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.”
  - a. Other translations:
    - 1) “And we have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts” (ASV).
    - 2) “And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts” (NKJV).
  - b. Views of various commentators:
    - 1) “There has been considerable diversity of opinion in regard to the meaning of this passage. Some have supposed that the apostle, when he says, ‘a more sure word,’ did not intend to make any comparison between the miracle of the transfiguration and prophecy, but that he meant to say merely that the word of prophecy was very sure, and could certainly be relied on. Others have supposed that the meaning is, that the prophecies which foretold his coming into the world having been confirmed by the fact of his advent, are rendered more sure and undoubted than when they were uttered, and may now be confidently appealed to” [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].
    - 2) “We may explain either: (a) as the English Revised Version (1885), ‘we have the word of prophecy made more sure,’ i.e., we are better certified than before as to the prophetic word by reason of this voice; or (b) we have the word of prophecy as a surer confirmation of God's truth than what we ourselves saw, i.e., Old Testament testimony is more convincing than even the voice heard at the transfiguration. The latter seems to accord better with the words which follow. ‘To appreciate this we must put ourselves somewhat in the place of those for whom Peter wrote. The New Testament, as we have it, was to them non-existent. Therefore we can readily understand how the long line of prophetic scriptures, fulfilled in so many ways in the life of Jesus, would be a mightier form of evidence than the narrative of one single event in Peter's life’ (Lumby). ‘Peter knew a sounder basis for faith than that of signs and wonders. He had seen our Lord Jesus Christ receive honor and glory from God the Father in the holy mount; he had been dazzled and carried out of himself by visions and voices from heaven; but, nevertheless, even when his memory and heart are throbbing with recollections of that sublime scene, he says, ‘we have something surer still in the prophetic word’” [Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].
    - 3) “Taken according to the common translation, it seems to say that prophecy is a surer evidence of divine revelation than miracles; and so it has been understood. The meaning of the apostle appears to be this: The law and the prophets have spoken concerning Jesus Christ, and Isaiah has particularly pointed him out in these words: Behold my servant whom I uphold, my CHOSEN IN WHOM MY SOUL DELIGHTETH; I have put my Spirit upon him, and he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and THEM THAT SIT IN DARKNESS out of the prison house, Isa 42:1,7. Now both at his baptism, Matt 3:17, and at his transfiguration, Jesus Christ was declared to be this chosen person, God's only Son, the beloved One in WHOM HE DELIGHTED. The voice, therefore, from heaven, and the miraculous transfiguration of his person, have confirmed the prophetic doctrine concerning him” [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1996 by Biblesoft].
    - 4) Brother Woods gives the following: “The apostle thus affirms, ‘And we have the prophetic word more sure.’ More sure than what? Many expositors assume that the comparison which the apostle

draws is between the transfiguration scene which he had witnessed during the personal ministry of Christ and the prophetic word which he mentions, thus making him to say that these prophecies were more convincing and constituted better evidence of the deity of Jesus than that which he had just related concerning his experiences in the ‘holy mount’....

- a) “Had the apostle been writing exclusively of others, it is barely possible that he might have intended to convey such an idea; it will, however, be seen that he includes himself—in the personal pronoun *we*—among those who have the prophetic word more sure. It is inconceivable that Peter could have regarded any evidence, whatever the source, as more convincing than that which he received on the occasion of the Lord’s transfiguration.
  - b) “He saw the light above the brightness of the noonday sun flash about the Saviour. He looked upon the transfigured face of his Lord with his own eyes. He witnessed the appearance of Moses and Elijah....He heard the Voice from heaven identify Jesus as deity. Surely no word of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, or other Old Testament prophet could have supplied more irrefutable and convincing evidence than this” (p.159).
  - c. Perhaps the apostle’s meaning is that the word of prophecy [Old Testament predictions about Christ] was made more sure and further confirmed by what Peter had witnessed; and that he was passing on this eyewitness account of confirmation to his readers.
    - 1) Certainly, the transfiguration scene did serve to support and confirm the testimony of the Old Testament prophets. Thus, in this view, the eye-witness testimony of Peter, James and John made the testimony of the prophets more sure and certain.
    - 2) Our translation says, “We have also a more sure word of prophecy....” The original text has the definite article the, as given in the ASV: “And we have the word of prophecy made more sure....” Peter has in mind a definite set of prophecies—those found in the Old Testament; these relate to his present subject—the coming and glory of Christ [verses 16-18].
    - 3) The word of prophecy was certain; the miraculous events in the Transfiguration, which Peter here describes as an eyewitness, places God’s supernatural stamp on all that had been predicted about Christ—thus the word of prophecy was made even more sure!
  - d. The word of prophecy is the prophetic word. Many such utterances were given in the Old Testament regarding Christ:
    - 1) 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.”
    - 2) Genesis 22:18: “And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”
    - 3) Deuteronomy 18:15: “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.”
    - 4) Isaiah 7:14: “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”
    - 5) Malachi 4:5-6: “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.”
    - 6) John 1:45: “Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”
    - 7) Luke 24:27: “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”
    - 8) Luke 24:44-48: “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
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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.”

- e. *”Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed....”* To take heed is to pay attention to, to fix the mind on. Peter calls on his readers (including us) to take heed continually to the significance of these great truths. Since Jesus is the Son of God, the one who fulfilled the Old Testament predictions, we ought to ever let him be our Master.
  - f. *”As unto a light that shineth in a dark place....”*
    - 1) “The term translated ‘dark place’ is that which denotes a squalid, filthy, and dark dungeon, a fitting description of the condition which characterizes men without the light of truth. Into such a world the lamp of prophecy sheds its light bringing hope and cheer” (Woods, p.160).
    - 2) Christ is thus pictured as the one who brings light, hope, cheer, and blessings into our world. More to the point, he brings these advantages into the lives of those who obey the gospel and continue to walk in its light.
    - 3) Our world today is one that is getting more and more corrupt, becoming more and more steeped in sin and degradation, teetering on the brink of collapse into ruin. Our world is in such a desperate condition because the great majority has repudiated, ignored, and has not been obedient to the principles of the gospel. It would be even worse without the glorious light of the gospel. But as long as there are those who sincerely practice the precepts of God’s word, and endeavor to teach others to do the same, the present condition of our world can be improved.
    - 4) 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 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.”
  - g. *”Until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts.”*
    - 1) When the day star [the sun] arises in the east, the gloom of dark flees rapidly westward, until it is completely dispelled by the bright rays of the sun. What the sun does to our world, so does Christ to those who hear and heed his divine principles. That individual’s life is brightened; he can see who he is, what he is to do, and where he is going. As more people are led to do the same, our world is made brighter, and becomes a far more pleasant place in which to live.
    - 2) This does not, therefore, necessarily refer to the Second Coming of Christ. When one comes into the light of God’s word, becomes a Christian, the gloom that formerly characterized him is
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dispelled; and as he grows in the knowledge of God's word, the gloom is further driven away, and hope and joy grow brighter.

8. Verse 20: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation."
  - a. The apostle points out at the very beginning of the passage, that it was of prime importance for his readers to understand that the source of prophecy is not to be found within the prophet himself. No man can predict future events. No mortal can presently identify the person who will be president of the United States in the year 2020. Only the Almighty could so-read the future so as to give specifics of future events. God did this very thing when he predicted many items through prophets in the ancient days. There are no living prophets on earth today.
  - b. "The verb 'is' in this passage is of significance and sheds much light on the meaning of the passage. It is translated from the verb *ginomai*, to become, to spring into being, and not from the simple ordinary *eimi*, is. The meaning is, no prophecy comes or springs into existence by means of private interpretation" (Woods, p.161).
    - 1) The word *private* refers to something that belongs particularly to an individual; the word *interpretation* denotes an explanation or exposition.
    - 2) Taken together, the two statements of the latter section of the verse mean that the prophecies of the scripture did not spring into being from the private activities of an individual. Thus, no prophet originated, developed, or caused to come into existence, the material he presented.
  - c. "It follows, then, that no prophecy of the scripture came into existence merely as the result of the prophet's own personal explanation, but originated, as he points out in the verse which follows, by holy men of God who were influenced by the Holy Spirit. Since the prophecy of scripture is not a product of those who delivered it, nor did it originate as expositions of their own intellects, but came by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, Peter's readers would indeed do well to give heed thereto, 'as unto a lamp shining in a dark place'" (Woods, p.161).
  - d. Catholics have long contended that only the pope [and his agents] can interpret the scripture; the members were held in darkness for centuries, until courageous and dedicated men translated the Bible into the common languages of the people. Catholic authorities cite this passage as proof that the ordinary person cannot understand the Bible on his own—he needs the guidance of a Catholic priest. But if the common man can understand this verse, then he can understand the rest of the Bible. And if the common man can understand this verse, then the theory is false. If one cannot understand this verse, how can he know that it teaches that one cannot understand the scriptures?
  - e. The *private interpretation* of the passage refers to those who initially delivered the prophecies—the prophets themselves. They were not speaking things which they had personally developed; they were speaking a message God gave to them. Often they did not even understand the things they were speaking or recording.
    - 1) 1 Peter 1:10-12: "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. 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."
    - 2) 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."
    - 3) Daniel 12:8-9: "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.”

9. “Verse 21: “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.”
  - a. The reason the prophecy was not produced by the intelligence of the prophet is because it was God who delivered the prophecy to the prophet through the work of the Holy Spirit. The word *for* is from the Greek term *gar*, which introduced the reason for the preceding statement. The prophets spoke from God; those who thus spoke were moved by the Holy Spirit.
  - b. The word *moved* is from a Greek term which was used to describe a sailing ship being borne along by the wind. Similarly, the prophet was *moved*, was borne along by the Holy Spirit in receiving and communicating the prophetic message.
  - c. “Since the prophecies are not of human origin; since they did not originate in the will of man; and since they were delivered by men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, they have the weightiest possible claims on our reverence, our most serious consideration and prayerful study.
  - d. *Prophecy* [*propheteia*] signifies the speaking forth of the mind and counsel of God [*pro*, forth; *phemi*, to speak]. Prophecy is not necessarily (nor even primarily) fore-telling. It is the declaration of that which cannot be known by natural means; it is the forth-telling of the will of God, whether with reference to the past, the present, or the future (see Vine, p.221).
    - 1) Genesis 20:7: “Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine.”
    - 2) Deuteronomy 18:18: “I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.”
    - 3) Revelation 10:11: “And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.”

## A Statement Concerning the *Parousia* and *Epiphaneia* of Christ's Coming

by Foy E. Wallace, Jr.

"There will be no period of time between the two stages of his coming, sometimes called the 'parousia' and the 'epiphaneia'—his 'presence' and his 'manifestation.' The premillennial theory provides for a twofold coming of Christ which they say is taught by two distinct words in the New Testament, words which they say were specially inspired to teach this particular thing. These words are 'parousia' and 'epiphaneia.' The first word, 'parousia,' we are told means his 'presence,' while the second word, 'epiphaneia,' means his 'manifestation.' The theory is that when the Lord comes down 'for his saints,' it will be the time of his 'presence'—the *parousia*. But when he comes 'with his saints,' it will be the time of his 'manifestation'—the *epiphaneia*. And it is argued that there will be a seven year period between the *parousia* and the *epiphaneia*. This period is what is called the 'rapture' of the saints in the heavens with the Lord, while the tribulation is blasting out its fury on the earth. So Christ comes 'for the saints'—*parousia*—at which time his coming is not manifested; then after the 'tribulation,' he comes 'with his saints,' which is the manifestation—*epiphaneia*—at which time the millennium begins.

"That is quite a pretty theory, but the difficulty of it is that it is not true. The New Testament does not support any such distinction in the use of the two words mentioned. In the first place, the translators of our two accepted versions—the King James and the American Standard versions—make no such distinction in the translations of these words. The one hundred and forty-eight translators did not know of such a distinction; hence, they translated both terms in the word 'come' and the word 'coming.' Had there been such a distinction they would doubtless have so translated it into the English text.

"But in positive proof that there is no distinction, and that the two words are used interchangeably in reference to the coming of the Lord, I submit a few passages from the New Testament where these words occur.

"2 Thess. 2:8: 'And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.' The word 'brightness' in the passage is the word *epiphaneia*; and the word 'coming' is the word *parousia*. So we have both words in one passage. That helps us to understand their use. Now read it: 'Whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness (*epiphaneia*) of his coming (*parousia*).' So the coming of the Lord in this passage is called the *epiphaneia* of his *parousia*. He will destroy that Wicked—the wicked one—with the 'epiphaneia' of his 'parousia.' There is not one split second between the time of his 'brightness' and his 'coming,' or his 'manifestation' and his 'presence,' in this passage. It shows that the 'epiphaneia' and the 'parousia' will be at the same time, and the words are used to describe the same coming.

"1 Thess. 3:13: 'To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.' The word 'coming' in this verse is the word 'parousia.' Here it says that Jesus Christ will come 'with all his saints' at the *parousia*. But the millennial theory is that he comes 'for his saints' at the *parousia*, and 'with' the saints at the *epiphaneia*. So Paul made a slip—he has the Lord coming 'with' the saints when he should be coming 'for' them. Paul has the Lord coming 'with' his saints seven years too early to fit the millennial theory. Paul was not a premillennialist, and did not use these words as the premillennialists use them—Paul used them interchangeably with reference to the one coming of Christ. And that is right, because the coming of Christ will be his presence and it will be his manifestation—but it is the same coming, at the same time.

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"1 Thess. 4:14: 'For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.' When the Lord comes the apostle says he will 'bring with him' those who 'sleep in Jesus'—the dead in Christ. But this coming of Christ, when he is to 'bring with him' these saints who died 'in Jesus,' is the very time that the theory says he will come 'for his saints'—so they have him coming '*for*' his saints 'with' his saints!

"2 Tim. 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.' In this passage Paul says that the Lord shall give to him 'the crown of righteousness' at his 'appearing'—*epiphaneia*. When will Paul receive the crown of righteousness? At the 'appearing' of the Lord—at the Lord's *epiphaneia*. This is proof that 'parousia' and 'epiphaneia' are used interchangeably, and do not teach the distinction which premillennialists attempt to make.

"1 Thess. 3:13: 'To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.' Here the apostle assures the Thessalonians of what God will do 'at the coming of the Lord with all his saints'—at the *parousia* of Christ *with all the saints*. The millennial theory is that the *parousia* will be when he comes *for* the saints seven years before he comes *with* the saints, and therefore contradicts the passage.

"As the argument stands, in 2 Thess. 2, the return of Christ is called the brightness of his parousia—the manifestation of his presence; but this will be when he brings 'with him' those who have died in Jesus, according to 1 Thess. 4:14; but it will be the time when Paul receives the crown of righteousness, which will be at his 'appearing,' or *epiphaneia*; and finally, according to 1 Thess. 3:13, it will be at the *parousia* when he shall come 'with all his saints.'

Now, since the premillennial theory teaches that the *parousia* will be when Christ comes 'for the saints' and will take place seven years before the *epiphaneia* when he shall come 'with the saints'—but Paul plainly says in 1 Thess. 3:13 that Christ will come 'with all his saints' at the *parousia*—it follows that the premillennial theory is a flat denial of the statement of Paul, and to believe the theory is to deny the word of God." (*God's Prophetic Word*, pp.241-243).

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## 2 PETER 2

### A. 2 Peter 2:1-11: Warnings Against False Teachers.

1. Verse 1: "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."
  - a. If false teachers represented no danger to our souls, there would be no need for warnings to be issued. But the Bible frequently gives such warnings against false teachers, including these:
    - 1) Isaiah 9:15: "The ancient and honourable, he is the head; and the prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail."
    - 2) Jeremiah 14:14: "Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart."
    - 3) Ezekiel 13:3: "Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!"
    - 4) Matthew 7:15-20: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."
    - 5) Philippians 3:2-3: "Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."
  - b. Peter had just spoken of the word of God which came by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; one who takes heed to the divine word does well. He begins this chapter with the word *but*, drawing a contrast with the inspired word and the corrupt word of false teachers. Great caution is to be taken to avoid the evil fruit of false prophets. As there were false prophets among the people of ancient Israel, so there would be false prophets within the New Testament church.
    - 1) Galatians 2:4-5: "And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you."
    - 2) Acts 20:28-32: "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. 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."
  - c. As the Lord showed in Matthew 7:15-20, false teachers do not advertise their doctrine as error; indeed, they seek in every way to convince men that they are the true teachers of God's truth. Thus, they present themselves dressed in sheep's clothing—pretending to be what they are not. In some cases, the false teachers have even convinced themselves that they are proclaimers of truth. We would surely

be in grave peril if we had no way to identify false teachers; but we have been given a standard by which we may know. The Lord stated that “by their fruit we can know them” (Matt. 7:15-20). The fruit of a false teacher is his false doctrine.

- 1) 1 John 4:1: “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”
  - 2) 1 Timothy 4:1-3: “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.”
  - 3) 2 Timothy 3:1-8: “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.”
- d. 1 John 2:20: “But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.”
- 1) These warnings show that truth can be known; they also show that sincerity alone is not enough; they show that truth must be learned, believed, and followed. Compare John 8:30-32; James 2:10; 2 John 9-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.
  - 2) The anointing [called *unction* in the King James] is from the Greek term *chrisma*, a word which originally described an oil or ointment applied to the skin; later it came to refer to the anointing itself (see Woods, p.245).
  - 3) The anointing certain ones had been given enabled them to know certain things: “But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him” (1 John 2:27).
  - 4) The anointing supplied them with the information they needed to recognize and to refute the false teachers who had gone out from among them: “These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him” (1 John 2:26-27).
  - 5) This anointing was a miraculous measure of the Spirit (one of the nine spiritual gifts of 1 Corinthians 12:8-10), which enabled them to identify and resist the false teachers who were afflicting the church. In the absence of the full written revelation of the New Testament, this supernatural gift was necessary.
- e. 1 John 2:26-27: “These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”
- 1) When the apostle stated, “Ye need not that any man teach you,” he has reference to the things of the context. The brethren had been given the ability to discern between false and true teaching. The ones who had no need of teaching were those who had been anointed (who received a miraculous
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- gift which enabled them to discern error). Not every Christian had this or other spiritual gifts.
- 2) It is wrongful interpretation to extend the statement given to include all believers; or to claim that one does not need to be taught the gospel today because he can be given this information supernaturally. The meaning is that those who had received this gift were able to weigh the claims of teachers. There is no support here for the theory that all Christians have or can get the anointing of the Holy Spirit, or that the inspiration of the Spirit extends to believers today. The spiritual gifts were intended only for a limited period of time, and even then only a part of the saints received the gifts. The gift discussed was one necessary for the church of that time until the full message of the gospel was revealed, confirmed, and recorded.
  - 3) If all the disciples received the anointing [possessed knowledge of all things; did not need to be taught], why did John write to them? The anointing was a miraculous gift of limited duration, and was removed along with all the other such gifts when the New Testament was completed. Today, we have the completed New Testament, and to it we may go to find the truth on any important matter: 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:3.
- f. The apostle Peter warns us that the false prophets would privately bring in destructive heresies. To bring error in privily is to slip it in and mingle it with the truth. False teachers are very clever and sly; they are able to beguile the unsuspecting. They are basically dishonest and deceitful; they will not openly tell the brethren their true intentions, but will work behind the scenes. One cannot warn against error and false teachers too strongly or too often!
- g. The Judaizing teachers of the first century entered the church [they went through the right motions, but their sincerity was suspect]; they “became Christians” for the purpose of overturning the faith of the real Christians. “And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you” (Gal. 2:4-5). Paul opposed them and exposed them! They became deadly enemies to the apostle. Again, we note that false teachers do not announce their intentions; they work undercover, sowing the seeds of their error to those who are unlearned and gullible. In modern times, a few of those who have thus cause trouble, included:
- 1) The digressives who sought to bring in instrumental music into the worship.
  - 2) Those who opposed cooperation between congregations in certain good works.
  - 3) The Crossroads/Boston errorists, who divided and destroyed countless congregations.
  - 4) The modern liberals, who seek to break down the God-given barriers separating faithful congregations from the sectarian groups.
  - 5) We have also been confronted by Pentecostalism, Premillennialism, and the A.D Seventy error.
- h. Peter stated that the false teachers would bring in destructive heresies.
- 1) “Heresies” is from the Greek term *hairesis* [a choosing, choice, an opinion]. Their doctrine would be man’s word, not the word of God. Christ gave many pronouncements against the commands of men (cf. Mark 7:7-13).
  - 2) These heresies would be destructive (bringing condemnation to the souls of those who accept them). False doctrine can lead the soul into spiritual ruin.
  - 3) It does make a difference what we believe and practice: “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
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- 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” (Gal. 1:6-11; cf. Rev. 22:18-19).
- i. Peter identifies one specific error some of these false teachers would bring—denying the Lord who provides salvation.
- 1) “There were many heresies afloat near the close of the first century, all tending to this end. The Lord’s *deity* was questioned by some (1 John 4:15), his *humanity* by others (1 John 4:2). Some teachers then, as now, denied the threefold personality of the godhead, maintaining that there is but one person, with three manifestations. Others held to the doctrine that the body of Christ was not real, but only imaginary; while still others, by their wicked and corrupt lives, denied their Master by using their bodies as their own and not his” (Woods, pp.163f).
  - 2) To discuss this point, must have brought a pain to Peter, reminding him about his own denials during the trials of our Lord.
  - 3) One does not need to orally denounce Christ; he can deny Christ by following false doctrine:
    - a) Philippians 3:16-19: “Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things).”
    - b) John 15:14: “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”
    - c) Luke 6:46: “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”
    - d) Luke 9:23: “And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.”
    - e) Galatians 2:4-5: “And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.”
- j. This verse teaches that one for whom Christ died can be lost. Calvinism says this is impossible.
- 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) Matthew 26:28: “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”
  - 3) Hebrews 2:9: “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.”
  - 4) Titus 2:11-12: “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.”
  - 5) 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.”
  - 6) 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.”
  - 7) 1 Corinthians 6:20: “For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in
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- your spirit, which are God's."
- 8) Galatians 5:4: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."
2. Verses 2-3: "And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."
- a. Many would follow the pernicious [lascivious] ways. False teachers always seem to find a large following; there is something appealing about error. Usually the exponents of error will tailor their doctrines to satisfy the longings of people. None of these will preach the truth on the plan of salvation, the ingredients of true worship, or the New Testament church.
- 1) Watchtower Witnesses deny the existence of Hell.
  - 2) Calvinists deny the possibility of any Christian ever falling away.
  - 3) Millennialism excites people with the prospect of an earthly reign of Christ which is about to begin any day.
  - 4) Pentecostalism promises miraculous powers.
  - 5) Catholicism offers pomp and ceremony which appeal to the sensational appetites of many.
  - 6) Protestantism offers ease of "conversion" and an easy "Christian" life.
- b. Teachers of error are great in number and ability.
- 1) 2 Corinthians 11:3: "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."
  - 2) 2 Corinthians 11:13-15: "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."
  - 3) 2 Corinthians 4:3-5: "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. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake."
  - 4) 1 John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."
  - 5) Matthew 7:15-21: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. 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."
  - 6) 2 Timothy 4:2-4: "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."
- c. We are taught here and elsewhere in the Scriptures, that false teachers often appeal to the lusts and desires of men.
- 1) "Come as your are! You don't need to be dressed modestly or seemly."
  - 2) Some make their Bible classes a coffee and doughnut fest!
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- 3) Some want to use instrumental music in their services, beginning outside the worship hour.
  - 4) Some have even shown “The Andy Griffith Show” in place of real study of the Bible.
  - 5) Some twist 1 Timothy 3:8: “Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre.” They allege the use of alcoholic beverages is permissible as long as it is not “much.” Paul is not contrasting “much” with “little.” He refers to being addicted to wine. Alcoholic beverages must be shunned.
3. Strong warnings are inculcated into the inspired record:
- 1) 2 Timothy 4:3-4: “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.”
  - 2) Liberals among the Lord’s church have been emphasizing for several years entertainment to attract and keep members. They have erected gymnasiums; they offer sensational “worship” that appeals to worldly appetites; they do not speak against activities which promote fleshly lusts, such as dancing, scanty attire, drinking alcoholic beverages, etc. They have been known to dismiss their evening services so that their members may watch the Super Bowl. Recently, when Christmas day fell on Sunday, some of the so-called “mega-churches” dismissed all of their services that day so the people could follow worldly pursuits.
- b. On account of these things, Peter states that the way of truth would be reviled and blasphemed.
- 1) False teaching conflicts with statements of truth; when these contradictions are pointed out to those who hold false doctrine, the result is often an open ridicule on their part against the passages which repudiate their error. Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38, John 4:24, Colossians 3:16, 1 Peter 4:11, and many other passages, are frequently ridiculed.
    - a) Mark 16:16: “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) John 4:24: “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”
    - d) 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.”
    - e) 1 Peter 4:11: “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.”
  - 2) Not only do the false teachers speak evil of the truth, they also cause others who might have been reached by the truth to think that what they see in the false teachers is representative of Christianity and thus reject the truth without further investigation. Several years ago, when several prominent television preachers got involved in sinful and illegal activities, a great portion of the American people turned against organized religion; in rejecting sectarian religions, they reject the true religion of the New Testament.
  - 3) During the time of one of America’s most prominent unbelievers (Robert Ingersoll), some sectarian preachers approached him with a demand that he debate them about the Bible. Ingersoll told them that they did not even believe the Bible themselves. He asked them whether they believed Mark 16:15-16 [which addresses the requirement of baptism in order to be saved]. They were driven from the field in defeat, for they denied the truth of that passage.
- c. The false teachers Peter describes would make merchandise of the brethren by using feigned words. Feigned words are words that are cunningly and artfully spoken—intended to deceive men. Their aim
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would be to enrich themselves at the expense of their dupes.

- 1) 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."
  - 2) 1 Timothy 6:5: "Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself."
  - 3) Titus 1:11: "Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."
  - 4) Television is filled with such today. If God were to exact judgment directly and immediately today as he sometimes did in Bible Times, the television programmers would have a lot of time slots to fill!
  - d. Though judgment against evil workers is not immediately forthcoming, this does not mean there will be no punishment.
    - 1) Ecclesiastes 8:11-12: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him."
    - 2) 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."
    - 3) John 5:27-29: "And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. 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."
    - 4) 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."
    - 5) 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."
  4. Verse 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." "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).
    - a. The apostle gives three examples [in verses 4-6] to show that God does inevitably punish evildoers who do not repent. **The first illustration** he cites is that of the angels who sinned. These angels violated God's will and were cast down into hell [*Tartarus*], where they are confined in darkness, awaiting judgment.
    - b. Angels are created beings and are subject to sin. But there is no provision for their restoration if they commit sin. Sinful angels have no hope of salvation. These sinful angels lived in the direct presence of God, they knew full well what they must do and what they must not do; their transgression cannot be excused; only punishment awaits them.
    - c. Here we have a plain statement about some angels who sinned. Jude 6 makes the same affirmation. We are not told what their transgressions were. "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but
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left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day” (Jude 6).

- d. The word *angel* means “messenger.” The term is sometimes used in reference to a human messenger; for example, John the Baptizer is spoken of in this light: “As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee” (Mark 1:2). There is no reason here to interpret “angels” as men in our text, but rather we are to understand the reference to be to the heavenly messengers who violated God’s will. We have no way to know the nature of their sin, when they committed this sin, or the number of angels who sinned.
- e. “Much speculation has been indulged in regarding this matter. There is a popular view that Gen. 6:2-4 involves an unholy association between angels and women, and that the sin of the angels was fornication ‘with the daughters of men.’ This exposition is based on an erroneous view of Gen. 6:1-4. There is no reference to angels in that passage. The ‘sons of God’ were human beings. Others, with more reason, have concluded that these angels were the same as those alluded to by Jude when he said that ‘they kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation,’ and are kept ‘in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.’ (Jude 6.) Some hold to the view that Satan was a created angel; that he led a revolt in heaven (Rev. 12:7); that the occasion for the revolt was spiritual pride and a desire for higher position (1 Tim. 3:6); and that for such arrogance and presumption he was cast out of heaven. Inasmuch as it is inconceivable that God created these angels wicked, the following conclusion seem certain: (1) they were originally holy; (2) they sinned; (3) the occasion of their sin was in abandoning their ‘proper habitation’; (4) as a result they were thrust down to a place of bondage” (Woods, pp.165f).
- f. Our English word “hell” was used to describe a covering; a man who put roofs on houses was called a “heller.” Covering up potatoes in the ground (*i.e.*, planting potatoes) was called “helling” potatoes. Tartarus was the word in the Greek language that described the place where souls of wicked men were held after death. It is used by Peter to describe the place where these evil angels were being held.
  - 1) Peter and Jude both say that they will be there until the judgment in the last day. The nature of this place is the same as that in which the rich man (Luke 16:23-26) was being confined and punished; it is reasonable to identify these two places as the same.
  - 2) “The word here rendered ‘hell’ is ‘Tartarus,’ a word not found in any other of the sacred writings. The meaning of the word must therefore be sought in the pagan literature. Strachan said: ‘In Homer, Hades is the place of confinement of dead men, and Tartarus is the name given to a murky abyss beneath Hades, in which the sins of fallen immortals are punished’....It was natural for Peter, writing to Greeks, to use their word with reference to the state of condemnation of the angels, but without endorsement of any of the pagan traditions about the fallen Titans....It would appear that the demons themselves used another of the pagan words for this very place. See Luke 8:31, where is the record that the demons besought Jesus not to send them into the abyss” (Coffman, p.316). Peter was guided by the Holy Spirit in recording this epistle. The words used were not of Peter’s choice (cf. 1 Cor. 2:9-13).
  - 3) There is no escape from that prison. The inhabitants will surely be retained there and be in torment until the end of time, when the Judgment will occur; at that time, the final sentence will be rendered, and the final destiny of each individual will be administered.
    - a) Matthew 25:46: “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”
    - b) 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.”
    - 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) 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.”
- g. The present punishment of these angels is described as chains (pits—ASV) of darkness. “And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matt. 25:30).
- 5. Verse 5: “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.”
  - a. Peter uses **a second example** from ancient times to show that God does indeed punish the wicked. In this case, God’s judicial wrath was poured upon the wicked people of Noah’s generation. Peter’s readers knew the ancient story of how God destroyed the entire population of the world (except for Noah and his family) by the universal flood. Since God punished those corrupt people then, we may be sure he will also punish the false teachers (and other sinners) of this present age.
  - b. Noah is here described as a preacher of righteousness. This is the only direct testimony given in the Bible about his preaching, but from this statement we may properly conclude that Noah preached to his generation the need to repent and obey God, and thus avoid destruction; but obviously they refused to do so. Inasmuch as righteousness is the doing of God’s will, it is clear that Noah preached to his rebellious generation the need for obedience to God. He was a righteous man, and therefore could consistently preach righteousness.
    - 1) Genesis 6:9: “These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.”
    - 2) Genesis 6:22: “Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.”
    - 3) Hebrews 11:7: “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.”
    - 4) Psalms 119:172: “My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.”
    - 5) Matthew 3:15: “And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.”
    - 6) 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.”
    - 7) 1 John 3:7: “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.”
    - 8) “But Noah was very uneasy at what they did; and being displeased at their conduct, persuaded them to change their dispositions and their acts for the better: but seeing they did not yield to him, but were slaves to their wicked pleasures, he was afraid they would kill him, together with his wife and children, and those they had married; so he departed out of that land” [Josephus: Antiquities of the Jews, PC Study Bible formatted electronic database Copyright © 2003 by Biblesoft, Inc.].

Josephus has much to say that is very interesting, but not all of it can be confirmed.

- c. It is manifest that they rejected Noah's preaching; they continued in their rebellion; and they suffered the fate their disobedience brought. Verse one stated that the false teachers [and their dupes] would deny the Lord who bought them. This evidently indicates that they had been recipients of his grace. But through their false teachings they had fallen away; as a result of their error they were bound to be lost in the world to come. Truth is important. Noah's generation did not learn the lesson; these errorists of Peter's day did not learn it; there are multiplied millions today who have not learned.
- d. Notice that only a relative small number in each generation are acceptable to God: "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" (Matt. 7:13-14).
  - 1) Only eight out of a world-full of people were saved from the flood.
  - 2) Gideon's 300-man army; the Lord did not accept the rest of Israel's fighting men into this special band of fighters.
  - 3) Only two of the twelve spies Moses sent into Canaan to search out the land returned with the proper findings.
  - 4) Of the great multitude of Israelites who left Egypt, only two of the men survived the wilderness to enter the land of promise [Caleb and Joshua].
  - 5) Only three thousand people on Pentecost Day (Acts 2) obeyed the gospel; this number represents only a small fraction of the people in and around Jerusalem during this feast season.
6. Verse 6: "And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned *them* with an overthrow, making *them* an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly."
  - a. This is **the third illustration** of God's sure judgment—the destruction of the wicked people of Sodom and Gomorrha. The apostles graphically describes the punishment of these cities as their being turned into ashes. Their cities were thus destroyed, and the inhabitants also. The location of these cities has not been proved, although it appears they lie buried beneath the dingy depths of the Dead Sea.
    - 1) The initial account is recorded in Genesis 19:23-29: "The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar. Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt. And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD: And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace. And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt."
    - 2) Isaiah 1:9-10: "Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah. Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah."
    - 3) Ezekiel 16:48-56: "As I live, saith the Lord GOD, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou hast done, thou and thy daughters. Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good. Neither hath Samaria committed half of thy sins; but thou hast multiplied thine abominations more than they, and hast justified thy sisters in all thine abominations which thou hast done. Thou also, which hast judged

thy sisters, bear thine own shame for thy sins that thou hast committed more abominable than they: they are more righteous than thou: yea, be thou confounded also, and bear thy shame, in that thou hast justified thy sisters. When I shall bring again their captivity, the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them: That thou mayest bear thine own shame, and mayest be confounded in all that thou hast done, in that thou art a comfort unto them. When thy sisters, Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate. For thy sister Sodom was not mentioned by thy mouth in the day of thy pride.”

- 4) Luke 17:28-32: “Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. Remember Lot's wife.”
- 5) Jude 7: “Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”
- b. The prominent sin of these wicked cities has furnished the name for one of our modern plagues—sodomy (and other forms of homosexuality). Nations of the ancient past had to learn from direct experience, just how awful are the consequences of this sinful practice on society. The Grecians and Romans became afflicted with this spiritual disease. America and other modern nations have allowed this evil to become accepted; indeed, to speak out against it is to incur the wrath of the guilty, and to risk punishment from the judicial authorities.
- c. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrha and the other cities of the plains serves as an object lesson and warning to all who would live ungodly lives. Wise men have observed: “A fool never learns from the mistakes of others.” “A generation that does not learn the lessons of the past is doomed to repeat the same mistakes of those who went before.” Various societies learned the hard lessons of how this evil can destroy a nation—they banned homosexuality. This pattern was followed for generations; but recently it has been revived, to the harm of the world.
- d. Inspiration declares:
  - 1) Romans 15:4: “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”
  - 2) 1 Corinthians 10:6: “Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.”
  - 3) 1 Corinthians 10:11: “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”
- e. “By the fact of their being overthrown, he showed that they were to be condemned, or that he disapproved their conduct. Their calamity came expressly on account of their enormous sins; as it is frequently the case now that the awful judgments that come upon the licentious and the intemperate, are as plain a proof of the divine disapprobation as were the calamities that came upon Sodom and Gomorrah. [Making them an ensample...] That is, they were a demonstration that God disapproved of the crimes for which they were punished, and would disapprove of the same crimes in every age and in every land. The punishment of one wicked man or people always becomes a warning to all others” [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblsoft].
7. Verses 7-8: “And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous soul from day to day with *their*

unlawful deeds).”

- a. In contrast to those who lived around him, Lot was an outstanding spiritual man; later, he became guilty of drunkenness and incest, the latter of which was produced by the former; but this kind of conduct was not characteristic of this righteous man. Peter brings up the case of Lot to show that God knows the difference between the righteous and the unrighteous; he is willing to help and bless the former, and he is quite able to punish the latter.
  - b. He lived amid much wickedness, but he was not corrupted by it, although some members of his family were. We are told that he had “sons-in-law,” which implies he had at least two married daughters. When he tried to get them to leave Sodom with him, the sons-in-law scorned him: “And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law” (Gen. 19:14). Lot was not corrupted by the evil around him; he was not indifferent toward it; he was deeply concerned about it.
  - c. Lot made a grave mistake years earlier when he made the choice of moving into the well-watered plain where Sodom was located. In Genesis 13, we are told that the flocks and herds of Abraham and his nephew Lot could be supported by the country where they were presently situated; it was obvious that they must separate. Abraham, the grand and generous gentleman that he was, gave Lot the first choice of the available territory.
    - 1) Genesis 13:9-12: “Is not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other. Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.”
    - 2) It appears that the people of Sodom were already known for their lawless ways; despite this, Lot chose to pitch his tent in that direction. “But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly” (Gen. 13:13).
    - 3) Lot’s choice eventually cost him most of his family, including his wife; we do not know whether he was able to keep his flocks and herds [these might have been safely pastured at a distance from the destruction that fell].
  - d. Lot was vexed [*sore distressed*—verse 7, ASV] by the sinful lives of his wicked neighbors. “The words ‘sore distressed’ are translated from the present passive participle of *kataponeo*, to wear down, to tire out, to harass beyond endurance. The verb thus denotes the distress which Lot felt at the open and shameless ungodliness which was practiced around him” (Woods, p.168).
    - 1) When Lot perceived the awfulness of his decision to locate at Sodom, did he want to leave? No doubt! Was he unable? Most likely. What kept him from being physically assaulted by his wicked neighbors who sought to attack the two angels? Perhaps his wealth and influence.
    - 2) “Forced to live daily in the presence of gross and unrestrained licentiousness, and to see and to hear it constantly, he vexed (imperfect active of *basanizo*, kept on tormenting—verse 8) his righteous soul with the lawlessness about him. It should be observed that it was Lot who tormented his own soul at what he witnessed. The words described the pain that a naturally sensitive and righteous man would experience at the sight of such flagrant lawlessness as that which existed in Sodom” (ibid., pp.168f).
  - e. “The sight of lawless deeds and the sound of wicked words were a daily grief to Lot. He distressed himself; he felt the guilt and danger of his neighbours, the dishonour done to God, and his own unhappy choice” [Pulpit Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 2001 by Biblesoft].
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8. Verse 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.”
- Other translations:
    - ASV: “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment.”
    - NKJV: “Then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment.”
  - Peter gives this statement as a proper conclusion to the information in the preceding verses. God can deliver the godly and can punish the ungodly. He delivered Noah and Lot; he punished the wicked angels, the evil people of Noah’s generation, and the lawless people of Sodom.
  - The word translated “temptations” means “trials.” This same word is used in 1 Peter 1:6: “Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, ye have been put to grief in manifold trials” (ASV). It denotes the various and many hardships and problems which assail the righteous.
  - The apostle’s purpose is to offer encouragement and assurance to the faithful. The brethren to whom he initially wrote were facing heinous persecutions by wicked and unscrupulous men; the enemy seemed be invincible, while they appeared to be helpless. With the examples Peter has put before their minds, he gave them reason to have great confidence and hope. Where are the wicked angels? Where are the wicked of Noah’s generation? Where are the licentious people of Sodom? In a state of harsh punishment! Where is Noah? Where is Lot? Where are the other righteous ones who have passed on into eternity? Their state is one of comfort and rest and honor and bliss.
  - The Lord is also able to help us overcome enticements to sin, but we must do our part.
    - 1 Corinthians 10:12-13: “Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 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.”
    - James 1:13-16: “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. Do not err, my beloved brethren.”
    - 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.”
  - Peter tells us the Lord is able to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment. “The words ‘under punishment’ are from *kalazomenous*, present participle of *kolazo*, to punish, and reveals that the punishment of the wicked precedes as well as follows the final judgment, a fact also clearly taught in the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31), as well as in the reference to the angels who sinned (2 Pet. 2:4)” (Woods, p.169).
9. Verses 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.”
- ASV: “But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of defilement, and despise dominion. Daring, self-willed, they tremble not to rail at dignities: whereas angels, though greater in might and power, bring not a railing judgment against them before the Lord.”
  - Jude offers a parallel thought: “Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities” (Jude 8). Remember that Peter is speaking in chapter two of false teachers (verse 1). Many false teachers live clean lives (morally), but many do not. The cases of various infamous television preachers several years ago illustrate the immorality common to some.
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- c. Some scholars, with the case of Sodom fresh in mind from the preceding verses, think that the “lust of uncleanness” (“lust of defilement”—ASV) is a reference to homosexuality—a particularly vile sin. Clarke offers this thought: “That is, God will in the most signal manner punish them that walk after the flesh—addict themselves to sodomitical practices, and the lust of pollution; probably alluding to those most abominable practices where men abuse themselves and abuse one another” [Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1996 by Biblesoft].
  - d. We love all people and would never do them personal harm. It is our sincere desire that all who are opposed to God and godliness, would choose to turn to the gospel. The wicked men of whom Peter speaks not only walk after the flesh in the lust of defilement, but they also despise government. They had contempt for authority. Anything or anyone who opposed them became the victims of their hatred.
    - 1) That is certainly true in our world today, when we speak against the evils of homosexuality. Efforts have been made in our nation to enact “hate laws.” Under such legislation, anyone who speaks against homosexuality would be in great peril.
    - 2) It is also true when we expose false religious teachings. Many pay lip-service to the Scriptures, but when their doctrines and practices are shown to be in opposition to the Bible, they reject the authority of God’s word; they even scorn certain biblical themes and passages which oppose their false doctrines and sins.
    - 3) We have a generation coming on the scene in our country which has very little respect for authority—parental, school, law enforcement, judicial, biblical. It is enough to cause God-fearing people to tremble over what lies in store for the future.
  - e. The wicked men of Peter’s reference are presumptuous (*daring*—ASV). They are self-willed. They are not afraid to rail at dignities (people in authority). Living in direct rebellion to constituted authority (civil or spiritual), they have so little regard for those in authority and for the law itself, that they are not fearful of any punishment. This description indicates an extreme hardness of heart.
    - 1) 1 Timothy 4:1-3: “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.”
    - 2) Ephesians 4:18-21: “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.”
    - 3) 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. There were many in Peter’s day, who are thus described, and in the time upcoming, which the passage would describe. There are many in our own day who are likewise described by these words. The attitude is manifested especially by many in the world, and many in the sectarian religious world, and even some within the Lord’s church. Peter’s words describe a grievous condition, one which will certainly bring upon the wicked an awful punishment.
  - g. The apostle closes this section with the notice that even angels do not do what these sinful men find easy to do. We have a saying, that “fools rush in where angels fear to tread.” The angels know better; and men ought also to know better. Angels are also much more powerful than men.
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- 1) Two angels blinded the evil men of Sodom, thus effecting Lot's escape from their wicked city and the vile intentions of the sodomites.
- 2) One angel wiped out a vast Assyrian army in a short space of time: "Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD. For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh" (Isa. 37:33-37).
- h. Consider Zechariah 3:1-3: "And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel." [The following is taken from the author's commentary on Zechariah]:
  - 1) Zechariah does not provide us with the details of the accusation Satan made against Joshua. If Satan could cause Joshua's destruction by the charges he raised, God's purposes through Israel would have been severely damaged, if not altogether ruined.
  - 2) The next verse says that Joshua was clothed in filthy garments, which indicates that his "skirts were unclean," that is, he was guilty of sinful activity. The prophets had exposed the many sins of the priesthood and the people; evidently, this high priest was not what he ought to have been spiritually. God does not need Satan's accusation in order to know of a man's sins.
    - a) Hebrews 4:13: "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."
    - b) Proverbs 15:3: "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."
  - 3) "Jehovah's rebuke of any opponent silences him and sweeps him away. Satan may have felt confident in his charge against Joshua; for whatever the present accusation may have been, the priesthood had been guilty of making no distinction between the holy and the common and between the clean and the unclean (Ezek. 22:26). To a degree they had been responsible for the ignorance of the nation (Hos. 4:6) and had fed on the sins of the people (Hos. 4:8); they had taught for hire (Mic. 3:11) and had been further polluted by having been in an unclean land. But Satan misjudged the grace of God; he could not fathom a love that could and would forgive" (Homer Hailey, Commentary on the Minor Prophets, p.333).
  - 4) In Jude 9, we have another statement describing the same or a similar situation: "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." Such a statement could drive Satan from the battlefield.
- i. Many in our world today have been deluded into rejecting the Bible as the word of God. A great number have been deceived into rejecting the very existence of God. Many have accepted the foolish notion that men came into being by the blind operations of nature. Consequently, many have no fear to do anything that they think they can do with impunity. They live for the moment; they think little about the effect sinful actions have on others; and perhaps they give no thought about eternity. How sad and how foolish! When the world at large rejected the gospel of Christ, and the church of the Lord went into the great apostasy, the civilized world entered into a thousand years known as the "dark ages." But think of the vast numbers of lost souls produced in that process. And think of the vast numbers of lost souls being produced during our time.
- j. In 1971, one of the greatest soldiers of Christ in the twentieth century, Gus Nichols, made some

thought-provoking remarks at the Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship. His statements were directed especially toward the students in the school, but are very meaningful to us all today, in view of the horrible spiritual state our world has developed. I encourage you to read these thoughts with the realization that the world Brother Nichols described was not nearly as corrupt as the one we face today. His words are sound counsel, and offer much encouragement to those who have committed themselves to serving the God of heaven with all their hearts, sacrificing everything, if need be, that the "truth of the gospel" might continue with mankind. Brother Nichols passed into eternity only a few years after these remarks were made:

- 1) "We are living in a time when the world needs the gospel more than anything else....We don't need wealth and other things very much, but we need God....It makes me rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory when I think of the sacrifices that are being made by those who are here to study the Bible for two years, day and night—to study the Bible. It's a wonderful work. When I think of the teachers and others that are working day and night and overtime, in order to impart their knowledge to somebody who can pass it on to the third generation, that we spoke about last night. You know there is the [generation of] Moses and the [generation of] Joshua, but that third generation didn't get it. And so, let us remember that we are over in the Joshua period of the church, so to speak, and if we don't pass it on to the next generation, then our children and grandchildren will suffer terribly.
  - 2) "Jesus is sure to come, not in the very distant future, if our world continues to grow worse. It can grow worse more rapidly than you have imagined. Sometimes nations go into atheism almost instantly, as with Darwin. They have the denominational preachers capable of putting atheism over, and liberalism and everything that is equal to atheism. They've got the talent, they've got the money back of it, they've got the plants. Denominationalism now is liberalism, largely, and they have largely given up the facts of the gospel and the Bible as we know and love it now. Think what a tremendous force for evil there will be when the religious people of the earth line up with the irreligious and the atheists, and begin to fight the church and the word of God, and take that which has been accepted, the theory of evolution, which is now an accepted 'science' by those who have left science and have gone over into the realm of philosophy and have begun to philosophize; because evolution is not a science; it is a theory in the realm of philosophy, instead. But when they delude the whole mass of our people upon the earth, it might be that if the world did stand a thousand years, that so few would get to heaven in that time that it would not justify the many that would be born and go to hell.
  - 3) "Jesus said in Luke 18:8: '...When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?' God did not destroy Sodom and Gomorrah until there were just so few righteous people till they couldn't find ten. He did not destroy the world with the flood in Noah's day until there were few that were left that were righteous. Eight souls. If the time comes when this world is used for nothing but an incubator into which children are born by the millions and millions and millions, to grow up and to influence other people to sin, and to rear children that will sin, and to go to hell, and take all to hell with them who have been under their influence, God will not let this thing stand!
  - 4) "I think I know God. I have been studying his word, and thinking about him and his attributes for now 64 years; carefully studying it. I think I know he is too good let this world stand for no purpose other than to populate hell. He certainly would not do it! I am confident, therefore, that we are living in serious times.
  - 5) "I would to God that we had thousands of schools like this, instead of so few. And that the churches would wake up, and encourage men, and send them, bear their expenses, and help them so that they will not suffer too much in the fiery trials as they are getting through these two years. When you go out to preach the gospel, you may have some hardships while you are getting settled
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and getting started, but they will all be good for you. Remember Peter says, that the trying of our 'faith is more precious than gold...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...' (1 Pet. 1:7-9).

- 6) "We do not see Jesus as yet; we can't endure except as seeing him when we are not. Like it is said of Moses, that he endured as seeing him who is invisible. He endured his trials and hardships as though he could just look up and see God any time he needed encouragement and strength. We need to be close to God like that, if we can be, as it were, seeing him day by day, because we will sometimes have no one else on whom we can lean for comfort and courage. Let us be of good courage then and remember that the field is the world, sow the seed, and sow as much as we can....
- 7) "Remember that, 'They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him' (Psalm 126:5,6)."

B. 2 Peter 2:12-22: Condition and Destiny of False Teachers.

1. Verse 12: "But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption."
    - a. Other translations:
      - 1) ASV: "But these, as creatures without reason, born mere animals to be taken and destroyed, railing in matters whereof they are ignorant, shall in their destroying surely be destroyed."
      - 2) NKJ: "But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption."
      - 3) ESB: "But these, like irrational beasts, born as creatures of instinct to be caught and killed, speak evil of the things they do not understand; shall in their corruption also be destroyed."
    - b. The apostle draws a contrast between the holy angels of the previous verse and the wicked men he is describing in this context.
    - c. Brother Woods has an excellent observation: "The fallen angels recognized the moral law of God and felt the wrath which came upon them in their disobedience; whereas, these false teachers, though greatly inferior to the angels (verse 11), were like mere animals in disregarding utterly any laws of a higher world. Like wild beasts of prey which exist solely for the gratification of fleshly appetites, and eventually to be taken and destroyed for the harm they do, these false teachers, as similar creatures without reason or rational conduct, deserved no better fate. In their senseless railing against matters about which they knew nothing, they would eventually suffer the destruction which was wrought out for all whom they deceived. In destroying others, they would, themselves, eventually, be destroyed" (p.171).
    - d. Today, false teachers rail at the existence of God, the deity of Christ, the inspiration of the Bible, the gospel plan of salvation, scriptural worship, the church of our Lord, and about Christian living. The faithful have never been lacking in enemies.
    - e. Knowing the spiritual condition of those lost in sin, and being appraised by the Bible of the awful fate awaiting them, we are moved to pity when we contemplate their end. Our heart aches to help them to see the error of their ways! But, they are unwilling to listen.
  2. Verse 13: "And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, *as* they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you." "Suffering wrong as the hire of wrong-doing; men that count it pleasure to revel in the day-time, spots and blemishes, revelling in their deceivings while they feast with you" (ASV).
    - a. This verse connects with the previous verse. These errorists would suffer the due penalty for living
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in unrighteousness. They will reap what they sow:

- 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) Proverbs 16:17: "The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul."
  - 3) 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. Two familiar instances:
- 1) This was the case with Balaam: "And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword" (Num. 31:8).
  - 2) This was also the case with Judas: "Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out" (Acts 1:18).
- c. The ones Peter has in mind count it a pleasure to engage in riotous living in the daytime. Usually such is done under cover of darkness, while righteous people are normally at home. They were so far gone into iniquity, that they took pleasure in doing their misdeeds even in daylight, having no shame.
- 1) Isaiah 5:20: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"
  - 2) Proverbs 17:15: "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD."
  - 3) Jeremiah 6:15: "Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the LORD."
  - 4) Jeremiah 8:12: "Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the LORD."
- d. These are described as spots and blemishes. They had corrupted themselves and were tainting the church. They were completely unlike Christ.
- 1) 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."
  - 2) Ephesians 5:26-27: "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."
- e. They are pictured as sporting (reveling) in their deceptive ways. "Further, these teachers had injected themselves into the feasts which the Christians commonly held, and there sported themselves in their deceivings, using such occasions as additional opportunities to deceive the people" (Woods, p.172).
- f. Jude 12 is a parallel passage: "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots."
3. Verse 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."
- a. These individuals being described passed themselves off as faithful Christians, but they had eyes that
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were full of adultery. This graphic depiction reveals a man who is unwilling to look at a woman without impure thoughts and motives, a condition that directly violates the Lord's injunction in 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."

- b. Having this kind of corrupted heart, they could not cease from sin. "The hearts of these false teachers were filled with lust, and they ever sought opportunity for the gratification thereof. Thus motivated, they did not, and could not, cease from sin" (Woods, p.172). They could not stop this sinful process because they did not want to stop it. Compare:
  - 1) Jeremiah 6:16: "Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein."
  - 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."
  - 3) Ephesians 4:18-22: "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."
- c. These sinful men would beguile the unstable [unsteadfast—ASV]. The unstable are weak, irresolute, and vacillating, and are easily led astray. Peter described these sinful men as using guile in order to lead those under their influence into ruin. The word rendered beguiling is a fishing term, and means to bait, to entrap; it could be applicable to hunting and fishing. These unscrupulous men used this as a means of ensnaring the gullible. "For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts" (2 Tim 3:6). A knowledgeable, alert, strong Christian who is mature in the faith would not fall victim to such a deceiver.
- d. These sinful men have their hearts exercised in covetousness. The term *exercise* has reference to training in a gymnasium, but it is not the physical muscles that have been strengthened, but rather their covetousness; they were well-trained in greed and self-gratification.
- e. These sinful men are described by the apostle as *cursed children*. They brought curses upon others, and would themselves be cursed (condemned). They were under the curse of God because of their sinful condition.
- f. Their punishment will be fully meted out at the Judgment of the Last Day:
  - 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) 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) Compare:

- a) John 17:12: “While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.”
  - b) Ephesians 2:2: “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.”
  - c) “And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder” (Mark 3:17). [This does not place James and John in league with the evil ones named above; the descriptive term, *sons of thunder*, depicts these two apostles as strong, and perhaps even severe].
4. Verses 15-16: “Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son* of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.”
- a. This passage shows that the evil men under consideration are fallen Christians, apostates from the faith. Peter shows this by reporting that they had forsaken the right way and had gone astray. One cannot leave a road without having been on that road; one cannot go astray unless he was once all right. The term go astray means to err—it is used also in these verses:
    - 1) Matthew 22:29: “Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.”
    - 2) Mark 12:24: “And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?”
    - 3) Mark 12:27: “He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.”
    - 4) James 1:16: ‘Do not err, my beloved brethren.’
  - b. The right way is the way of God’s truth—the Gospel system.
    - 1) 1 Timothy 4:1: “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.”
    - 2) 2 Timothy 4:2-4: “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.”
    - 3) Acts 16:17: “The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.”
    - 4) Acts 13:5-12: “And when they were at Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister. And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus: Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith. Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou

- shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.”
- 5) 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.”
- c. When these false teachers adopted their sinful practices, they followed in the steps of Balaam (Num. 22-24; 31:16; 25:1ff). Balaam was more interested in obtaining money from unrighteous activity than from doing that which was right. The evil men Peter described also loved the reward of sin and error. “Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD” (Num. 31:16). Balaam was later slain for his wickedness (Num. 31:8).
- d. “Peter says that these had followed the way of Balaam and consequently had gone astray. Balaam was the prophet whom the king of Moab hired to curse the people of God. (Num. 22:2ff.) Balaam coveted the reward which Balak offered so much that he would have cursed the people of God if God had given him a curse to deliver. But, being unable to deliver the curse, he suggested to Balak how he could lead the people into sin so that God would destroy them. (Num. 31:16.) So Peter speaks of some in his day who had followed the way of Balaam, and in doing so had forsaken the right way. In all of these we see the ways in which good, sincere, earnest people may forsake the right. These people whom Peter described did not forsake the right way in a day or a week; it was a matter of growth, gradually going farther and farther into sin until they had reached that degree which is described in the context” (ALC, 1956, p.323).
- e. Balaam was rebuked for his sin through the voice of a donkey. This miraculous event has the New Testament stamp of approval on it. Modernists deny the Old Testament event, but to deny what Moses wrote also is to impeach what Peter recorded here. To reject part is to reject the whole. People today who allege that they exercise the miraculous gift of tongues can only give forth unintelligible gibberish. However, Balaam’s donkey spoke a message that was audible and understandable and sensible; it has been recorded and preserved in the sacred record:
- 1) “And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?” (Num. 22:28).
- 2) Speaking through the beast, God forbade the madness of the prophet (Balaam). Balaam tried to force the animal to continue the journey, but an angel blocked the way. The prophet’s anger at his donkey evaporated when his eyes were opened and he saw the angel, who was bearing a sword.
5. Verse 17: “These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.”
- a. Compare: “These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever” (Jude 12-13).
- b. The apostle gives here a figurative description of the worthlessness of what these false teachers taught. They paraded under the guise of spirituality, but were like wells or springs without any water.
- 1) A dry well is useless and dangerous. One might walk many miles on a hot day toward a dry well or spring, only to be terribly disappointed when he got there. “One approaching a spring or a well where he expects to slake his thirst and finds no water will be disappointed, so those who expected to hear saving truth from these apostates would be sorely disappointed” (ALC, 1956, p.325).
- 2) Think of the horrible dismay those will feel in the Judgment who followed false teachers here! False teachers make great, glowing promises about heaven, but are unable to fulfill them.
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- c. They are further described as mists driven by a storm; they contain the promise of rain, but are quickly blown by, without delivering any moisture.
  - d. The blackness of darkness has been reserved for such individuals and their dupes. The way of the wicked is sometimes depicted in the Bible as traveling in “the way of darkness.” Their way is without true light here, and results in the punishment of outer darkness in the next world.
    - 1) Matthew 25:30: “And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
    - 2) Compare: “Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the LORD, and because of the words of his holiness. For the land is full of adulterers; for because of swearing the land mourneth; the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their course is evil, and their force is not right. For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the LORD. Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery ways in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their visitation, saith the LORD” (Jer. 23:9-12).
    - 3) Proverbs 4:19: “The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.”
    - 4) 1 Thessalonians 5:1-8: “But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. 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.”
  - 6. Verse 18: “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.”
    - a. Here Peter tells why the false teachers were described in the previous verse as dry wells without water—all they say is vanity (empty, void, meaningless). Compare: “This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind” (Eph. 4:17).
    - b. “The meaning here is, that they made use of every variety of lascivious arts to beguile others under religious pretences. This has been often done in the world; for religion has been abused to give seducers access to the confidence of the innocent, only that they might betray and ruin them. It is right that for all such the ‘mist of darkness should be reserved forever’; and if there were not a place of punishment prepared for such men, there would be a defect in the moral administration of the universe” [Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].
    - c. “Great swelling words” were merely high-sounding words, full of pomposity, but empty of truth and void of meaning. It is characteristic of false teachers to present their error in the most appealing manner. Political liberals also have this ability to “put the right spin” on a matter to make it seem true. Only those who are knowledgeable will be able to discern the error—in the religious, judicial, and political fields.
    - d. “This suggests the pride and the surety with which these speakers delivered their empty, vain lessons. But instead of these lessons slaking the spiritual thirst of the weary or furnishing the rains which would mature the grain, they enticed through the lusts of the flesh those who were just escaping from error. Instead of their words bringing life and salvation, they brought death and destruction” (ALC, 1965, p.325).
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7. Verse 19: "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."
  - a. "They promised equal liberty, but being themselves bond servants of corruption, they could do nothing more than bring those whom they influenced under bondage to the same corruption. There are teachers today who promise men salvation and freedom from sin on terms other than those revealed in the gospel. The net result is that they lead their hearers farther and farther into the chains of sin and spiritual corruption" (ALC, 1965, p.325).
  - b. Despite their great swelling words, which sounded so impressive to the untrained mind, these false teachers promised liberty but were themselves the slaves of spiritual degradation. One who claims to be free, but practices sin, is under the worst kind of bondage—he is dominated by sin here and will bear the frightful penalty of sin in the next world. Liberty is not license to commit sin.
    - 1) John 8:34: "Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin."
    - 2) Galatians 5:13: "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another."
    - 3) Romans 6:1-2: "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?"
    - 4) Romans 6:16-20: "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. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness."
  - c. Macknight, in discussing the thought, *of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage*, makes this comment: "This, Le Clerc tells us, is an allusion to the ancient custom of making those slaves who were conquered and taken in battle. Such persons were called *Servi*, because they were preserved from death to be made slaves....It was one of the Stoical paradoxes, That the wise man is the only *free man*, and that all wicked men are slaves. This maxim the apostle adopts and supports in its sound sense, by unanswerable argument; namely, that the man who is conquered by his lusts hath no freedom left him, but must as a slave obey all their dictates" (Vols. V-VI, pp.555f).
8. Verses 20-22: "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. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."
  - a. What the apostle states here has application especially to the false teachers of the context; but it also applies to those who have been deceived by them. Since it is the case that these individuals had departed from the truth, then it follows that *all* who depart from the truth fall into the same condition here described.
  - b. Notice the ones he describes had "escaped the pollutions of the world." That means that they had obeyed the gospel and received the blessings and benefits pertaining to saved people. The only way anyone can escape the defilements of this world is to obey the gospel. As Peter expresses it, the escape was effected through "the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." The knowledge of Christ is the gospel of Christ; it is in the gospel that we learn all of the truths, precepts and requirements

which can produce freedom from the guilt of sin [the defilements of this world].

- 1) Knowledge is a prominent theme in the epistle.
  - a) 2 Peter 1:2: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord."
  - b) 2 Peter 1:3: "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."
  - c) 2 Peter 1:5-6: "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."
  - d) 2 Peter 1:8: "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."
  - e) 2 Peter 2:20: "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."
  - f) 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) Knowledge of God's truth lies at the heart of the gospel.
  - a) We need to know the truth before we can be made free: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).
  - b) We need to love the truth in order to be saved: "And with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess. 2:10-12, ASV).
  - c) We must learn the truth in order to be drawn to God through Christ: "No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up in the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me" (John 6:44-45, ASV).
  - d) The gospel must be preached and taught in order for us to come to a knowledge of it:
    - (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 8:26-39: "And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him



Jesus. 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. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.”

- (3) 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.”
- e) We must believe the truth if we expect to be pleasing to God and receive his blessings.
  - (1) 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.”
  - (2) John 8:21-24: “Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. 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) Romans 10:17: “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
  - (4) Acts 16:7, 9: “After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not....And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.”
- f) We must obey the truth in order to be saved: “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 2:36-42; cf. Rom. 6:1-18).
- 3) The pollutions (*miasma*) means *defilements*—“the vices of the ungodly which contaminate a person in his intercourse with the world” [Vine's Expository Dictionary]. Concerning this Greek term, Macknight said that, being part of “the language of the ancient physicians, signified the infection of the plague. It is used here to denote sin in general; but more especially the sin of lasciviousness, on account of its infectious nature and destructive consequences” (p.556). The defilements of the world includes sin—of any kind; sin defiles the soul.
- c. The defiled ones Peter discusses had escaped from the pollutions that had contaminated their souls; they had obeyed the gospel (cf. Acts 22:16; Rom. 10:16; Rev. 1:5). But these had become entangled

again with sin, and overcome.

- 1) “From this we learn that it is possible for one who has escaped from the defilement of the world through the knowledge of Jesus Christ, to become entangled in worldly things to the extent that he is overcome by them. There are those who believe in the impossibility of apostasy, saying that the child of God can never so sin as to be finally lost. But in this passage Peter teaches that one who has escaped the defilements of the world, or has been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ, can become entangled in the world’s defilements again and be overcome by them” (ALC, 1956, pp.325f).
- 2) As a fish can become entangled in a fisherman’s net, so unwary Christians can become entangled in the devil’s snare. The people the apostle has been discussing in the context were false teachers who alleged that one could live licentious lives and still enjoy liberty. Those who teach that a Christian cannot fall from grace, despite his conduct, teach the same faulty doctrine. Sin taints the soul, whether the individual is an alien sinner or a Christian. The deceivers became ensnared by the same bait with which they enticed others.
- d. The apostles reports that their latter condition was worse than their former state (before they obeyed the gospel).
  - 1) “Such is the condition characteristic of those who have been delivered from the corruption of the world only to return to its defilements. The last state for all such is worse than the first: (a) apostates are usually more abandoned in sin than those who have never walked in righteousness; (b) such a state involves more guilt because of the greater knowledge such a one possesses; (c) such individuals are far more difficult to influence for good than those who have never known the way of righteousness” (Woods, p.177).
  - 2) A Christian who willfully returns to a life of sin does so despite knowing the truth; he cannot claim ignorance; he knows the truth and still goes into sin.
  - 3) Having repudiated the truth by his willful disobedience, he has turned his back on the only means of his salvation; if he does not love and respect the truth, the truth will have no appeal to his heart.
  - 4) Consider these awesome passages:
    - a) Hebrews 6:4-6: “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”
    - b) Ephesians 4:18-19: “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.”
    - c) Hebrews 10:23-31: “Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And

again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

- 5) When a man has shown his preference for sin over righteousness, God does not block his way; he gives him up to do those things which are unseemly.
    - a) Romans 1:24: “Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves.”
    - b) Romans 1:26-28: “For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.”
    - c) As examples of this process, consider the cases of Balaam (Num. 22-24), Judas (Matt. 26:14-16), rebellious Israel (Jer. 6:15-16), and the Gentiles of ancient days (Rom. 1:18-32).
  - e. They would have been better if they had never known the way of truth than to have turned from the holy commandment.
    - 1) “Since this fallen, apostate state is worse than the first it is obviously better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandments delivered to them....To know the way of righteousness means to have saving knowledge of God and to walk in the ways that are right according to God’s standards” (ALC, 1956, p.326).
    - 2) In this verse we have strong evidence that a saved person can return to sin and be lost. The doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy is false.
    - 3) 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.” An examination of this passage shows that inspiration is speaking of a child of God who has erred from the truth; if another saint converts that wayward member, he has brought back a sinner (an erring saint) from the error of his way, and has delivered that precious soul from death (spiritual death in the present world and from the second death in the next world).
    - 4) 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.” [This passage evidently addresses the subject of degrees of punishment. In the eternal scheme of things, even a “light” beating is still awful; the culprit would still be separated from God, from heaven, from glory, from rest, from light, from the redeemed, and from eternal life].
    - 5) Matthew 11:20-24: “Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.”
  - f. The holy commandment is the word of God—the gospel.
    - 1) Isaiah 35:8: “And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness;
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- the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.”
- 2) 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.”
  - 3) Compare: “But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed” (Gal. 1:23).
- g. The two animals are used by the apostle to depict the awfulness of being contaminated with sin.
- 1) The animals Peter names are the dog and the swine; the dog is a scavenger and the swine was considered as an abomination (by the Jews and the Arabs). Those who know dogs and swine know how accurate Peter’s statement is.
    - a) Proverbs 26:11: “As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly.”
    - b) Matthew 7:6: “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.”
  - 2) “It should be observed that in both instances the animal was *changed*. That each returned to its former offensive habits does not alter the fact that a change had occurred. Advocates of the doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy, in an effort to avoid the obvious force of this passage, insist that the dog remained a dog, the sow a sow. Such is not the point of the proverb. The dog had ejected that which was foul; the sow had been washed. That each returned to its former manner of life reveals that the old nature *returned*. Peter cites the proverb as an illustration of that which had occurred in the lives of these men who, though they had escaped the corruptions of the world through the knowledge of Christ, had become entangled again therein, and overcome, and their last state was thus worse than the first” (Woods, p.178).
  - 3) “The application of the proverb is that a person may through obedience to the gospel and by the power of the blood of Christ become free from sin and continue in that freedom for a while, but turn back to sin and become so defiled that he will be lost....The application is that a person becomes free of sin and then after remaining free for a while becomes entangled and deviled by that sin again” (ALC, 1956, p.326).
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## 2 PETER 3

### A. 2 Peter 3:1-13: The Second Coming of Christ and the End of the World.

1. Verses 1-2: "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour."
  - a. The apostle calls to the attention of his readers the fact that he had written an earlier epistle. *This Second Epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; literally, this Epistle already a second one I write unto you* [see Pulpit Commentary]. The Greek text uses a term translated "now" [it carries the meaning of "even now, already"]. This implies that it had not been long since he penned the first epistle.
  - b. Peter gives a reminder of the words spoken by the prophets and apostles of Christ, which these brethren had been taught. The purpose was to stir up their pure [sincere; flawless] minds. Many people do not have open, sincere minds, and so are not subject to being reasoned with; they have their minds made up and will not change.
  - c. There was a need that their memories be aroused, that they be reminded of the great truths of the gospel. The human mind tends to forget. Being able to forget helps us to overcome our mistakes and pains of the past; but our forgetting ability can be a detriment to our store of knowledge.
    - 1) The Lord did not trust the great work he assigned to the apostles to their fallible memories: "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. 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" (John 14:26-27).
    - 2) Peter had earlier in the epistle spoken about the need to be reminded: "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 shewed me" (2 Pet. 1:12-14).
  - d. Protection against religious error and personal sin requires a continual reminding of the truths of the gospel. If we keep the truth in our minds, we will be much less likely to accept some false doctrine or commit some act of sin. Our Lord fended off the temptations of Satan by citing certain pertinent passages from God's word (Matt. 4:1-22; Luke 4:1-13).
  - e. It was important that they remember what had been spoken earlier by the prophets and more recently by the apostles of Christ.
    - 1) Since these prophets are spoken of in connection with the apostles, the prophets of the New Testament are probably included. The Old Testament prophets had made many predictions about the New Covenant. When our Lord returned to heaven following the successful completion of his earthly mission, he empowered his apostles to carry on his work.
    - 2) In doing their work, it was necessary that they lay hands on certain converts and thus confer to them various gifts of the Holy Spirit. One of those gifts was that of prophecy (cf. 1 Cor. 12:8-10). Some of these New Testament prophets were later guided to record parts of the New Testament revelation [Mark, Luke, James, and Jude]; the rest of the writers were apostles. All of these prophets presented the revealed will of God; a few of them did so in print; all of them did so in oral presentations.
  - f. The apostles and prophets are frequently mentioned.
    - 1) Ephesians 2:20: "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."

- 2) Ephesians 3:5: "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."
  - 3) Ephesians 4:11: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers."
  - 4) Acts 11:27: "And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch."
  - 5) Acts 13:1: "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul."
  - 6) 1 Corinthians 14:29: "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge."
  - g. At the time Peter wrote, the New Testament revelation had not been completed. It was revealed first in oral form, and later committed to writing. When Paul spoke of having this "treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Cor. 4:7), he had reference to the inspired word that was in the apostles and prophets, before it was put into printed form. By reading the inspired word, we obtain the information, strength, and motivation to overcome sin and error. Peter sought to stir up their minds (their minds, not their emotions) by making an appeal to the word of God. This is the way we stir up people today.
    - 1) Psalms 119:11: "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."
    - 2) 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."
    - 3) 2 Timothy 4:2-4: "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."
    - 4) 1 Timothy 4:16: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."
    - 5) 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."
    - 6) If the gospel will not motivate us, what can! If we are not motivated by the principles and the commands of the gospel, we are improperly motivated! Those who twist the Scriptures to fit their own purposes and doctrines, do so to their own destruction: "And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (2 Pet. 3:15-16).
  - h. The commandment of the passage was the Lord's, but it was given through the apostles.
    - 1) 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."
    - 2) Hebrews 2:1-4: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; 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?"
    - 3) Mark 16:20: "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen."
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- 4) Luke 10:16: "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."
- 5) 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."
- 6) 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."
- 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."
- i. From Acts two forward, the only prophets were those who had had an apostle lay hands on him, to confer that miraculous gift. When the last apostle died, and last person died upon whom an apostle had conferred a gift died, the exercise of the prophetic gift ceased. [Each of the apostles also had the prophetic gift].
  - 1) Acts 8:14-17: "Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost."
  - 2) Romans 1:11: "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established."
  - 3) 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."
  - 4) 1 Corinthians 13:8: "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."
2. Verses 3-4: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation."
  - a. At the start of the current presentation, Peter advises his readers to be aware at the very start that scoffers would inevitably come on the scene. He had already warned in the previous chapter that false teachers would arise in the church; here he warns about some who would mock certain basic tenets of the gospel system.
  - b. The "last days" is a reference to the Christian Age. Peter does not specify any exact period of this last epoch of human history when these mockers would arise. He was writing near the beginning of this last Age; this Age will continue until the return of Christ.
    - 1) On the Pentecost Day of Acts two, Peter spoke of this last period of time: "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams" (Acts 2:16-17).
      - a) In view of other references, including the present passage (Acts 2:16-17), it is clear that the *last days* is a reference to the last dispensation of time, the Christian Age:

- (1) 1 Timothy 4:1-2: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron."
  - (2) 2 Timothy 3:1: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come."
  - (3) Hebrews 1:1-2: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."
  - (4) Jude 3: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." [The entire gospel was revealed before the end of the first century—once for all time delivered].
- b) It is during this last age that Christ reigns on his throne at God's right hand.
- (1) Acts 2:33-36: "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) Zechariah 6:12-13: "And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; 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."
- 2) God speaks to humanity during the last days through his Son: "Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Heb. 1:2). "These last days" is a reference to the Christian Age, the last dispensation of time. It began with the death of Christ and will end with the return of Christ.
- a) Isaiah 2:2: "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." The house of the Lord is identified in 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."
  - b) Joel 2:28: "And it shall come to pass afterward, *that* I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." The fulfillment of Joel's prophets began on the Pentecost Day of Acts two: "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams" (Acts 2:16-17).
  - c) 1 Corinthians 10:11: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."
  - d) 1 Timothy 4:1: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."
  - e) 1 John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."
  - f) 2 Timothy 3:1: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come."
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- g) Matthew 12:32: "And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come."
- h) When the Lord returns, the entire universe and time itself will be no more (2 Pet. 3:8-13)
- c. Peter does not specifically identify these scoffers. Some of them were present then; some have been present during every generation since then; and certainly there are many during our own time. The first century scoffers could include unbelieving Jews, materially-minded pagans, and apostate Christians.
- d. These scoffers would mock [ridicule, deride, hold up to contempt] the idea that Christ would return. The Jews believed Jesus was a blasphemous false prophet; the Gentiles never believed any dead man would rise from the grave; apostate Christians would have given up any semblance of hope of his return. By doing this, Peter says they were walking after their own lusts—their primary interests in life was in satisfying the appetites of their flesh.
  - 1) This is why many have no interest in the gospel today—they are too busy fulfilling the desires of their physical bodies: sensual pleasures; recreation; reveling; partying; making money; amassing wealth and property.
  - 2) John 3:16-21: "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. 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 reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."
- e. There are many who constantly spout error about the Lord's return. There were some at Thessalonica who mistakenly thought the Lord would return during their lifetime, and when some of their loved ones died, they were shaken, supposing those close associates had lost their hope. Paul showed them the truth on this matter in the two epistles he directed to them. There are many today who speak and write much foolishness about this matter.
  - 1) Hal Lindsay is on record in teaching that Christ's return will be within one generation of the time when the Jews began returning to Palestine. This began in 1948; giving forty years as one generation, he thinks the coming will be by 1988. After that year goes by, what will his followers think? What will their children do? He knows no more than anyone else about when Christ will return. When it becomes obvious that he and the other millennialists have been wrong, it is likely that their organizations will be shattered, and many of these individuals could become scoffers. [Note: this material was first penned in the middle 1980s; anyone knowing the Bible could know that Lindsay's predictions were wrong].
  - 2) The war with Iraq in 1990-91 led to much speculation.
    - a) "Iraq is the Gate to Armageddon" (Title of article in "Pulpit Helps," Nov., 1990). The article, written by Moody Adams, went on to say that the Bible warned us against Iraq in the Book of Revelation!
    - b) He cited Revelation 16:12: "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared." Somehow, according to Adams, the present mid-east war is fulfilling this passage. He asserts that an army of 200 million troops will move across the dry river bed and meet another great army at Megiddo in the battle of Armageddon in a little valley in northern Israel. He says the plain is only 14 x 20 miles (1,478,400 square feet). This would give the space of

less than 1 square foot for each of the 200 million invading soldiers (not counting the opposing force). His claim is pure speculation, and is nonsensical!

- c) He cited Revelation 9:14-15: "...Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men." Mr. Adams thinks that this supports his theory, but again, he offers no evidence that this speaks of modern-day Iraq and that one-third of humanity will be wiped out as a result of the fighting that is going on over there today. What happens to his theory when Iraq is defeated?
- d) He cited Revelation 18:21: "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all." Adams claims that Hussein is rebuilding ancient Babylon, and that Iraq is really Babylon. But the Bible says that Babylon was to be destroyed in ancient times and would rise no more. Whoever tries to rebuild Babylon will fail, just as Mr. Adams' theory will fail. "And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there" (Isa. 13:19-20).
- e) 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 ©) 1997 by Biblesoft].
  - (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].
  - (3) 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).
- f) 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) 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.
  - (3) "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.].
  - (4) 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.
- 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).
- f. A "prophet" who gives a prophecy that fails is a false prophet: "But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that *is* the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, *but* the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deut. 18:20-22).
- g. The scoffers would demand to know about the promise the Lord made about his return. They would assert that these promises were in vain. One of their mistakes was in thinking the Lord promised to return in the immediate future; he gave no date. From 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12, we learn clearly that his return would be subsequent to the great apostasy: "That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 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" (2 Thess. 2:2-3). The Lord and the apostles addressed the second coming on many occasions [see Matthew 25:31-46; 24:30; 1 Corinthians 15; 2 Corinthians 5:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; 1:6-9; Revelation 1:7].
- h. The Lord will come, but no man can learn when that return will be.
- 1) Mark 13:32-33: "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."
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- 2) Since the Lord perfectly knew every item in the Old Testament and was the author of the New Testament, but did not know when his return would be, we may be certain that there is no clue in any part of the Bible that would identify that time.
- i. The scoffers argue that all things have continued uninterruptedly from the beginning of the creation to the time the fathers fell asleep (died). The first question is to learn the identity of the fathers.
  - 1) The scholars seem to be in agreement that the first generation of Christians is meant. Peter is writing about thirty years after the establishment of the Lord's church, and many of the saints had died.
  - 2) Stephen had been stoned to death (Acts 7); the apostle James had been slain with the sword (Acts 12); others had been slain also (cf. Acts 26:9-10); others had died natural deaths (1 Thess. 4:13-18). The argument of the false teachers overlooks the fact that the Lord would not return until some time after the great apostasy developed (2 Thess. 2).
  - 3) The argument could be in reference to the first generation of Christians, many of whom had died; but it could be in reference to those of many preceding generations—extending on back in the dark recesses of antiquity. The “fathers” could be the Jews of earlier generations.
- j. These scoffers would assert that all things have continued as they had from the beginning—the years come and go, the seasons change, the rivers continue to run into the sea. They apparently had some conception that the return of Christ would spell the end of the earth; since the earth is still here and remains in operation as it has always done, then the promises of the Lord's return are vain.
  - 1) The same rationale is used by those who reject Bible miracles: “We have not seen a miracle; all things continue to operate by natural law; therefore, miracles did not occur.” Miracles are divine acts that rise above and supercede natural laws. We do not see miracles today because God has decreed that they are not to occur. The next miraculous demonstration will be at the coming of Christ—but that will be too late for those who are not already Christians.
  - 2) There will be no signs in nature to identity the imminent return of Christ. No signs were shown in nature to identify the impending flood of Noah's time. “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be” (Matt. 24:35-39).
- k. More on “the sleep of death.”
  - 1) Death is sometimes described as falling asleep. This is an appropriate figure for the death of the saints. Jesus used the term “sleep” for “death” (Matt. 9:24; Mark 5:39; John 11:11-12.) Paul also used the term “sleep” for death (1 Cor. 15:18,51; 1 Thess. 4:13,14).
  - 2) The Bible makes numerous references to death as sleep. Some have taken this as a literal statement, even a few of our brethren, and teach that our soul goes to sleep when the body dies, and will not be awakened until the resurrection. This is not what the Bible teaches.
    - a) The depiction is a figure of speech. This pleasant metaphor was used by our Lord, as in the cases of Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:39) and of Lazarus (John 11:11). Our word *cemetery* comes from the Greek word used in the text.
    - b) The connection between death and sleep is the obvious similarity between a dead body and a sleeping body. The former resembles the latter so much that we connect the two. To speak of death as sleep is a euphemism; it is much kinder to say someone “fell asleep” than to say he died: “And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep” (Acts 7:60). The picture the New Testament paints

of death as a sleep, builds in our minds an image of rest and serenity, as opposed to the rage and violence surrounding the death of Stephen.

- c) This word-picture has a wonderful, consoling effect on our hearts as we ponder the death of a loved one, or as we contemplate our own passage from this world.
- 3) Cases in the New Testament:
- a) Luke 16:19-31: The story of Lazarus and the wicked rich man. This is a factual report of the experiences of two real men, who lived and died under the Mosaic Age.
  - b) 2 Corinthians 12:1-4: "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." The context demands that the individual described is the apostle Paul himself.
3. Verses 5-6: "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." "For this they willfully forget, that there were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the word of God; by which means the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" (ASV).
- a. The apostle begins his answer to the claims of the scoffers. They had willfully forgotten an important fact of history. Their argument was based on the uniformity of nature; all things in nature have continued uninterruptedly (the *allege*) since the beginning of the creation; therefore, Christ will not return. They asserted that God had not intervened to bring destruction upon the earth in the past, and that he will not do so at any time. The world was not destroyed in the past, so it will not be destroyed in the future; Christ has not come with the clouds and angels in the past, so he will not come in the future.
  - b. "*For this they will fully forget.* The following is offered for our consideration here: (a) their ignorance of these matters was willful, intentional. They did not know of the changes that had taken place because they did not wish to know. Their statement that all things are the same from the time of creation was not according to fact, and their ignorance of these facts was willful. (b) Their statement was untrue. They based their conclusions on a false premise. Then Peter proceeds to show the falsity of the position they had taken" (ALC, 1965, p.331).
  - c. Peter next refers to the original creation of the earth, when God separated the water and the land:
    - 1) "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters....And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good" (Gen. 1:2, 6-10).
    - 2) The theory of evolution cannot be worked into Genesis 1 (or anywhere else in the Bible). Peter affirms that it was by the word of God that these great feats were accomplished.
      - a) Psalm 33:6-9: "He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe
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- of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.”
- b) Hebrews 11:3: “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”
  - c) Hebrews 3:4: “For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God.”
- 3) The earth is amidst the water (it is surrounded by water); and water in vaporized form fills the atmosphere around the earth.
- d. Passing several centuries into the future from the creation of the world, Peter uses the case of Noah’s flood as a rebuttal to the argument of the scoffers. They claimed that the world had continued without interruption since the beginning of the creation; they conveniently ignored the great flood of Noah’s time.
- 1) By means of water, God then destroyed the world. He did not destroy the earth, but the inhabitants of the earth—the world of sinful men. We read that God loved the world (John 3:16); it means that he loves the people who inhabit this world. We read that the world can love and hate (cf. John 15:19; 7:7)—this can be said of people, but it cannot be said of the physical earth.
  - 2) God sent the great deluge of waters by breaking up the fountains of the deep and opening the windows of heaven; water fell upon the earth from above, and gushed up from the depths of the earth beneath. There was enough water to cover the entire globe, reaching a depth of fifteen cubits above the highest mountain (Gen. 7:20).
  - 3) The world that then was perished in the waters: “And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days” (Gen. 7:21-24). As Peter has written in another place, God saved eight people on the ark, along with sufficient numbers of animal-life, to re-populate the earth (1 Pet. 3:18-21).
  - 4) “The waters from above and below joined as instruments in the hands of God in the judgment upon the wicked world. It thus ‘perished’ (*apollumi*), i.e., it was destroyed. It was not annihilated, but such the word does not mean. The existing order was changed; the evils of the age were removed, and there emerged a new world cleansed from its former impurities” (Woods, p.183).
- e. The “heavens were from of old” (ASV)—they dated from the original creation as recorded in Genesis chapter 1. The earth was compacted out of water (ASV) and in the midst of water. The word rendered “standing” (KJV) is *sunistemi*, which means “to stand together” [*sun*, with; *histemi*, to stand]. The word is used to describe the Lord’s upholding the universe.
- 1) Colossians 1:17: “And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” When the right ingredients are mixed together to form bread dough, the lump will “stand together” (have the proper consistency); thus our world holds together by the word of the Lord.
  - 2) 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.” “It is concerned, not only with sustaining the weight of the universe, but also with maintaining its coherence and carrying on its development. What is said of God, Col 1:17, is here said or implied of Christ...” [Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1997 by BibleSoft].
4. Verse 7: “But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”
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- a. The same *word* that created the heavens and the earth in the beginning, which brought the terrible destruction upon the world in the great flood, now reserves the heavens and earth for the destruction of fire in the last day. Since the word of God could create the heavens and earth in the beginning and bring the destruction of Noah's flood, it will surely be able to bring Christ back to earth and destroy the universe in finality.
  - b. The Lord has determined to use fire as the instrument by which he will destroy the earth and the universe at the return of Christ. He will bring *perdition* [*apoleisa*, from *apollumi*] upon ungodly men. The same word describes what happened to the earth in Noah's day; as the earth did not cease to exist, so the ungodly men will not cease to exist. In *apollumi*, the "idea is not extinction but ruin, loss, not of being, but of well-being" (Vine). This word is used to describe:
    - 1) Bursting wine skins (Luke 5:37).
    - 2) Lost sheep (Luke 15:4,6).
    - 3) The lost son (Luke 15:24).
    - 4) The perishing of food (John 6:27).
    - 5) Gold (1 Peter 1:7).
    - 6) Persons (Matt. 2:13; 8:25; 22:7; 27:20; 10:28; Luke 13:3,5).
  - c. The destruction ungodly men will receive is to be cast into Gehenna:
    - 1) 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) Mark 9:42-48: "And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."
  - d. This destruction will occur at the appearing of Christ: "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 Thess. 1:6-10).
5. Verse 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."
- a. Peter has answered the first quibble offered by the scoffers; they asserted that the natural world has continued without significant change since the beginning of the creation. They thought that this would destroy the New Testament doctrine of the return of Christ and the destruction of the earth—since no heavenly power had been brought against the earth in the past, they alleged that none would be done in the future. The apostle pointed to the universal flood of Noah's time which destroyed all men and air-breathing animals, except for those secured on the ark.
  - b. Peter now addresses their claim that if Christ was going to return, he would have done so by then. "His second answer to their allegations is that lapse of time between the promise and the realization is not
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- to be interpreted as meaning that God will not fulfill his commitments and discharge his threatenings” (Woods, p.184).
- c. He advises them that they ought not be ignorant of a fundamental fact—the Lord is not concerned with the passage of time. It matters not how much time might pass; God will certainly fulfill his promises and mete out the punishments he has ordained. A day is with the Lord as a thousand years; and a thousand years is as one day.
  - d. The passing of time does not affect the promises or the threats of God. “Whether it be a day or a thousand years between the time of the promise and the reward, the threatening and the retribution, God will perform it” (Woods, p.185).
  - e. God is not like man. Man may die, or forget, or violate his word, or find it impossible to fulfill his threats or his promises. But God is faithful to his word, is eternal in his being, will not forget, and can always do what he says.
    - 1) Numbers 23:19: “God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?”
    - 2) Psalms 90:2,4: “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God....For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.”
6. Verse 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.”
- a. Having assured the scoffers that God means what he says, he now advises them to take advantage of the opportunity to repent—while they have that privilege!
  - b. God is not delaying the return of Christ; he has not forgotten or postponed the occasion, but has simply set the time far enough into the future to give as many as possible the opportunity to obey the gospel and prepare for eternity.
  - c. He is not *slack* [slow, tardy]. The word is used in 1 Timothy 3:13, being translated as *tarry*: “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.” There is a time fixed in the mind of the Almighty when the end shall come:
    - 1) Mark 13:32-33: “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.”
    - 2) 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.”
    - 3) Regardless of the amount of time that God allows to pass, he will without fail fulfill every promise. Scoffers think to the contrary; but there will be no tardiness in the fulfillment of his promises and threats.
  - d. Instead of slackness, God is showing *long-sufferance* toward sinful man. These scoffers were perverting this evidence of God’s patience into an argument against the truth of his word. The Scriptures often speak of his longsuffering (cf. Rom. 11:11-36).
    - 1) Romans 2:4: “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”
    - 2) Romans 12:1: “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.”
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- 3) Revelation 2:20-22: "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds."
  - 4) Deuteronomy 5:29: "O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!"
  - e. God is unwilling for any to be lost, but he will not force anyone's obedience. This statement does away with the false doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation. Christ died for all men (John 3:16; Heb. 2:9; Tit. 2:11-12). God longs for all to come to repentance. If it is his will for all to repent, then it is possible for all men to repent; indeed, everyone is commanded to do so (Acts 17:30).
    - 1) 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."
    - 2) Hebrews 2:9: "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."
    - 3) Titus 2:11-12: "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."
    - 4) Acts 17:30: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent."
  7. Verse 10: "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."
    - a. The *day of the Lord* is the Second Coming of Christ—the very event the scoffers were denying. The apostle affirms in strong terms that the day of the Lord **will come**. The events that will occur in connection with his return are announced in the Scriptures:
      - 1) 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."
      - 2) 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: "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."
      - 3) Revelation 1:7: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."
      - 4) 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."
      - 5) 1 Corinthians 15:50-53: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."
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- 6) 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.”
- 7) 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.”
- b. His return will be as a thief—unannounced and unexpected [by the majority]. His coming is depicted as the coming of a thief because there will be no outward signs, but will occur with the abruptness and surprise characteristic of a thief.
  - 1) Matthew 25:36-39: “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?”
  - 2) 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6: “But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.”
- c. The heavens shall pass away with great noise.
  - 1) Paul spoke of a *third heaven* (2 Cor. 12:2—the eternal realm), which implies a first and a second heaven. The first heaven is the atmosphere above the earth where the birds fly (Gen. 1:20). The second heaven is outer space where the heavenly bodies are located (Isa. 13:10).
    - a) Genesis 1:20: “And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.”
    - b) Isaiah 13:10: “For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.”
  - 2) The heavens which will pass away with the Lord’s return are the physical heavens—the universe where the stars and planets are and the atmosphere where the birds fly. Similar phrases appear also in other passages:
    - a) James 1:10: “But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.”
    - b) Matthew 5:18: “For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”
    - c) Matthew 24:35: “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”
    - d) Luke 16:17: “And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.”
    - e) The heavens and earth are to pass away—will perish, or as the parallel thoughts in the passage describe it, will be burned up, will be dissolved. In each of these verbs, the heavens and the earth will cease to exist.
  - 3) The heavens will pass away with a great noise. “Accompanying its dissolution there will be ‘a great noise.’ The word thus translated is *rhoizedon*, an onomatopoeic term, in which the sound denotes the meaning. Its kindred noun, *rhoidsos*, was used in classical Greek of the whizzing of an arrow, the whirring rush of wings, the sound of the wind, and the murmur of waters. Here it describes the crash of dissolving worlds and the tremendous roar of flames as they consume the earth” (Woods, p.186).

- d. The elements shall melt with fervent heat.
    - 1) The elements are the basic components of a material object. There are more than 100 chemical elements known to exist in the universe. Scientific investigation has learned that matter is comprised of atoms, which are comprised of sub-atomic particles. Every particle of every material object will be destroyed.
    - 2) The same power that brought all physical matter into being has the ability to send it back into nothingness.
      - a) Hebrews 3:4: "For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God."
      - b) Hebrews 11:3: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."
      - c) The means which God states he will use in the destruction of all matter is fire. When this fire has done its work, there will be no residue remaining—there will be nothing material left.
  - e. The earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up.
    - 1) This clause expresses a complete thought, a full sentence. It has one verb (shall be burned up); it has a compound subject (the earth and the works therein). The earth will be burned up; the works that pertain to earth will be burned up.
    - 2) "Shall be burned up" is translated from one Greek word; it is used twelve times in the New Testament, including the following places:
      - a) Matthew 3:12: "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will **burn** up the chaff with unquenchable fire."
      - b) Matthew 13:40: "As therefore the tares are gathered and **burned** in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world."
      - c) Luke 3:17: "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will **burn** with fire unquenchable."
      - d) Acts 19:19: "Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and **burned** them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver."
      - e) Hebrews 13:11: "For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are **burned** without the camp."
      - f) The Greek word (*katakaio*) means "**to burn utterly.**"
    - 3) "From the use of this word in the New Testament there can be no doubt that Peter meant to convey the idea that the earth is to be burned up. Notice again the distinction between the use of the word *earth* and the word *world*. Peter does not say that the *world* is to be burned up, but that the *earth* is to be burned up" (ALC, 1956, p.332).
    - 4) "The works that are to perish in the fire which shall ultimately destroy the earth are those which belong to the earth and are characteristic of it, whether of God or man. Along with its dissolution there will be the burning of all that man has accomplished of a material nature—houses, cities, monuments, etc.—everything to which he has set his hand here. These, along with all of God's material creation, are to be dissolved, consumed in the heat of the mighty catastrophe" (Woods, p.187). The greatest buildings, even the Great Wall of China, will be destroyed.
    - 5) The earth and its works will all be burned up. The earth which gives an appearance of great permanence, and the works that pertain to the earth (including all that man has built) will be utterly removed by fire. The mechanics of this great conflagration are not stated. Some have speculated that man will be the instrument of this final catastrophe, with his bombs or other weapons of destruction, but we are not told how—we are only told that God's power would be the cause of
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it.

- f. Does Burned up Really Mean Burned Up? [Bob Duncan].
  - 1) The Premillennialists of a generation ago and the Zionists of more modern times all claim that Jesus is coming back to this earth and establish his kingdom hereon. When the statement in 2 Peter 3:10 is shown to them, they have no recourse but to deny that Peter really meant what he said, or that he really said what he meant. Peter's statement in 2 Peter 3:10 is as follows: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in 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."
  - 2) The real problem seems to be with the phrase, "burned up." The Zionist does not believe that "burned up" means "burned up"; because if "burned up" means "burned up," Jesus cannot establish his kingdom upon this earth when he comes again. Does "burned up" mean "burned up," or does it mean something else? The Zionist insists that "burned up" means "renovated" or "purified." Let us examine the matter carefully.
  - 3) The phrase, "burned up" is translated from the Greek *katakaio*, a word which is used a total of twelve times in the New Testament. It is used in Matthew 13:30, and also verse 40 to describe what would happen to the tares when they were separated from the wheat. It is used in Matthew 3:12 and Luke 3:17 to tell of the burning of the chaff when it is separated from the wheat. It is used in Acts 19:19 to tell of the burning of the many books in that great bonfire at Ephesus. When the tares were burned, were they just renovated? When the chaff was burned, was it just purified by the fire? When the books were brought together at Ephesus, were they just warmed by the fire? 1 Cor. 3:15; Heb. 13:11; Rev. 8:7 (twice); 17:16; and 18:8. In each of these cases it is clear that the word describes destruction by fire; and there is absolutely no cause to believe it means something different in 2 Peter 3:10.
  - 4) We are aware that there is a variation among the manuscripts at this passage. Some manuscripts have *eurethesetai* 'discovered,' instead of *katakaio*. But this adds no strength to the argument of the Zionist; for to "be discovered" does not mean to "be renovated" or to "be purified." Furthermore, we believe there is reason to agree with the following statements: "The reading 'shall be burned up' is well supported, and suits the context best" (The Pulpit Commentary). "We consider the variant reading...out of the line of thought" (R.C.H. Lenski).
  - 5) Incidentally, we have checked several different translations; and the only one we have personally examined at this passage which translates the variant reading is the one put out by the Jehovah's Witnesses. The New International Version, which is being used by a good many brethren, does not accurately translate either *eurethesetai* or *katakaio*. It says, "the earth and everything in it will be laid bare." This appears to be an attempt on the part of the NIV translators to insert their Zionistic theology into the text of the Bible. It is lamentable that the NIV translators stooped even lower at this point than did those of the Watchtower Society. At least the Watchtower Society translators did properly translate the less likely variation; while the NIV translators showed a preference for the less likely variation, and then supplied their own interpretation. We believe "burned up" means "burned up." [This article also appeared in Vol. 14, No. 1 of Words of Truth (Dec. 16, 1977).]
8. Verse 11: "*Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.*"
  - a. This is a logical application that grows out of the foregoing truth. In view of the fact that the earth and the universe are to be dissolved, how ought we to live? Literally, our citizenship should be of what country? To whom do we owe our greatest allegiance—to some earthly entity or to the Almighty?
  - b. We are elsewhere told that we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth—this world is not our primary abode.

- 1) Hebrews 11:13: "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 they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."
  - 2) 1 Peter 2:11: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul."
  - 3) 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."
- c. 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 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).
- 1) 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).
  - 2) 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.
    - d) 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).
- d. The word *ought* [*dei*] expresses obligation. Many in our nation today dislike the idea of obligation; but those who respect the Bible, gladly accept all of their God-given duties.
- 1) Luke 24:26: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"
  - 2) 1 Timothy 5:13: "And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not."
  - 3) Acts 19:36: "Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly."
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- 4) Luke 6:46: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"
  - 5) 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."
  - 6) 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."
  - 7) James 2:10: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."
  - 8) The two-fold obligation Peter specifies [holy living and godliness] includes and sums up all the duties and traits of living the Christian life.
  - e. Our obligations extend to holy living [holy conversation]. This is the lifestyle God requires; to live otherwise is to die lost.
    - 1) 1 Timothy 4:8: "For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."
    - 2) Titus 2:11-12: "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."
    - 3) Matthew 5:8: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."
    - 4) 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."
  - f. Our obligations extend to godly living. A godly life is a pious life, conduct of which God approves.
    - 1) 1 Corinthians 6:9-11: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."
    - 2) Galatians 5:19-23: "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."
  - g. "In view of the transitory nature of this world and all things that pertain to it, the children of God should cease their concern about it and fix their attention on matters that are eternal" (Woods, p.187). "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....For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 4:18; 5:1).
  9. Verses 12-13: "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." "Looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? But, according to his promise, we look for new
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heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (ASV).

- a. The apostle adds another attitude which should characterize faithful people of God: They are to be looking for and earnestly desiring the return of Christ.
    - 1) Our disposition is something like a worker who has been given certain work to do before his employer returns, and is diligent to finish the work assigned him, and perhaps doing even more than what was required.
    - 2) The attitude we are to cultivate is one of happily looking forward to our Lord’s return, and not live in dread of that occasion. It is such that we happily do the work assigned to us, and seek to do even more. Compare: “So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do” (Luke 17:10).
  - b. Peter states again the fact that the heavens and the elements will be dissolved and be melted with fervent heat. The fervent heat derives from the heavens being on fire with fervent heat. This fervent heat will dissolve and melt the materials out of which the universe and the earth were created. There will be nothing material that will remain. We are well familiar with the significance of *dissolve* and *melt*.
  - c. Notice that this occasion is said to be the “day of God.” In verse ten, Peter identified it as the “day of the Lord” [Christ]. In the context, therefore, the Lord (Christ) is also called God. This is one of those many passages which teach the deity of Jesus.
  - d. In keeping with the promises of God, we look for new heavens and a new earth.
    - 1) It is clear from the context that the heavens and the earth of our present circumstance will be gone forever, destroyed in the great conflagration at the Lord’s return. Despite the feeble attempts by the Watchtower Witnesses and others to pervert Peter’s words, the earth will not be restored and renewed. These so-called Witnesses claim that the earth will be “discovered” (not burned up). This is a plain repudiation of the inspired text.
    - 2) In this world, man lives on the earth and in the heaven—he walks on the earth and breathes the air of the first heaven (the atmosphere around him). In eternity, he will have a new earth and a new heaven—a reference to heaven itself.
  - e. “There are two words translated ‘new’ in the New Testament; one is prospective and indicates that which is young as opposed to old; the other is retrospective and points to that which is fresh in contrast to that which is worn out. It is the second of these (*kainos*) which is used here. The heavens and the earth which the apostle describes in this passage will be fresh and new, and not worn and old, as are the heavens and the earth which now exist” (Woods, p.188).
    - 1) In Matthew 9:17, both words are used: “Neither do men put new [*neos*] wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new [*kainos*] wine into new [*kainos*] bottles, and both are preserved.”
    - 2) Here, the new wine is recently made wine, yet to ferment, expand, pressure and break the old and dried skins used for bottles. The new skins or bottles are new in quality, not like the old skins but fresh and pliable, able to expand and fit for the new wine. The word new [*kainos*] is the adjective used in reference to Joseph’s tomb in which our Lord was buried (Matt. 27:60). This tomb was not necessarily new in that it was freshly hewn from rock, but was new in the sense that it had never been used—it was undefiled by the dead: “And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews’ preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand” (John 19:39-42).
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- 3) Peter speaks of the new heavens and new earth only in the sense of a new habitation for the saved, one prepared by the Lord and wherein dwells righteousness. It is a place new in quality, one that has never before been used by men. He does not intend that we think of this old sin-scarred earth with its millions of sinful memories, but tells of a special place that is new and fresh in quality, specially made and prepared by the Lord.
- 4) When the Lord spoke of the eternal abode of the redeemed, he described it as a place to which he would go (leave the earth to go there); he promised that he would go there to prepare a place for us; and that where he would go, there we would also be (John 14:1 ff). He left the earth (Acts 1:9-11) and ascended to heaven. Therefore, heaven will not be a refurbished earth. He promised to return to receive us in the air (1 Thess. 4:13-18) and that we would ever be with him. Thus, our eternal home will not be on earth.
- f. The new heavens and new earth will be a place where righteousness dwells. Righteousness is found where righteous people live. The new heavens and earth will be the abode of righteous people. "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).
  - 1) The new heavens and new earth (for us) will follow the destruction of the present heavens and earth; the earth that will be is not this one; the new heavens and new earth of necessity must be heaven itself.
  - 2) If the new heavens and new earth are simply refurbished and the earth will be "discovered," then the works will also be discovered: what are these works?
    - a) Colossians 1:21: "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled."
    - b) Romans 13:12: "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."
    - c) Galatians 5:19: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness."
    - d) 2 Peter 2:8: "For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds."
    - e) Jude 15: "To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."
    - f) 1 John 3:8: "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."
  - 3) How should we understand the passages which say the earth shall stand forever? (Psalms 78:69; 104:5; Eccl. 1:4). The Hebrew word *olam* is used, which means "age-lasting." The word is qualified by the nature of the object to which it applies. The word only means that the object will last as long as it is designed to last.
    - a) Exodus 12:14: "And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever." [The Passover was not intended to be in effect throughout the rest of time, but throughout the generations of Israel—during the time that the Law of Moses was God's operative system and Israel was God's special people].
    - b) Numbers 25:13: "And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel." [The Levitical priesthood was to last only as long as the nation of Israel remained part of God's plan; when that plan was fulfilled in the gospel system, the Mosaic



system was removed].

- 4) The Old Testament and the New Testament teach that the earth is not eternal:
    - a) Genesis 8:22: “While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.” [The earth will remain only for a limited period of time; this implies that it will cease to exist when that time arrives].
    - b) Matthew 24:35: “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”
    - c) Hebrews 1:11-12: “They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.”
    - d) 2 Peter 3:7-12: “But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, 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 which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? (NKJV).
  - g. Things equal to the same thing are equal to each other; our eternal hope [and reward] is in heaven; we will dwell in the new heavens and new earth; thus the new heavens and new earth is heaven.
    - 1) Matthew 5:12: “Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”
    - 2) 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.”
    - 3) 2 Corinthians 5:1: “For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”
    - 4) Hebrews 12:23: “To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.”
    - 5) Mark 16:19: “So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.”
    - 6) Hebrews 6:19: “Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.”
    - 7) Hebrews 10:20: “By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.”
    - 8) Colossians 1:5: “For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel.”
    - 9) 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.”
  - h. “From a careful consideration of the matters set forth in the foregoing passage, these facts seem to
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appear: (a) The present heavens and earth serve as a figure of the heavens and earth to follow. (b) The words ‘heavens and earth’ are not intended to embrace all of God’s material universe, but only that portion where his people dwell. (c) In the antitype, this limitation must be understood, and the words ‘new heaven and earth’ must then be regarded as a designation of where his people dwell, and not a detailed description of the future abode. (d) Heaven is the final abode of the people of God. (e) Therefore, the phrase ‘new heavens and new earth’ must be understood as a designation for *heaven!*” (Woods, p.189).

**B. Peter 3:14-18: Concluding Remarks.**

1. Verse 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.”
  - a. The events they were looking for were the great things the apostle has just discussed—the return of the Lord and the dissolution of the earth along with the universe. The brethren had been well-taught about the Bible doctrine of final things.
  - b. They were to strive earnestly (give diligence) to avoid the awful tragedies of being unprepared when that great day arrived. It was essential, if they wanted to be found in peace, that they should be found without spot and in a blameless condition. To be in peace with the Lord, we must also be at peace with our fellowman and our brethren in Christ.
  - c. To be at peace with God requires that we follow his will, not our own.
    - 1) Amos 3:3: “Can two walk together, except they be agreed?”
    - 2) John 15:14: “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”
  - d. To be at peace with others requires love for them, a willingness to go the second mile, and to be patient with them. There are some people who are unwilling to be at peace with us—those who hate the truth, despise the Lord’s church, and oppose godly living.
    - 1) Matthew 5:38-44: “Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. 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.”
    - 2) 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.”
    - 3) 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.”
    - 4) Romans 13:10: “Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”
    - 5) Romans 12:18: “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.” [This implies that there are some folks who are unwilling to be at peace with us, despite our best efforts].
  - e. To be without spot is to have no spiritual defilements on our soul; to be pure from and innocent of wrong-doing. We are without spot if we have obeyed the gospel and live in daily obedience to the requirements of the gospel.
    - 1) Acts 22:16: “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”
    - 2) 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.”
- 3) Hebrews 8:12: “For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”
  - 4) 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.”
- f. To be counted blameless is to be in an uncondemned state; we do not regularly commit some sin; when others examine our life, there is nothing blameworthy to be found.
- 1) Elders are to be blameless: “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” (1 Tim. 3:1-2).
  - 2) Colossians 1:22: “In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight.”
  - 3) 1 Thessalonians 3:13: “To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.”
  - 4) Luke 1:6: “And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.”
  - 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. “
2. Verse 15: “And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you.”
- a. We must not regard the passing of time as an indication that the Lord is slack in bringing punishment upon evildoers. He is not delaying; he has not changed the appointed time (Acts 17:30-31). Rather, we should view this as an example of the Lord’s long-sufferance, which offers to fallen man every opportunity to make the necessary changes. The longsuffering of the Lord should be accounted as salvation—in that it affords fallen man added occasions to obey the gospel.
    - 1) Romans 2:4: “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”
    - 2) 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.”
    - 3) 1 Timothy 2:4: “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”
    - 4) Ezekiel 18:31-32: “Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.”
    - 5) Deuteronomy 5:29: “O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!”
    - 6) 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.”
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- b. Peter wrote to Christians who lived in an area where Paul did much of his work: “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia” (1 Pet. 1:1; cf. 2 Pet. 3:1). Paul wrote to the churches in Galatia, Ephesus, *et al.* Both of these great apostles addressed the patience and long-sufferance of God.
  - c. “From this significant allusion to Paul, we learn that Peter was acquainted with the writings of that apostle; that he was on intimate terms with Paul, having addressed him as his beloved brother; and that he considered Paul’s writings as inspired and equally authoritative with his own” (Woods, p.190).
  - d. Peter affirms that the apostle Paul wrote according to the wisdom given to him. What Paul wrote was material inspired by the Holy Spirit; this material is described in the next verse as being part of the “Scriptures.” Both men wrote by the same Spirit.
    - 1) 1 Corinthians 2:9-12: “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.”
    - 2) 1 Corinthians 14:37: “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.”
    - 3) 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.”
    - 4) 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.”
  - 3. Verse 16: “As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.”
    - a. Paul in all of his epistles spoke on the same themes which Peter addressed. Paul taught on the great subjects of the Judgment (cf. 1 Thess. 3:12; 2 Thess. 1:6-9), the Resurrection (1 Cor. 15), Heaven (2 Cor. 5:1-10); and the end of the world (2 Thess. 2:1-12; 1 Cor. 15:21-28).
    - b. The information these two men recorded was given independently to each, yet there is perfect harmony in the material; both were inspired by the same Spirit. The same is true with all of the other inspired writers and speakers.
    - c. Peter, still writing by inspiration, acknowledges that there are some things in Paul’s material that are hard to understand. These are difficult to grasp because of the nature of the subjects. “Subjects of such profound import would obviously involve difficulties of interpretation, and the preconceived notions which the people had—particularly the Jews—added to the difficulties....if such were hard to be understood even by Peter, an inspired man, we need not despair if we find them difficult today. And if Peter, an inspired man, regarded them as difficult, it is utter folly to assume that any so-called successor of his could do any better with them” (Woods, p.191).
    - d. Any obligation we bear before God will be sufficiently clear that we can all understand it.
      - 1) John 7:17: “If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself” (ASV).
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- 2) John 8:32: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."
  - 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."
  - 4) 2 Timothy 3:15: "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."
  - 5) Ephesians 5:17: "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is."
  - 6) Ephesians 3:3-4: "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)."
- e. There are still some things difficult to comprehend, not only in Paul's epistles, but in Peter's also. The Bible speaks of the *milk* and the *meat* of the word, indicating the different subjects addressed in the Scriptures.
- 1) 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."
  - 2) 1 Peter 2:2: "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."
- f. Concerning these difficult subjects, Peter states that there are some individuals who wrest Paul's writings, as they do the other Scriptures.
- 1) The ignorant are those who have little or no knowledge of God's will. They may think they have a grasp of such things, but preconceived ideas and false doctrines can becloud their minds. Before one can comprehend the inspired text, he must be able to look at the material objectively, for if he has already made up his mind, he will be unable to see the truth.
  - 2) The unstable are those who have no definite convictions; they can be swayed in almost any direction; their current ideas depend on the one who last spoke with them.
  - 3) "It will be seen that those who wrest the scriptures to their own destruction are men who are uninstructed in the way of truth and who lack the stability of character necessary to espouse a position and hold it" (Woods, p.191).
- g. To *wrest* the scriptures is to "twist, to turn from the proper position, to torture, to pervert. It is used here of those who twist the scriptures from their intended purpose in order to make them teach matters never intended by the sacred writers" (Woods, *ibid.*).
- 1) Satan did that: "Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 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" (Matt. 4:5-10).
  - 2) 2 Corinthians 2:17: "For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." Here, Paul denies that he is like many who corrupt the word of God. Concerning the word *corrupt*, Lipscomb says: "The term was originally applied to tavern keeping, and extended to cover all the devices by which the wine sellers in ancient times deceived their customers. Then it was used figuratively as here, and of philosophers
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- of selling the sciences, and in most cases like tavern keepers, blending, adulterating, and giving short measure" (*Commentary on 2 Corinthians*, pp.44).
- a) One corrupts the word of God who adds to it, subtracts from it, or makes any changes to it (Rev. 22:18-19; Gal. 1:8-9; 2 John 9). Such is frequently done with regards to: the plan of salvation; the identity, organization, work and worship of the church; the nature of Christ; the nature and work of the Holy Spirit; the inspiration, the integrity and authority of the Scriptures; and the Bible doctrine of final things.
  - b) One corrupts the word of God by *watering-down* its requirements. One corrupts the word of God by failing to preach it all—the whole counsel of God.
  - c) Paul affirms the pureness of his motives, that they were sincere. He did not seek to make merchandise of either the Corinthians or the gospel. He preached it with sincerity; he wanted the best for the saints, and sought to serve God without hypocrisy. He recognized the awesome truth that all he did and said was in full view of Almighty God. If that knowledge did not make him sincere, nothing could. What he presented to them, therefore, was delivered by the authority and blessing of Christ. [From the author's commentary on 2 Corinthians].
- 3) Those who twist the scriptures to fit their own doctrines and purposes, do so at their own peril; they bring destruction upon their own souls. They will bring condemnation to themselves; they will be cast away from God in the Judgment. *Destruction* means "loss of well-being, not of being" [Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (c)1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers]. They will be consigned to *Gehenna* in eternity, with all the attendant agonies and losses which pertain to that condition.
4. Verse 17: "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."
- a. Other versions:
    - 1) ASV: "Ye therefore, beloved, knowing these things beforehand, beware lest, being carried away with the error of the wicked, ye fall from your own steadfastness."
    - 2) NKJ: "You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked."
  - b. Others have been led astray by false teachers; the apostle warns them that they should beware lest they also fall victim to these deceivers. Warning is thus given for the brethren to maintain vigilance lest they be carried away by the error of wicked men.
  - c. "This warning is significant only on the supposition that it is possible to fall. If, as some allege, it is impossible for a child of God to fall from grace, this warning is without force. The conclusion is irresistible that Peter's readers would escape the *destruction* of the wicked only by being constantly on their guard against the *seductions* of the wicked" (Woods, p.192).
  - d. These brethren to whom Peter wrote had been made steadfast; they had grown in the faith; but they could still fall victim to error and fall from their own steadfastness. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. 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. 10:12-13).
    - 1) Despite the evident strength of their faith and resolve, some have fallen victim to error. Barnabas and Peter had been led astray momentarily by the Judaizers who came to Antioch: "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
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- 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?" (Gal. 2:11-14).
- 2) During the American Revolutionary War, one of our ablest and most respected leaders was led to betray his own people. The name, Benedict Arnold, has become synonymous with treason.
5. Verse 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."
- a. Peter gives here the key to remaining faithful—grow in grace and knowledge. It is fitting that knowledge, being the keynote of the epistle, should be emphasized at the conclusion of the letter.
- b. "'Grace' is here used to sum up all the favor of God, which favor increases toward us as we advance in stature as his children....He is the divine giver of the grace in which Christians are to grow, and the object of the knowledge which they are to possess" (Woods, p.193). Jesus grew in favor with God and man (Luke 2:52); he grew in their approval.
- c. When we grow in God's grace, we grow in his approval—his favor. It pleases God when we make certain advances as revealed in his word.
- 1) It pleases God when we increase our faith: "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth" (2 Thess 1:3).
- a) Faith can grow in extent—the more truth we know, our faith becomes broader.
- b) Faith can grow in firmness; it can become unshakable.
- (1) 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."
- (2) Ephesians 4:14: "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."
- (3) Ephesians 6:16: "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."
- c) Faith can grow in depth:
- (1) Matthew 14:30: "But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me." [Peter's faith was weak at this point].
- (2) Romans 4:18: "Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be."
- (3) Acts 27:20, 25: "And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away....Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me."
- d) Only by a strong, unswerving faith can we face the storms of life.
- 2) It pleases God when we grow in love: "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth" (2 Thess 1:3).
- a) Love can become cold: "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Matt. 24:12).
- b) We can increase our love so nothing can separate us from the Lord: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" (Rom. 8:35).
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- c) Growing in love knits a congregation together:
    - (1) Colossians 2:2: "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ."
    - (2) Colossians 3:14: "And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness."
  - d) We should grow in love until we can pray for our enemies:
    - (1) Matthew 5:44: "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."
    - (2) Acts 7:60: "And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."
  - 3) It pleases God when we grow in hope: "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth" (2 Thess 1:3).
    - a) Hope relates to things we do not now have: "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).
    - b) Hope deals with the Second Coming, the resurrection, the Judgment, with heaven, and with eternal life.
    - c) Hope is the desire for these plus the expectation of receiving them.
    - d) We are to grow in hope until we can speak with conviction these statements:
      - (1) Ephesians 1:18: "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."
      - (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) 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."
    - e) We are to grow in hope until we can face death bravely and with anticipation:
      - (1) Philippians 1:23: "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better."
      - (2) Hebrews 6:19: "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."
      - (3) 2 Peter 3:12-15: "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. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you."
  - 4) It pleases God when we grow in humility: "But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God
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resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble” (Jas. 4:6).

- a) There are many Bible examples of humility:
    - (1) Psalms 84:10: “For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.”
    - (2) Ephesians 3:8: “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.”
  - b) We grow in God’s favor through humility:
    - (1) Matthew 5:3: “Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”
    - (2) 1 Peter 5:6: “Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.”
    - (3) Luke 18:9-14: “And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”
  - c) We cannot serve God acceptably without it.
  - d) Humility is demanded in dealing with our problems with others (1 Cor. 6:7); it keeps us from lashing out, being resentful, nursing wounds we receive.
  - d. “The doxology with which the epistle concludes ascribes glory to Christ forever, literally ‘to the day of eternity.’ The Greek phrase thus rendered, *eis hemeran aionos*, occurs only here in the sacred writings. It is proper to refer to eternity as a *day*, because it is indeed an everlasting one, without a yesterday to precede it, or a tomorrow to follow it” (Woods, p.193).
  - e. “This glorious epistle is a triumphant affirmation of a magnificent faith in Jesus Christ. Such a production is utterly beyond the power of any human being to forge....The entire epistle carries the inherent hallmarks of integrity, authenticity, yea more, the true ‘inspiration of the Holy Spirit’” (Coffman, p.352).
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