

1 & 2 PETER

for growing believers

17



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for growing believers

Bible Study Guide

From the leadership development ministry of

FELLOWSHIP BIBLE CHURCH MISSIONS

Acknowledgments

The lesson outlines and notes in this booklet are based on New Tribes Mission's method of chronologically teaching scripture and were prepared by Tim McManigle, Director of FBC Missions and Scott McManigle. Special thanks to Lisa Grams for editing.

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Progression Toward Maturity

- **Phase 1 – Relationship with God** – (Rev. 4:11; 1 Cor. 1:9) – Call of God is first to Himself - “Creation to Christ” - (Foundation for salvation)
- **Phase 2 – Position with Christ** (1 Cor. 1:30a) **New Creation** (2 Cor. 5:17) – “Positioned in Christ” and “New Birth Explained” – (Foundation for Sanctification)
- **Phase 3 – Dependence upon the Spirit** – (2 Cor. 3:17-18) – (Holy Spirit is the Spirit-of-Truth – John 16:13-14) – **Introduction of the Church** - (Church is the Pillar and foundation of Truth – 1 Tim. 3:15) - “Acts for Growing Believers”
- **Phase 4 – Practical sanctification** - **Identification with Christ/Co-crucified with Christ/ Conformed to image of Christ** – (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 8:28-29) – Romans to Revelation for Growing Believers, “Principles of Spiritual Growth”, God’s Masterpiece the Cross,” and “Looking unto Jesus” lessons
- **Conclusion – Recommended order of study**

Detailed Explanation of Each Phase

Phase 1 – Foundation for Salvation - (“Creation to Christ”)

The Christian life is a relationship; therefore our desire is to lead our readers into a deep and intimate relationship with God. In order to grow into that level of relationship with God, there are foundational truths that must be clearly taught and understood. These foundational truths include the following;

- The attributes of God - His love, power, grace, omniscience, omnipotence, justice, immutability, hatred of sin, faithfulness.
- The sinfulness of man, his helplessness to save himself, and his need for a Savior.
- Only God can provide a way of salvation
- The Gospel.

Phase 2 – Foundation for Sanctification - (“Positioned in Christ” and “The New Birth Explained”)

The moment someone is born again, there is an immediate change of position that takes place in his or her life. At that very moment, one becomes a child of God, and is taken out of Adam and placed into Christ. All that Christ is, and all that Christ has, becomes ours. Therefore, before service to God is considered, one must be grounded in an understanding of who we are in Christ. Some important foundational truths that should be emphasized in phase 2 teaching, includes the following;

- Placed into Christ
- Justified (declared righteous) and accepted in Christ.
- Child of God
- Restored to oneness with God
- Eternally secure in Christ
- His Divine power has given to us all things pertaining to life and godliness through His finished work on the cross.
- Our part is to believe.

Phase 3 – Dependence upon the Spirit and introduction of the church – (“Acts for Growing Believers”)

The position change that takes place in every believer's life at salvation, is immediate and complete. The daily "living out" of that position, on the other hand, is a growth process. It is the progression of growth that the Holy Spirit is working all believers through in His process of conforming us to the image of Christ.

In order for believers to move on to maturity, we must learn to walk and depend upon the Holy Spirit. Therefore, our purpose in phase 3 teaching is to reveal the Holy Spirit's ministry, and His faithfulness to lead, guide, feed, and protect God's children, as well as to introduce the church. Some of the important foundational truths that should be emphasized include the following.

- The Holy Spirit's ministry to lead, guide, feed, protect, and establish us in truth.
- To emphasize the FAITHFULNESS of the Spirit to fulfill all that Jesus promised.
- To reveal the early church's dependence upon the Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit is as faithful in our lives today, as He was to the early church in the book of Acts.
- Introduction of the church and her role.

Phase 4 – Practical sanctification; Identification with Christ; Conformed to the image of Christ – (“Romans to Revelation for Growing Believers,” Principles of Spiritual Growth, God’s Masterpiece the Cross of Christ,” and “Looking Unto Jesus” lessons.)

The Holy Spirit is teaching us to walk less in the flesh and more in the Spirit, with Christ becoming more and more the object of our hearts.

In phase 4, we will study through the epistles with the purpose of learning to rest in our identification with Christ and His finished work. As we, by faith, begin to appropriate identification truths, our co-crucifixion with Christ, our lives will become more and more conformed to the image of Christ, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit.

Some of the important truths that will be emphasized in Phase 4 includes the following.

- The believer's identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. (Crucified with Him, and raised to newness of life)
- Sanctification is the process of walking less and less in the flesh and more and more in the Spirit.
- Our part in the process is faith in the finished work of Christ, and our identification with it.
- What it means to truly walk in the Spirit
- Putting off the old and putting on the new.
- Manifesting the life of Christ/ fruit of the Spirit.

Conclusion: Recommended Order of Study:

Being that there truly is a progression of growth that the Holy Spirit is taking all believers through, therefore our Bible lessons have been developed and arranged to line up with that work of the Spirit in our lives. Each set of lessons contain the foundational truths that must be in place in a person's heart in order to facilitate their growth unto the next stage of spiritual growth. Therefore, we believe that it is important to teach the lessons in the following order:

1. Creation to Christ
2. Positioned in Christ
3. *Acts for growing believers*

4. Romans *for growing believers*
5. Ephesians *for growing believers*
6. 1 Corinthians *for growing believers*
7. 1 Timothy *for growing believers*
8. Titus *for growing believers*
9. 1 & 2 Thessalonians *for growing believers*
10. Revelation *for growing believers*
11. Galatians *for growing believers*
12. Colossians *for growing believers*
13. 2 Corinthians *for growing believers*
14. Philippians *for growing believers*
15. Philemon *for growing believers*
16. 2 Timothy *for growing believers*
17. 1 & 2 Peter *for growing believers*
18. 1, 2 & 3 John *for growing believers*
19. Hebrews *for growing believers*
20. James *for growing believers*
21. Jude *for growing believers*
22. The Old Testament *for mature believers*
23. Acts through Revelation, *verse by verse for mature believers*

I PETER FOR GROWING BELIEVERS

LESSON 1

A. Introduction

- Peter's epistles were written primarily in accord with his special ministry to the Jewish people. *"(For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)* Galatians 2:8
- Peter was primarily writing to Christian Jews who were scattered abroad from the persecution (**Acts 8:1**).
- I Peter is an epistle that depicts the believer's journey from the cross to glory, and the trials and affliction that one must endure as we travel our pilgrimage through this life to our inheritance in heaven.
- Therefore, Peter testifies that *"this is the true grace of God where in we stand"* (**I Peter 5:12**).
- Peter is not speaking of saving grace, but the grace of God that is ministered each day and enables Christians to stand against the schemes of the enemy and the trials of life (**Romans 5:2; Ephesians 6:11**).
- Peter perceives that it is normal for believers to undergo affliction while pressing on toward their inheritance that is laid up for them in heaven.
- It is possible to actually rejoice in the privilege of suffering for Him who redeemed us with His own blood, because it is through the suffering that we are matured (**I Peter 5:10**).

B. Suffering

- Today, among Christians, there is much misunderstanding regarding suffering and therefore, we avoid it at all costs.
- We must understand that suffering is the fruit of the fall. Because of sin, we live in a fallen world, in cursed bodies that experience pain, sickness, and death. Keep in mind that trusting in Christ does not guarantee any change in our physical circumstances in this life.
- We must also understand that enduring trials and suffering is a natural part of this life (**I Peter 2:21-23**).



- Jesus suffered severely on our behalf. Our suffering gives us a glimpse of what He endured for us.
- And God's Word also teaches that oftentimes God uses our suffering to keep us from sin (**1 Peter 4:1; 2 Corinthians 12:7**).
- God uses suffering to perfect His children (**Hebrews 12:6-11**).
- If our suffering is truly out of faithfulness to His name and devotion to His cause, we will sense a special fellowship with Him while remaining in the place that rejected Him and still hates His testimony. However, the outcome is sure and will make us forget about the momentary affliction (**2 Corinthians 4:17**).
- Becoming a believer does not free us from many of sin's consequences, as the Adamic curse has not been yet lifted.
- Also, the believer will find that the world to which he once belonged has now become a scene of hostility because of his association with Christ.
- We must also realize the difference between suffering WITH Christ (**Romans 8:17**), and suffering FOR Christ (**Acts 5:41**).
- All Christians suffer with Him because we are partakers of the divine nature and therefore experience the adverse conditions through which we are called to pass.
- But suffering for Him may include bearing shame and reproach even to persecution and death for Christ's name (**Acts 9:16**).
- Paul wrote in Galatians 2, that after consultation with the church leaders in Jerusalem, it was decided that Peter should go to the Jews and Paul to the Gentiles.
- In the book of Romans, Paul wrote that there was neither Jew nor Gentile, but all had become one in Christ.
- 1 Peter is an epistle for afflicted believers; even though Peter was writing primarily to believing Jews, but still the truths which he has written, are applicable for the entire body of Christ, just as Paul's writings are also for believing Jews who are a part of the body.
- No one knows exactly when Peter wrote his epistles, but most conclude that it was approximately 66-67A.D. It is evident from **2 Peter 3:15-16**, that at least some of Paul's epistles were already in circulation and accepted by the time of Peter's writings.

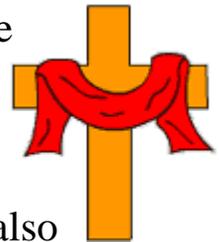


I PETER FOR GROWING BELIEVERS LESSON 2

A. Peter's Greeting

“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.” I Peter 1:1-2

- Peter was writing to the scattered Jews who had placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as their Savior.
- He states that these Jewish believers are “elect;” meaning they are chosen by God.
- *“According to the foreknowledge of God.”* God always knew that He would choose these believers through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of molding them into the image of Christ.
- God’s ultimate purpose for all of His children is Christ-likeness (**Romans 8:28-29**).
- At salvation and through the finished work of Christ we are placed into Christ, and given a position of holiness before God.
- As we rest in, and appropriate by faith what has already been done for us, it will become our daily experience, thereby also producing obedience. **Romans 1:5** makes clear that obedience is a fruit of faith.



“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,” I Peter 1:3

- Peter writes that God should be thanked and praised because according to His great mercy, He has brought us into a new existence.
- Because of God’s abundant grace (giving of what is not deserved), He has given us a new and true, living hope that was provided for and is dependent upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- Christ's resurrection proves that God was satisfied with Christ's payment of death, and thereby making available to us everything that His Word states will be accomplished by His death.
- Had God not been satisfied, Christ would have remained in the grave.

B. An Inheritance

“To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:” I Peter 1:4-8

- In **Romans 8:17**, Paul wrote that we are joint heirs with Jesus. Everything that He is and everything that He has is ours.
- Peter wrote that our inheritance is “incorruptible;” it is undecaying and can neither lose its existence nor its effect on us.
- Peter also wrote that our inheritance is undefiled which means that it is pure or unsoiled. Because it is from God and was obtained by Christ on our behalf; man had nothing to do with it, therefore, it can never become contaminated.
- He wrote that it does not fade away, but is being reserved in heaven for us.
- It is perpetual and will never lose its authenticity or become watered down in its effect on man.
- It is reserved for us in heaven. What can be more sure and long lasting than that which is kept in heaven?
- Beginning in verse 5, Peter shifts his focus from the believer's inheritance to the believer.



- Believers are kept secure by the power of God through faith unto salvation.
- The Jewish believers that Peter was writing to were under much persecution. Peter wanted to encourage them by stating that their salvation was sure, for it was guarded by the very power of God.

- The keeping of their salvation was not determined by their own effort or strength, which gave great reason to rejoice.
- The many and difficult circumstances that these believers were going through was for the purpose of perfecting their faith.
- Trials/difficulties are used and often orchestrated by God to perfect our faith. In **James 1:1-3** we read that the *“trying/perfecting of our faith produces endurance and let endurance have its perfect work that we become mature, complete, lacking nothing”* (**I Peter 5:10**).
- In the flesh, our focus will be on our circumstances and our attitudes will be accordingly.
- Paul said that faith is more precious than gold.
- What makes gold so precious is its rarity, however true faith, that anchors the heart even in the midst of trials and hardship, is even more rare and precious than gold.
- Peter said that to have such faith, in the midst of trials, will result in praise and honor at the return of Christ.
- Peter also wrote that even though these believers had not physically seen Jesus, still they loved him and rejoiced with unspeakable joy.
- In the Spirit, Christ will be the occupation of our hearts and not our circumstances. Therefore, it will be possible for believers to rejoice while enduring difficult trials, for it is Christ and who we are in Him which will be the focus of our hearts.



C. Be Holy

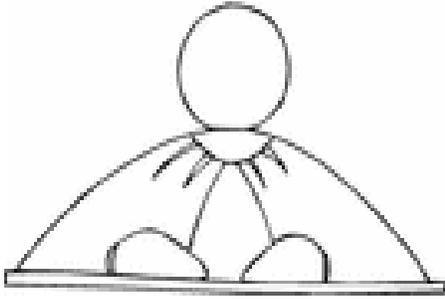
“Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” I Peter 1:13-16

- Peter said that since all these things were true and we have received such an awesome salvation, we should gird or prepare afresh our thoughts and be sober-minded, which strongly implies that one is spiritually-minded (walking in the Spirit).

- The flesh has its root and origin in Satan, and Satan is the master deceiver; therefore, any time we are carnally minded, we are deceived and therefore not sober-minded; nor will we set our hope (confident expectation) solely upon the grace of God that will be fully manifested at the coming of Jesus Christ.
- Peter goes on to say that we are no longer to walk in the flesh, carrying out our lustful desires, as we once did prior to salvation, but rather we are to live faith-filled, obedient lives.
- It was God who called us to Himself and is holy and He has provided everything pertaining to life and godliness (**2 Peter 1:3**). Therefore we now have the ability to be holy in all manner of living, in every area of our lives.
- Currently, God is taking us through the process of teaching us to walk less in the flesh and more in the Spirit, thereby conforming us more to the image of Christ; He is making us holy, because He is holy.
- In **Genesis 1:26**, man was made in God's image after His likeness. However, after the fall, we are told that man was "born after Adam's kind" (**Genesis 5:3**). We were born separated from God with a sinful, human nature.
- Now in Christ, we have been re-born after His kind (**I Peter 1:15**).

D. Be Holy

“And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.” I Peter 1:17-25



- All those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ will one day find themselves before the judgment seat of Christ, where each man's work will be judged without partiality for the good deeds that Christ did in and through them.
- Therefore, pass your time in this life with awesome respect for God.
- We have not been redeemed with something corruptible; silver or gold or even by the useless traditions that our forefathers taught us.
- We have been redeemed/bought by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Since we know that we have been bought with something so precious, we should be convinced that God is taking all of this seriously.
- In God's eyes it is no light matter, for His children, who have been bought by the blood of God the Son, to live selfish, carnal lives.
- God takes it all extremely serious, for it was paid for by the blood of God, the Son.
- Peter also said that the "seed" from which our salvation springs forth, is the Word of God, which is incorruptible and will abide forever (**John 1:1**).
- Everything in this life upon which man glories, will fade away, but the Word of God will abide forever.
- Therefore, the importance of God's Word and its appropriation in our lives is great.

I PETER FOR GROWING BELIEVERS LESSON 3

A. Put Away Sin

“Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.” I Peter 2:1-3

- How are these things laid aside or put off? Galatians 5:16: **“Walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”**
- As we mature to walk more in the Spirit and less in the flesh, we will lay aside more often the deeds of the flesh and manifest more the fruit of the Spirit, having more of a hunger for knowing God and His Word.



B. The Cornerstone

“To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.” I Peter 2:4-8



- Christ was rejected by men, but was the chosen of God to be the cornerstone of His Church.
- We believers, are precious stones added to the building of the Church.
- Our purpose in this life, as the “building of God” is to manifest His presence in the world and to offer up spiritual sacrifices, which are works done in the Spirit.

- The world rejects Christ, but those who place their faith and trust in Him will not be ashamed.
- Unbelievers often attempt to shame Christians, but ultimately, it will be them who are ashamed.

C. His Children

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.” I Peter 2:9-10

- God has called us unto Himself and made us His children; His possession so that our lives will show forth His excellencies.
- Before, we were spiritually dead and on our way to hell; but today, we are God’s people, who have been freely given the grace and mercy of God, including eternal life with Him.
- He took people who were all wrong and deserved punishment, and bestowed His grace upon them thereby making us His children so that we might manifest the excellencies of His grace to a lost and dying world.

D. A Fallen World

“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.” I Peter 2:11-12

- This world is fallen and sinful; as God’s children, positionally we are not considered citizens of this world, but rather citizens of heaven (**Philippians 3:20**), thereby making us strangers and pilgrims on earth who are merely passing through.
- As we walk in the Spirit, we will walk through life as strangers; who are different from the people who reside here.

- Walking in and fulfilling the deeds of the flesh (**Galatians 5:19-21**), is characteristic of those who are citizens of this world.
- However, even though unbelievers speak against Christians as evil doers, as we continue to walk in the Spirit, our crucified lives will draw some to Him, which ultimately will glorify God at the coming of Christ.

E. Obey Authorities

“Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.” I Peter 2:13-16

- As we live out the Christ-life (**Galatians 2:20**), our obedience to the authorities that God has placed over us will be a testimony to the rest of the world, which will ultimately silence the evil reports of the unbelievers.
- As we walk in the Spirit and live out the Christ-life, Peter said that we are to obey as free men and not to use our freedom as a license for further ungodliness (**Galatians 5:13**).
- We have been set free from the power of sin to be the servants of God.

“Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. 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.” I Peter 2:17-25

- What Peter is describing here is the difference between life in the Spirit and life in the flesh.
- In the flesh, we are unable to truly love and honor anyone except ourselves, nor would we be able to endure suffering as Peter describes because our focus is on self and our rights and desires.
- However, in the Spirit, Christ will be the object of our heart and we will rest upon the finished work of Christ, and our lives will manifest the fruit of the Spirit.
- In the Spirit, circumstances will not be the controlling factor regarding the attitudes of our hearts. Like Christ, our trust will be in God, who judges rightly.
- In the flesh, we judge unjustly; we attack and seek revenge on people for doing some of the same things that we ourselves do to others.
- Ultimately, Christ entrusted Himself to God and His will to accomplish God's purposes in his life.
- As we grow spiritually, we will have the same mindset, entrusting our lives into God's hands, desiring only to be used as He sees fit and trusting that through all circumstances, God will use it all for His glory.

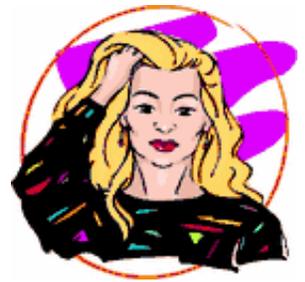
I PETER FOR GROWING BELIEVERS

LESSON 4

A. Instruction For Women

“Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.” I Peter 3:1-6

- Keep in mind that the key ingredient to this instruction is for wives to walk in the Spirit. In the Spirit, Christ will be the object of a woman’s heart and it will be possible for her to live out Peter’s instructions. In the flesh, she will focus on herself and her appearance, etc.



B. Instruction For Men

“Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.” I Peter 3:7



- Peter now gives instruction to husbands, and tells them to dwell with their wives according to knowledge (KJV)/live with them in an understanding way (NAS)
- God made men and women to be different and have different roles in the home. He made men to be the servant-leading, spiritual head of the home and the wife to be his help-mate completer.
- The man was made to be stronger in many ways; physical, emotional and in personality so that he could be the provider and protector of the home. His wife needs his understanding, protection and loving kindness.

- It is also important for men to keep in mind that their wives have been made “joint heirs of the grace of life.” Equal grace is available to both the husband and wife.
- And then Peter writes, “*that your prayers be not hindered.*”
- If men are not dwelling with their wives in an understanding way and not watching over and protecting them, they are walking in the flesh, even though they may spend time in prayer, their own selfish desires will be the object and therefore, their prayers will not be according to the will of God.
- We know from **I John 5:14-15**, if our prayers are not according to the will of God, they will be hindered.

C. Christian Living

“Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.” I Peter 3:8-12

- Peter now gives more characteristics of the Christ-life and how to live it.
- Again, this is only possible as we walk in the Spirit, for in the flesh, we only care for ourselves.
- Peter explains that if we walk in the Spirit, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit, no matter what life brings, whether good or bad, it will result in blessing our lives.
- God hears and will answer the supplications (humble request) of the righteous (those who are walking in the Spirit). But those who do evil (walking in the flesh) are in conflict with Him and God’s purpose in their lives will be to show them their carnality.

“And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope

that is in you with meekness and fear: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.” I Peter 3:13-16

- In the flesh, our focus is earthly, seeking after the pleasures and comforts of this life.
- However, in the Spirit, Christ is the occupation of our heart, and we will be most concerned about abiding in Him and proclaiming Him to others.
- There will always be those who hate us because we are Christians, but as Christ is lived out in our lives, we will give them no cause for their evil accusations.

“For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing. For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. 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: Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him” I Peter 3:17-22

- Christ is our example and He suffered for well doing, not for evil doing.
- Christ suffered because of our sin; the righteous for the unrighteous, so that He might bring us to God.
- Therefore, as we rest in our co-crucifixion with Christ and walk in the Spirit, no matter what people do and say, our goal should always be to see them brought to God.
- In the Spirit, we will willingly endure evil for the sake of bringing others to Christ.

I PETER FOR GROWING BELIEVERS LESSON 5

A. God's Purpose

“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: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you: Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit.” I Peter 4:1-6

- God's purpose in our lives is to conform us more to the image of Christ (**Galatians 4:19**).
- This process begins through our “struggling in the flesh.” The more we walk in the flesh and fail, the more we come to realize that our only hope is through our co-crucifixion with Christ.
- The only solution that God's Word gives for overcoming the flesh on a daily basis is found in **Romans 6:6**; we are crucified with Christ (**Galatians 2:20**).

B. Walk in the Spirit

“But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 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 forever and ever. Amen.” I Peter 4:7-11

- Again, the exhortation is to walk in the Spirit, manifesting what should be characterizing our lives.

- We have the power and desire to live with the realization that soon the Lord will return and take us to be with Him; for everyone who has not believed, it will be too late.
- Therefore, all that we do and say and all of our prayers should be with the goal of reaching the lost and seeing them brought to Christ.
- Only as we walk in the Spirit, will we manifest the love of Christ, dying to ourselves, being hospitable and serving others (**2 Corinthians 4:10-12**).
- In the Spirit, the love of God will cover sin; we will look past the sinfulness of others to a lost soul that is heading for hell (**Proverbs 10:12**).
- Each of us has, by God's grace, been gifted with an enablement to be used by the Lord to serve the body of Christ.
- As we walk in the Spirit, we will function in the body where we have been placed and according to our giftedness.
- As we walk in the Spirit and function according to His will, God will be glorified.



C. Persecution and Trials

“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.” I Peter 4:12-19

- We should not be surprised when people speak evil of us and persecute us for being Christians.

- We live in a world that rejected Christ, therefore, as His followers, we, too, will be rejected (**John 17:14**).
- But because we are His followers, on the day that He returns to gather His Church unto Himself, our rejoicing on that day will far exceed the amount of suffering that we are currently enduring in this life (**Romans 8:18**).
- Peter wrote that if we are reproached because of the name of Christ; if people are persecuting us because we are Christians, then we must be living a life that clearly reveals Christ.
- But, in the flesh, our lives will look no different from the unbelievers; they may be unaware that we are Christians.

I PETER FOR GROWING BELIEVERS LESSON 6

A. Instructions For Church Leaders

“The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” I Peter 5:1-4

- Here we have Peter's instructions to those who are leading the church.
- He exhorts them to tend the flock that the Lord has given to them.



- In the flesh, leaders will lead with wrong motives; seeking recognition, position, money, or power.
- Keep in mind that in the flesh, it is impossible for a leader's life to manifest the

love and life of Christ.

- However, in the Spirit, a leader will desire to lead with a sincere heart according to the will of God and because it is God's will.
- Christians are to be servant-leaders whose lives match their message (**Mark 10:42-45**).



B. Submit To One Another

“Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” I Peter 5:5-7

- In the flesh, we care for ourselves, seek our desire, and are often inflated with self-importance.

- We are unwilling to submit one to another, as it makes others look more intelligent, wise, and knowledgeable than ourselves.
- But, Peter makes clear that we should be girded (supported) by humility, which should govern all of our interactions with people.
- Peter writes that God resists man's fleshly pride, but gives grace/favor to the humble.
- God will not bless our prideful ways, as that would only tend to strengthen our pride and independence.
- But, to the humble He gives grace, unmerited favor.
- When we walk in Spirit-produced humility, and live our lives resting in God's sovereign power, we will cast all of our cares upon Him, trusting, resting, and depending upon Him to bring about in our lives what He desires and in His time.

C. Be Sober-minded

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.” I Peter 5:8-9



- Peter writes that Satan is seeking those he may devour; those who are vulnerable.
- Satan can't force destruction upon our lives. He doesn't grab us by the hand and force us to sin; he tempts, accuses and deceives.
- One of his main tactics is to cast a seed of doubt regarding truth.
- If we are walking in the flesh, we are one of the vulnerable ones that he seeks to devour, for in the flesh we will believe his lies and no longer stand upon the truth of God's Word.
- Peter writes that Satan is to be resisted by faith through the finished work of Christ and all that He has obtained on our behalf.

“But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” I Peter 5:10-11

- The whole process of going through trials, struggles and difficulties, learning to walk less in the flesh and more in the spirit, is a process that will go on throughout our lives, and is a part of God’s perfecting us; conforming us more into the image of Christ.
- Notice Peter writes that it is God who is doing this work. It is not our responsibility to make ourselves grow spiritually, but His, as we continue to walk by faith in the finished work of Christ.

D. Peter’s Closing Comments

“By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand. The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son. Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.” I Peter 5:12-14

- Through all that comes into our lives, God is working to conform us more to the image of Christ.
- Sometimes we walk in the flesh and become consumed with the difficult circumstances, but life is not about our circumstances; it’s about what God is doing and His ultimate purpose of conforming us to the image of His Son.
- Peter said, ***“This is the true grace of God; stand ye fast therein.”***

2 PETER FOR GROWING BELIEVERS

LESSON 1

A. Introduction

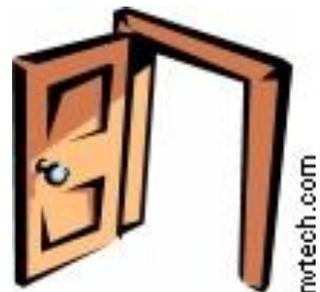
- It is unclear how much time elapsed between the writing of I Peter and 2 Peter, but many believe that it was a rather short period.
- At the time that Peter wrote this second letter, it is believed that Paul was either already with the Lord, or very close to martyrdom, for in **2 Peter 3:15-16**, Peter alludes to the fact that Paul's writings were already in circulation.
- 2 Peter is focused more on the future and what we believers can expect and how we are to proceed.
- The key word in this letter is "knowledge" and is used 13 times.
- It's important to note that Peter wrote this epistle knowing that he would soon be martyred, therefore he wanted to warn believers of the oncoming flood of error and apostasy that would sweep over Christendom.



- Peter's logic is simple: he first brings to our attention the blessings that are ours in Christ and the importance of growing in grace. Only then will we be able to stand against the oncoming evils that will threaten the church and shake the foundations of our faith.

“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: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,” 2 Peter 1:1-2

- Peter refers to believers as those who have “obtained faith in (through) the righteousness of our God.”
- Because of the finished work of Christ, God has, according to His righteousness, opened the door to salvation for all who believe.
- The phrase, “like precious faith with us” refers to the object of all believers’ faith, not the amount of faith. Peter and the apostles had the same kind of faith as



Christians do today; dependence upon the finished work of Christ.

- Peter writes, “*grace to you, and peace be multiplied by a full knowledge of God.*”
- God’s grace and peace will only be experienced to the degree that we know God and our Savior Jesus Christ, and His finished work on our behalf.
- The only solution we have to all of our worries, fears, and problems is found in the finished work of Christ (Christ died for me, I died with Christ; the Spirit is in control).
- If we are not mindful and do not have understanding of God’s solution, this can only result in worry, turmoil and a lack of peace
- In the flesh, we will trust and depend upon many other things (money, alcohol, drugs, sex, etc.) to find peace. Some of these things may seem to provide peace and joy for a short time (**Hebrews 11:25b**), but in the end will only let us down.

B. The Divine Nature

“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” 2 Peter 1:3- 4

- God’s divine power has given to us everything that is needed in order to live a godly life. As we grow in the knowledge and understanding of what He has done, we will begin to see the extent of His grace and the more our hearts will become calmed and stabilized regardless of our circumstances.
- However, if we don’t know God and all that His divine power has provided, we will not understand His grace and our hearts will become unstable as we focus on our circumstances.
- Verse 4 is very clear: the way to escape the corruption in this world is to become more like Christ (partake of His divine nature).
- We partake or experience the divine nature by knowing of, and believing in the “very great and precious promises,” which are found only in Christ (**2 Corinthians 3:18**).
- God’s provision, which makes it possible for man to be a partaker of “His divine nature” is promised, and provided in Christ, and in Him alone.

- If we want to experientially escape the lust that is in the world and be a partaker of the divine life of Christ, our only hope is to rest in the finished work of Christ and the fact of our identification with it; at salvation, we were positionally placed into Christ, and therefore crucified, resurrected and seated with Him at the right hand of the Father.

C. The Fruit of Living Faith

“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.” 2 Peter 1:5-11

- Peter is describing the “fruit of living by faith.” If we are truly experiencing a deliverance from the lust of our flesh and partaking of the divine nature, these characteristics will begin to characterize our lives.
- Along with growing in our knowledge of God and receiving God’s grace, peace, everything pertaining to life and Godliness, as well as His divine nature, Peter exhorts believers to earnestly consider the following:
- As we grow into Christ-likeness, to our faith will be added:
 - ***Virtue** (valor or excellence or purity).
 - ***Knowledge:** In order to live the Christian life, we must know who we are in Christ and what Christ has done for us before we can reckon them so.
 - ***Self control:** Self control is a fruit of the Spirit and increases as we grow consistently and steadily into Christ-likeness.
 - ***Patience:** Joyful endurance, constancy, patient continuance. Patiently enduring with joy comes as we grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ and is the fruit of the Spirit (**Colossians 1:11**).
 - ***Godliness:** “God-likeness” is not man imitating God, but rather God reproducing Himself in a man. God is not in a hurry and does not provide shortcuts to godliness. He is working from eternity and to eternity. As we

understand this and settle into this truth, we will be enabled to patiently endure with joy the life-long process of growing into God-likeness.

***Brotherly kindness:** fraternal affection or brotherly love will enable us to patiently endure the rate of another's spiritual advance. If we truly love our brothers, then we will desire for them to succeed. There will not be competitive and jealous hearts (**Philippians 2:3-4**).

***Charity:** True biblical love is not a feeling nor is it self-centered. It comes from God and gives to others expecting nothing in return (**I Corinthians 13:4-7; I Corinthians 12:15**).

- Peter went on to say that if these qualities are found in abundance in any Christian's life, that person will not be idle or unfruitful in his knowledge of God.
- To say that we know God and yet not be motivated in these things is to have dead, idle and inactive faith.



- If we buy a new vehicle because it's nice and new, we don't want to drive it because we don't want to get it dirty, then what use is it? Even though we have the vehicle, the fact that we won't use it makes it just as if we don't have it.
- Our faith and knowledge of God can be seen in a similar way. If all we have in Christ does not motivate and empower us to increase in these listed characteristics, then our faith and knowledge is idle, inactive, and not genuine.
- Peter goes on to say that in this situation, not only is our faith and knowledge inactive and idle, but we are blind and shortsighted, not remembering our cleansing of past sins.
- If we are not motivated to spiritual growth and a manifestation of these qualities in our lives, then we are not seeing the entire picture of salvation, but rather a narrow, self-centered view of salvation and all that we have been given in Christ.
- Titus writes that the "grace of God teaches to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live holy in this present age" (**Titus 2:11-12**).
- If we are not being motivated to live as such, then we don't have a clear view of what we've been saved from and freed unto by the grace of God.
- Peter exhorts believers to walk in and manifest these characteristics (virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience, Godliness, brotherly kindness, and love), for if they truly characterize our lives, it is proof that we are partaking of the

divine nature; proving the transformation that our salvation has provided for us.

D. A Reminder

“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.” 2 Peter 1:12-15

- These truths are so important that Peter communicates to his readers that he has a continual desire to always be reminding them; and even more so now that his death was imminent.
- The same is true today. Even though we have heard these truths and know them to be true, we can never be reminded too often. It is easy to revert back to walking in the flesh and once again lose sight of the deeper truths of God’s Word (**Ephesians 4:17-19**).

“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 honor 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 spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” 2 Peter 1:16-21

- Peter explains why Scripture is so important and worthy of our continual remembrance; because it is true.
- Even though we have not seen the things that the Scriptures proclaim with our own eyes, Peter says that he did. He was an eyewitness of the majesty of Christ and this is not a cleverly devised story.

- He was there on the Mount of transfiguration and heard God's voice with his own ears.
- We live in a day and age when deception abounds and man doesn't know what to believe; but we will do well to believe the testimony that is being passed down to us by those who have seen these things firsthand.
- The day is coming when we will be in heaven and will see all things clearly.
- But even though at this time we have not seen for ourselves, still we know that all Scripture is inspired by the Spirit and is from God, and therefore can be believed just as confidently as if we had been there ourselves (**2 Timothy 3:16**).

2 PETER FOR GROWING BELIEVERS

LESSON 2

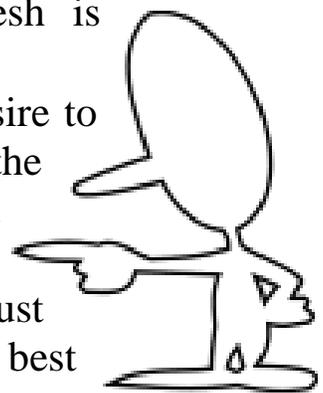
A. False Teachers

“But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.” 2 Peter 2:1

- Peter writes that just as there were false prophets during Old Testament times in Israel, so in the time that he was writing this letter (as well as today) there are false teachers that have infiltrated the church.
- Peter wrote that they “secretly” bring in destructive heresies and many are deceived because of their relationship with these false teachers.
- Peter went on to say that false teachers deny Christ. They might not deny Him outright, but often deny His finished work as that which is the source sanctification.
- Peter also said that false teachers bring swift destruction upon themselves.
- Not necessarily physical destruction, but rather spiritual destruction; true faith in their lives is destroyed.

“And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.” 2 Peter 2:2

- Peter continued by saying that many will follow their destructive ways. Keep in mind that many false teachers are unaware that their teaching is false. The flesh has deceived them and through them the flesh is deceiving others.
- We are seeing this today as many carnal Christians desire to be put under the law because they are motivated by the flesh. Keep in mind that the flesh loves addition and multiplication, but hates subtraction and cannot tolerate being made a zero. They want to be told what they must do for God in order to feel good about themselves; the best the flesh can ever produce is self-righteousness.



- *“For the Gospel of Grace is the end of religion, the final posting of the CLOSED sign on the sweatshop of the human race’s constant struggle to think well of itself; for at best, that is what religion is: Man’s well meant, but dim-witted attempt to gain approval for doing odd jobs that he thinks God will thank him for.....*

Religion, therefore, is a loser.....It has a failed past and a bankrupt future.....There was no religion in Eden, and there will be none in the New Jerusalem; and in the meantime, Jesus has died and risen to persuade us to knock it off right now. He has made it real clear that as far as God is concerned, we’re all home free already, and there is not a single religious thing that you or I have to do.....We are simply invited to believe it.”-Robert Farrar Capon

- Most reject the truth that man’s part is faith, and they simply are to rest in the finished work of Christ on their behalf.

“And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingers not, and their damnation slumbers not. 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;

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; And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;”

2 Peter 2:3-6



- Peter writes that the motivation of false teachers often times is covetousness. They use their followers as merchandise to gain financially or larger numbers to benefit themselves, however, they will receive the same judgment that we have seen throughout the Old Testament with the fallen angels, the people in Noah’s day, and Sodom and Gomorrah.
- Peter writes that their *“judgment does not slumber”*. Just as the ungodly have always been judged throughout history, so the judgment that these false teachers receive will be sure.

“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;) The Lord knoweth

how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

- Along with assuring believers that the false teacher's judgment is sure, Peter also assures them that the Christian's protection and deliverance will also be sure.
- He gives the example of Lot and describes how his soul was tormented every day by the wickedness that was in Sodom and Gomorrah.
- Lot was living among the wicked, but he was not one of them.



- God protected Lot from the wickedness in Sodom and also delivered him from the judgment that was brought upon the cities (**Genesis 14:15-16**).
- God's judgment is always perfect. Only the unjust will be punished and judged. Those who have already been justified by faith in

Christ will not be judged and punished for their sin at the Great White Throne Judgment.

- This principle can also apply to the great tribulation. There are some today who are teaching that the Church will go through the tribulation, which is a time of judgment.

“But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, 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. 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; 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; Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:

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.” 2 Peter 2:10-16

- Peter is describing some of the characteristics of false teachers; mainly that they are arrogant.
- They rebel against authority and are self-pleasing. They are proud and do not tremble at angelic majesties, speaking evil.
- They are not moved by the greatness of God and the great things that He has done.
- They do not understand the spirit world, but they strut and boast, rebuking and reviling Satan and the demons as if they are the ones who are in control of all.
- Peter said that they reproach supernatural beings; they speak evil about things that they don't even understand.
- Peter went on to say that these people have deviated from the truth; that they are corrupt in all they say, do, and think.
- They are obviously living for themselves, their own pleasures, and their own benefit.

B. Worthless Teachings

“These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.” 2 Peter 2:17-19

- From a distance, a spring may look good and refreshing, but up close we may find that it's empty and worthless.
- Peter said that this is what false teachers are like. Often their teaching sounds good and right, but as we listen in the Spirit to what is being said, we find that it is worthless and evil.
- In this present age of grace, to put believers under the law and tell them they must now perform for God to gain His acceptance and approval may appear right and spiritual, but Paul tells us in **Acts 15:10** that it provokes God to wrath and is an unbearable yoke.
- Peter said that the false teachers are able to deceive those who are weak in their understanding of truth by their flowery words of man's wisdom.
- They promise freedom, though they themselves are in bondage to their own flesh, for they are not accepting the finished work of Christ as the sole provision of their sanctification.

“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, then, 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.” 2 Peter 2:20-22

- There are many born again believers who have tasted the good Word of God, and then returned to walking in the flesh and living in sin, just as they did before they were saved.
- Peter said that it would have been better for them to have never known and tasted of true righteousness, than to have tasted it and then returned to unrighteous living (**Hebrews 6:4-6**).
- A believer who is living a carnal and sinful life is miserable, for the Spirit’s conviction of what they already know to be true will be ever present.
- But, Peter said the flesh never changes. It will never improve. Just as a dog will always return to its vomit and a pig to wallowing in the mud, so the flesh will always return to sinfulness and wickedness (**Proverbs 26:11**).

2 PETER FOR GROWING BELIEVERS LESSON 3

A. A Reminder

“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 Savior: 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.” 2 Peter 3:1-4

- Peter is reminding the Jewish believers of past prophecies regarding the end times, that scoffers and false teachers will come doubting the Lord’s return and saying; *“since Old Testament times, all things remain the same; Jesus isn’t coming back”*.
- It was a similar situation in the days of Noah. *“Noah, you’ve been telling us for 20 years that it’s going to rain. Where is it? Noah, it’s been 50 years; Noah, it’s been 100 year and no rain. Noah, after 119 years and still no rain, it’s time to stop all this.”*

“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: 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.” 2 Peter 3:5-7



- Peter wrote, *“They talk as if God has never been faithful to bring about judgment before. They forget that He was faithful to flood the earth and kill the inhabitants in judgment. But the next judgment which will take place to destroy the heavens and the earth, will not be with water, but rather with fire.”*

- Why will God not use water to destroy the earth again? The rainbow is God’s promise that He will never destroy the earth with water again (**Genesis 9:12-15**).



“But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”
2 Peter 3:8-9

- In the days of Noah, Noah preached of coming judgment for 120 years. To the people of that time, it seemed foolish and untrue.
- Now, as we focus on the end times and the coming judgment, there will be many who feel the same: “Oh, they have been saying this for hundreds of years. Where is it?”
- Often times we make promises that we don’t keep. Sometimes we forget, we become lazy, we change our minds, or have promised something that we just can’t produce.
- But none of these things are so with God. The sole reason that He hasn’t brought about the end times judgment yet is because He is longsuffering.
- It is His will that no man perish, but that all should come to repentance.
- The longer He waits, the more people will have an opportunity to hear and believe the gospel.
- That is the only explanation that Peter gives as to why God is waiting.
- To us, five years seems like a very long time, but God sees man and our history from beginning to end at the same time.
- Therefore, to Him one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years is like one day.
- So He is waiting for more to come to repentance.

B. The Thief in the Night

“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.”
Peter 3:10

- Peter continues on by saying when the time is right, Jesus will come back like a thief in the night.
- No one will be expecting Him and He will come suddenly and without warning.
- Just as in the days of Noah when he warned the people for 120 years of God’s coming judgment; and then one day the rains came without warning, it was too late for those who had not already believed.
- The Lord’s coming and the earth’s impending judgment will come quickly when it is His time, and it will be too late for those who refused to believe.

C. Holy Lives

“Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?” 2 Peter 3:11-12

- Since the Lord’s return is imminent and it will come suddenly without warning, what kind of life should we live?
- How should we be found when the Lord returns (**Ephesians 4:1**).
- We would not be pleased if the Lord were to return and find us living carnal lives.
- Peter continues on by saying that we should also live life with an eternal focus, looking for Christ’s return and anxiously awaiting that day.

D. New Heaven/New Earth

“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; 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 Peter 3:13-16

- If we are living with an eternal focus, we will not be looking for this world to get better, but rather we will be looking forward to its destruction and the new heaven and the new earth that will one day be created.
- Many Christians are praying for God to improve things here, as if they have no hope of a new heaven and new earth.
- In verse 14, Peter writes that since we are looking for a new heaven and earth, give careful consideration to being found in peace and blameless.
- God’s Word is sure and as we believe His promises and look for their fulfillment, our hearts will remain calm and stable, even in the midst of a fallen and chaotic world (**John 8:32**).
- Peter wants his readers to know that God is longsuffering and is patiently waiting that more souls may have the opportunity to hear the gospel and believe.
- If our hearts truly grasped these truths: that the world is headed for destruction, and there will be a new heaven and new earth, and that God is allowing all this to continue for the salvation of many, our lives would be changed.

“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. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen.” 2 Peter 3:17-18

- Now that we know these truths and stand upon them, Peter warns us regarding being led astray from what we know and believe to be true.
- It is very easy to become caught up in the fleshly complexities of living in a fallen world, and lose sight of the great and precious promises that God has given to us in His Word (**Ephesians 4:17-18**).
- Peter now concludes, *“Continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”*
- Peter knew that this is most important for all believers. The more we come to know Christ and the grace that He has bestowed upon us, the more our hearts will become occupied solely with Him and the truths of His Word.
- Our hearts will become stabilized and we will not be led astray by false teaching (**Isaiah 26:3**).

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