



I & II PETER

SUFFERING FOR GOD'S GLORY

Copyright © 2025 WORLD VIDEO BIBLE SCHOOL[®]

25 Lantana Lane, Maxwell, Texas 78656

Email: biblestudy@wvbs.org Phone: (512) 398-5211

Store: www.wvbs.org School: school.wvbs.org

Copyright Guidelines

Copyright © WORLD VIDEO BIBLE SCHOOL®

WARNING: SINGLE USER product

Use of this material is limited to the registered user,
according to the following conditions.

Print distribution: Any number of printed copies can be made by printing or photocopying, and used for Bible classes, seminars or teaching settings. Copies of a course or multiple courses can be printed. Printed copies cannot be used for resale purposes or mass distribution.

Electronic distribution: No electronic distribution is allowed, either transmitted or hyperlinked, in part or whole. The electronic version of the course notes is limited to the registered user.

Course Notes on USB: The USB version of the Course Notes is limited to the registered user, and may be copied to any device within the registered user's ownership. If the Course Notes are registered to a congregation, then the electronic files may be installed on any computer located on the congregation's property, and be used by any of its members as a resource to study (either in electronic or printed form) while on their premises. However, the copyright does not include making the files available to others through the Internet or other web services.

For any copyright questions, feel free to contact us so we can help.

25 Lantana Lane, Maxwell, Texas 78656

Email: biblestudy@wvbs.org Phone: (512) 398-5211

Website: www.wvbs.org

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY	4
FIRST PETER	5
BACKGROUND.....	5
OUTLINES.....	11
EXPOSITION.....	13
Chapter 1	13
Chapter 2	28
Chapter 3	39
Chapter 4	51
Chapter 5	61
SECOND PETER	69
BACKGROUND.....	69
OUTLINES.....	72
EXPOSITION.....	73
Chapter 1	73
Chapter 2	85
Chapter 3	97
APPENDICES	112
1 PETER.....	113
The Church in Purpose	113
Did Paul Endorse Slavery?	116
The True Likeness	121
Three Different Greek Words Used for the Same Office	124
The Eldership.....	125
2 PETER.....	129
Copulative Kai.....	129
Are We Called?	130
Special Study: 2 Peter 1:5-7.....	132
2 Peter 1:5-7	134
Faith	134
Virtue.....	140
Knowledge.....	142
Self-Control / Temperance.....	146
Perseverance	151
Godliness	156
Brotherly Kindness.....	161
Love	166
Where Do Go When We Die?	169
2 Peter 3: The Second Coming of Christ.....	170
False Brethren.....	172
Gnosticism	177

INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY

Instructor: Russell Haffner

Biography:

Russell Haffner currently serves as the director of the WVBS Online Bible School. He graduated from the Southwest School of Bible Studies in 1993. He is also an alumnus of Texas A&M University where he majored in Architecture. He has served as a minister of the gospel for over 30 years. He has spoken on various lectureships and has held several gospel meetings. He has also published articles in numerous lectureship books.

Russell and his wife Dee are blessed with three children - Ross, John and Kati. Ross and John are both graduates of the Southwest School of Bible Studies and currently serve as ministers in the Lord's church. Kati is married to Tony Lopez who is also currently serving as a minister in the Lord's church.

THE EPISTLE OF FIRST PETER BACKGROUND

I. GENERAL

- A. A letter of hope in the midst of suffering.
- B. There are several passages concerning suffering in the epistle:
 - 1. The value of suffering (1 Peter 1:6-7; etc.).
 - 2. The sufferings of Christ (1 Peter 1:11; 2:21, 23; 5:1).
 - 3. Warning against suffering as an evil doer (1 Peter 2:22; 4:15).
 - 4. Bear suffering patiently (1 Peter 2:23; 3:9).
 - 5. If you should suffer for the sake of righteousness be not troubled (1 Peter 3:14).
 - 6. Christians should expect suffering (1 Peter 4:12).
 - 7. Rejoice in suffering (1 Peter 4:13).
 - 8. Those who suffer according to the will of God (1 Peter 4:19).
 - 9. Other brethren have suffered (1 Peter 5:9).
- C. This epistle is mostly practical.

II. EVIDENCE OF AUTHORSHIP

- A. The epistle is universally recognized as a work of the apostle Peter.
- B. No other book has stronger or earlier evidence.
 - 1. External evidence for Peter's authorship:
 - a. Many early "church fathers" (non-inspired writers) cite this letter and ascribe it directly to Peter.
 - 1) Didache (AD 95) cites from 1 Peter 2:11 (*Didache* 1:4).

- 2) Papias (AD 110) cited portions of 1 Peter according to Eusebius (*Church History*, 3.39.17).
- 3) Polycarp (AD 130) cites portions of 1 Peter in his "*Epistle to the Philippians*."
- 4) Irenaeus (AD 180) cites 1 Peter 1:8 (*Against Heresies*, 4.9.2; cf. 5.23.2).
- 5) Tertullian (AD 200) attributes authorship to Peter (Tertullian, *Scorpiace* 12).
- 6) Origen (AD 250) attributes authorship to Peter according to Eusebius (*Church History*, 6.25.8).
- 7) Eusebius includes 1 Peter among those books everywhere recognized as belonging to the New Testament (*EH*25.2).

2. Internal evidence for Peter's authorship:

- a. The writer calls himself Peter (1 Peter 1:1).
- b. The writer is well acquainted with Christ and His teachings.
- c. It is similar with Peter's speeches in Acts.
- d. The recognition of the equality between the Jews and Gentiles is seen in the text.

C. The life of Peter

1. Peter is also called Simon or Simeon (Matthew 4:18; 10:2; 16:16-17; Mark 3:16; Acts 15:14).
2. He was born at Bethsaida (John 1:44).
3. Peter was a fisherman by trade (Matthew 4:18).
4. He was brought to Christ by Andrew his brother (John 1:40-42).
5. His life may be divided into two major divisions:
 - a. Before Pentecost -

- 1) Christ called him to be an apostle (Matthew 10:2).
 - 2) He was one of the three at the Mount of transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-2).
 - 3) He was one of the three at Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-37).
 - 4) He denied Christ three times (Matthew 26:69, 71, 74).
 - 5) The risen Christ appeared to him (Luke 24:34).
- b. After Pentecost -
- 1) He preached the first gospel sermon (Acts 2:14).
 - 2) He performed miracles (Acts 3:7; 5:15-16; 9:34, 40).
 - 3) He dealt with Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:5,10).
 - 4) He preached the first gospel sermon to Gentiles (Acts 10:34).
 - 5) He was imprisoned more than once (Acts 4:3; 5:18; 12:4).
 - 6) He was rebuked by Paul (Galatians 2:11).
 - 7) History tells us that he died a martyr's death in A.D. 67 or 68.

III. BACKGROUND AND RECIPIENTS

- A. The letter is addressed to "the pilgrims of the Dispersion."
1. The words "pilgrim" and "elect" (verse 2), and the whole context of the epistle, indicates the readers are Christians.
 2. The context reveals that the readers are primarily Gentile Christians.
 3. The letter is written to "sojourners and pilgrims" on earth among the heathen (1 Peter 2:11).
- B. The readers had been saved and established on the teachings of Paul (2 Peter 3:15).

IV. OCCASION AND DATE

- A. The letter was sent to Christians as a result of the persecution they faced.
- B. We learn of the condition of these churches from the epistle itself.
 - 1. They were under elders.
 - 2. The persecutions were in progress.
 - 3. They were told to not follow after heathen practices.
 - 4. The elders were warned against being greedy or domineering.
- C. The date of this epistle is set at approximately A.D. 65.
- D. This letter was written from Babylon (1 Peter 5:13).
 - 1. We know that ancient Babylon was completely destroyed never to be rebuilt, according to both prophecy and history.
 - 2. Therefore, the term "Babylon" is being used figuratively and is for this reason of uncertain identity (perhaps Rome).

V. PURPOSE AND PLAN

- A. The believers needed reassurance.
- B. He exhorts them to make full use of God's grace in their daily lives.
- C. This letter, like much of the teaching of the congregations at that time, was very much concerned with the second coming of Christ.
 - 1. Christians are being kept for the salvation which is to be revealed at the last time (1 Peter 1:5).
 - 2. Those who keep the faith will be saved from the coming judgment (1 Peter 1:7).
 - 3. Christians are to hope for the grace which will come at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:13).
 - 4. The day of visitation is expected (1 Peter 2:12).

5. The end of all things is at hand (1 Peter 4:7).
6. Those who suffer with Christ will also rejoice with Christ when His glory is revealed (1 Peter 4:13).
7. Judgment is to begin at the household of God (1 Peter 4:17).
8. Peter himself is sure he will share in the glory which is to come (1 Peter 5:1).
9. When the Chief Shepherd shall appear, the faithful Christian will receive a crown of glory (1 Peter 5:4).

VI. TEACHINGS OF THE EARLY CHURCH

- A. The age of fulfillment has come, in other words the Messianic age has begun (Acts 2:14-16; 3:12-26; 4:8-12; 10:34-43; 1 Peter 1:3, 10-12; 4:7).
- B. This new age has come through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:20-31; 3:13-14; 10:43; 1 Peter 1:20-21).
- C. By the power of the resurrection Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of God (Acts 2:22-26; 3:13; 4:11; 5:30-31; 10:39-42; 1 Peter 1:21; 2:7, 24; 3:22).
- D. These Messianic events will shortly reach their consummation in the return of Christ (Acts 3:19-23; 10:42; 1 Peter 1:5, 7, 13, 17-18; 5:1, 4).
- E. These facts were made the ground for an appeal for repentance, the offer of forgiveness, the offer of the Holy Spirit and the promise of eternal life (Acts 2:38-39; 3:19; 5:31; 10:43; 1 Peter 1:13-25; 2:1-3; 4:1-5).

VII. THEME

- A. The theme of the letter is hope in the midst of suffering. Biblical hope is desire, expectation and patient waiting with complete assurance.

VIII. KEY VERSES

- A. 1 Peter 1:18-19
- B. 1 Peter 1:23
- C. 1 Peter 2:2

- D. 1 Peter 2:11
- E. 1 Peter 3:15
- F. 1 Peter 3:21
- G. 1 Peter 4:16
- H. 1 Peter 5:8

**FIRST PETER
OUTLINE**

I.	Greetings	1:1-2
II.	The Nature of Christian Salvation	1:3-2:10
III.	Christian Relationships	2:11-3:12
IV.	Christian Suffering and Service	3:13-4:19
V.	Christian Discipline	5:1-11
VI.	Conclusion	5:12-14

**FIRST PETER
EXPANDED OUTLINE**

I.	GREETINGS.....	1:1-2
II.	THE NATURE OF CHRISTIAN SALVATION.....	1:3-2:10
	A. The Blessings of the Gospel	1:3-9
	B. The Blessings Were Foreseen	1:10-12
	C. The Heirs of These Blessings Must Change the Manner of their Life	1:13-16
	D. The Basis of the Believer's Confidence Must Not Be Forgotten.....	1:17-21
	E. The Heirs Have Present Responsibilities	1:22-2:3
	F. The Heirs Form a Spiritual Community	2:4-10
III.	CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS	2:11-3:12
	A. In the Pagan World	2:11-12
	B. In the State.....	2:13-17
	C. In the Household	2:18-3:7

D.	In the Church	3:8-12
IV.	CHRISTIAN SUFFERING AND SERVICE	3:13-4:19
A.	The Blessings of Suffering Wrongfully	3:13-17
B.	The Powerful Example of Christ	3:18-22
C.	Suffering in the Flesh	4:1-6
D.	The Urgent Need for Holy Living	4:7-11
E.	Encouragements in Special Suffering	4:12-19
V.	CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE	5:1-11
A.	Corporate Discipline	5:1-6
B.	Personal Discipline	5:7-11
VI.	CONCLUSION.....	5:12-14

FIRST PETER EXPOSITION

CHAPTER 1

I. GREETINGS..... 1:1-2

1:1 Peter - Peter's name had been Simon before Jesus renamed him (John 1:41-42; Matthew 16:16-18). Sometimes he was called Simon Peter. But here he refers to himself by the name the Lord gave him.

An Apostle - The literal definition of an apostle is, "one sent on a special mission." Notice he says "an" apostle and not "the" apostle. Peter did not have authority over the other apostles.

Those who claim to be apostles today do so without Bible authority. The Apostles we read about in the New Testament were men sent to be witnesses of Jesus Christ. The word "apostle" literally means one sent as a messenger. This is not mere testimony, but the ability to give an eye-witness account (Acts 1:21-22; 10:39-41; 1 John 1:1-3). These men were not self-appointed witnesses. They were sent by Jesus Himself, hence the name apostle (Acts 1:8). Today, sometimes people will claim they are witnessing for Christ. However, they cannot actually be witnesses. They were not present when Christ walked this earth. They did not see Jesus die and they did not witness His resurrection. The apostles offered personal testimony concerning the things they saw and experienced. Those who claim to be apostles or witnesses today do not have the requirements necessary to make such a claim.

Peter fully proved his apostleship by the miracles he did and the powers he demonstrated. It should be remembered that only the apostles could lay their hands upon Christians to give them the power to work miracles through the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17-21). Notice the phrase, "signs and wonders and mighty deeds" (2 Corinthians 12:12).

Was Peter the First Pope?

1. There is no evidence Peter was in Rome when the letter to the Romans was sent:
 - a. Paul did not build on the foundation of others (Romans 15:20).
 - b. Paul wanted to impart spiritual gifts to the Romans (Romans 1:11), but Peter would have already done that if he had been in Rome.

- c. In Romans 16:3-16 Peter is not even mentioned which is unthinkable if he were in Rome at that time.
 - d. Only Luke is with Paul in Rome (2 Timothy 4:11).
2. There is too much evidence in the New Testament against Peter being a pope:
- a. Peter refused to accept worship (Acts 10:25).
 - b. James, not Peter, made the decision in the meeting at Jerusalem (Acts 15:19).
 - c. Peter was openly rebuked by Paul (Galatians 2:11).
 - d. Peter was married (1 Corinthians 9:5).
 - e. Jesus is the only head of the church both in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18-20).
-

To the pilgrims - They could also be called "sojourners" (1 Peter 2:11). A pilgrim is one who lives alongside those in a foreign land.

1 Peter 2:11-12, "Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation."

This description can also be used of Christians since they are "citizens" of heaven and pilgrims in this world.

Philippians 3:20, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ."

Of the Dispersion - This describes those who are scattered. The Greek word used here originally meant Jews who were scattered among the Gentiles in various regions of the Roman Empire. However, the word has also been used in a more figurative way, so that it may include Christians of both Jewish and Gentile backgrounds as it does in this epistle.

In Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia - The places named were provinces of the Roman Empire located in what was known as Asia Minor.



1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father - "Elect" refers to the saved or chosen.

Colossians 3:12-13, "Therefore, as the **elect** of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do."

Titus 1:1, "Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's **elect** and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness."

In what way are the saved chosen? God chose a **class** of people, not individuals to save. God has already chosen or predetermined that He will save those who obey Him (Hebrews 5:9). The **obedient ones** will be saved!

Some teach that this election is an unconditional election as part of the Calvinistic Doctrine expressed by the acronym - TULIP.

T Total Depravity,

U Unconditional Election,
L Limited Atonement,
I Irresistible Grace and
P Perseverance of the Saints.

The theologian and philosopher, Augustine was the first to formulate this idea (around 400 B.C.), but it was the French theologian John Calvin who made the theory popular (around A.D. 1550). This doctrine is completely false! Consider the following things clearly taught in the Scriptures:

- a. Salvation is available to all (Matthew 11:28; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 17:30).
- b. Salvation is conditional (John 8:24; Luke 13:3,5; Hebrews 5:9).
- c. A Christian can sin and become lost (Galatians 5:4; Matthew 10:22).
- d. Unconditional election makes God a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11).
- e. Salvation can be resisted (Luke 7:30; Acts 7:51; Mark 16:16).
- f. Unconditional election makes God responsible for anyone being lost (2 Peter 3:16).
- g. God would be guilty of the worst cruelty to warn us about hell if we could not do anything about it (Acts 2:40).
- h. Why would God's word command us to preach the gospel if God has already decided who is, and who is not, going to heaven? (Matthew 28:18-20).

"Foreknowledge" comes from the Geek word (PROGNŌSIS) meaning, "determining beforehand."

Foreknowledge does not imply the absence of free-will or being forced to do something. If foreknowledge means one is forced then Jesus lied in John 10:17-18, for He would have had no choice.

John 10:17-18, "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. **I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.** This command I have received from My Father."

Acts 2:23-24, "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and **foreknowledge** of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it."

In sanctification of the Spirit - This refers to that process by which the Holy Spirit (as the agent) uses the word of God and providence (as instruments) to bring us into the likeness of Christ in word, thought and deed. How does this happen? Through the word of truth.

John 17:17, "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."

For obedience - This is the human side of sanctification. This is man's part in God's plan of salvation.

Hebrews 5:8-9, "Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, **He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.**"

And sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ - This "sprinkling" is the Divine side of sanctification. The "sprinkling of the blood," reminds us of the events of the Exodus.

Exodus 24:8, "And Moses took the blood, **sprinkled** it on the people, and said, 'This is the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you according to all these words.'"

The blood of Christ is sprinkled on men (**figuratively**), when they obey the Gospel which brings them into the benefits of that blood.

1 John 1:7, "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the **blood** of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

Hebrews 12:24, "To Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the **blood of sprinkling** that speaks better things than that of Abel."

The blood of Abel cried out for vengeance (Genesis 4:10, 15), while the blood of Christ calls out for mercy.

Hebrews 2:17, "Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a **merciful** and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people."

This "sprinkling" does not refer to the modern practice of sprinkling for baptism. The word "baptize" comes from the Greek word BAPTIDZŌ, meaning to "dip, plunge or immerse."

Acts 8:38-39, "So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch **went down into the water**, and he baptized him. Now when they **came up out of the water**, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing."

Sprinkling is not an acceptable practice for baptism!

Grace to you - Grace is the unmerited favor of God. Grace brings genuine peace to those who obey the Gospel and thus are sanctified (consecrated) to the Lord.

and Peace be multiplied - The peace referred to here was the peace of God and of Christ, as well as peace with one's brethren. Peter's desire is for God's peace to be abundant or "multiplied" toward His faithful servants.

2 Peter 1:5-8, "But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. **For if these things are yours and abound**, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

II. THE NATURE OF CHRISTIAN SALVATION 1:3-2:10

A. THE BLESSINGS OF THE GOSPEL 1:3-9

1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ - "Blessed" comes from the Greek word (EULOGĒTOS) meaning, "well-spoken of, praised, honored."

Who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again - "Again" could refer to the apostles who lost their faith at the crucifixion of Jesus, but were given "new life" (a living hope) by His resurrection.

To a living hope - When the inspired writers talked of the "living God," it was an implied contrast to the lifeless idols served by men. It seems the same contrast is implied here. It is a "living" hope in contrast to a "lifeless" hope.

There is only one hope for salvation.

Ephesians 4:4-6, "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in **one hope** of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

Biblical hope has three elements:

- a. Desire,
- b. Expectation and
- c. Patient waiting.

Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead - This hope was made possible by the raising of Jesus Christ from the dead.

1:4 To an inheritance - An "inheritance" is something not yet in one's possession, but looked forward to in the future. It is not what a man produces for himself, but what he receives from another by birthright. This term is used because the preceding verse says they had been "begotten" by God (children of God), which makes them heirs of His eternal estate.

Incorruptible - This is from the Greek word (APHTHARTOS) meaning, "immortal, imperishable, undying and enduring." It can also mean "unravaged" as with an invading army. The Christian's inheritance of peace and joy can never be invaded and ravaged by any army, including Satan's.

It is not even eligible to be corrupted! Things that are corruptible are perishable and subject to decay:

- a. Our bodies (1 Peter 1:23-24).
- b. All things that are seen - the physical world - (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

And undefiled - This is from the Greek word (AMIANOTOS) meaning, "not stained or soiled, pure" (compare Revelation 21:27).

And that does not fade away - This is from the Greek word, AMARANTOS. The amaranth was a mythical flower whose bloom was absolutely perfect and perpetual. Its loveliness never faded.

Reserved in heaven for you - "Reserved" comes from a Greek word (TĒREŌ) meaning, "watched, guarded, having been kept" (compare John 14:1-3). It is being held in safe keeping.

This does not mean a Christian cannot fall away and lose his salvation.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, "Let no one deceive you by any means; for **that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first**, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

Jesus is doing two things for Christians right now:

- a. Preparing heaven for them and
- b. Preparing them for heaven.

1:5 Who are kept by the power of God - "Kept" comes from the Greek word (PHROUREŌ) literally meaning, "guarded, to protect with a garrison or a military guard." Like a band of soldiers stationed around the faithful in order to protect and guarantee their safety, **so long as they remain inside the stockade of faith**.

The present tense participle shows this action is in progress and therefore continuous.

"Kept" = Guarded, But in What Way?

The guarding is **through faith** and NOT by an independent operation of God's power without our participation and effort. The Bible teaches **against** the false doctrine of, "once saved always saved." The Scriptures clearly teach that it **is** possible for a Christian to fall away and lose their salvation (John 15:1-6; Romans 8:12-13; 11:19-22; 2 Peter 1:2-11; Galatians 5:1-6; 2 Peter 2:18-22; Hebrews 6:4-8; 10:26-39).

A powerful proof that a child of God can be eternally lost is seen over and over again across the pages of the Old Testament. Consider what the New Testament writers said about the problem of Israel's continuous apostasy (1 Corinthians 10:13 and Hebrews 3:7-4:7). These passages clearly teach that as Israel fell so can a Christian: "Take heed if you think you stand lest you fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12). If the people of God can't lose their salvation, then all these warnings mean absolutely nothing.

Through faith for Salvation - Notice that it is only, "through faith." The heirs must cooperate by being faithful until the time when the inheritance is given.

The "salvation" referred to in this verse is not the salvation at baptism, but the actual receiving of **eternal salvation** on judgment day (compare Ephesians 1:13-14).

Ready to be revealed in the last time - "Revealed" comes from a Greek word (APOKALUPTŌ) meaning, "a revealing of something never known before."

1:6 In this - The "this" refers to the whole of the blessings in verses 3-5: sonship, forgiveness of sins, the Divine inheritance and the providential care of the Father.

You greatly rejoice - The Greek word for the phrase "greatly rejoice" (AGALLIAŌ) is used in the New Testament for exceeding joy or jumping for joy.

Though now for a little while, if need be - "If need be" is a 1st class conditional phrase that could be translated as "since." In other words, it is assumed to be true!

When it becomes necessary to be exposed to trials and hardships Christians are not to despair, but to see in these trials the occasion for rejoicing in the testing of their faith (compare 2 Timothy 3:12; James 1:2-4).

You have been grieved by various trials - These Christians were surrounded by heathens who constantly persecuted them. However, this gave the people of God an opportunity to have their faith tested.

"Various" describes something that is many shaded, or many colored (compare 1 Peter 4:10; Ephesians 3:10; Jacob's coat - Genesis 37:3).

1 Peter 4:10 – "the manifold grace of God" – One commentator remarked, "Our troubles may be many-colored, but so is the grace of God; there is no color in the human situation which that grace cannot match. There is a grace to match every trial and there is no trial without its grace."

"Trials" is a translation of the Greek word (PEIRASMOS) meaning, "an experiment, attempt, trial, proving."

1:7 That the genuineness of your faith - The Greek word for "genuineness" (DOKIMION) is defined as, "the proving" of one's faith.

Being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire - The Greek word for "tested" here (DOKIMAZŌ) means, "to test, prove, scrutinize (to see whether a thing is genuine or not), as in metals being proved."

May be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ - A tested and proven faith is worth more than all the refined gold in the world. It will not be found lacking in the day of judgment.

Trials do not come upon the Christian to take strength **out** of him, but to put strength **into** him!

1:8 Whom having not seen you love - We do not need to see Jesus to love Him, if we truly have faith in the abundant evidence of His love for us.

Reasons to love God:

- a. He first loved us (1 John 4:19).
- b. He loved us while we were yet sinners (Romans 5:5-11).

Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory - The Greek word here for "inexpressible" (ANEKLALĒTOS) means, "unspeakable" or that which is unable to be **fully** expressed.

1:9 Receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls - The Greek word for "end" (TELOS) means, "that by which a thing is finished, its aim, its purpose." This is the culmination or outcome of one's biblical faith (compare Revelation 2:10; Colossians 1:12-23).

B. THE BLESSINGS WERE FORESEEN 1:10-12

1:10 Of this salvation - The "salvation" mentioned here refers to the salvation of the Christian's soul mentioned in the previous verse.

The prophets have inquired and searched carefully - "Inquired" literally means, "sought out." This has reference to the interest the Old Testament prophets had in the prophecies God had told them to make. They could make the prophecies accurately because they were inspired, but this did not mean they had complete understanding about the predictions they made.

Matthew 13:16-17, "But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it."

Who prophesied of the grace that would come to you - This "grace" was the Christ (compare John 1:17).

This is indisputable evidence for the verbal inspiration of the prophetic writings. These prophecies, far from being the products of the prophets unaided by inspiration, were so far above them, that they were dependent on others for instruction enabling them to grasp the significance of their own writings.

1:11 Searching what, or what manner of time - The prophets knew what they prophesied, but they did not know at what "time" these Messianic prophecies would be fulfilled (compare 2 Peter 1:21).

Spirit of Christ - This refers to the Holy Spirit (Compare 2 Peter 1:21; Romans 8:9; Galatians 4:6).

2 Peter 1:21, "For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God **spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.**"

Who was in them was indicating - "Indicating" comes from the Greek word (DĒLOŌ) meaning, "did signify, or did point to." It is in the perfect tense here and would be better thought of as, "was declaring" all along through the prophetic age in successive prophets.

When He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow - This restates the thoughts of the previous verse, while adding the prophecies concerning the sufferings of Christ that were required for the salvation of mankind (see Psalms 22 and Isaiah 53).

1:12 To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering - the prophets ministered to us by means of their prophecies to verify Christ (compare Hebrews 11:39; Ephesians 3:10).

The things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven - The "things" refer to the information in the prophecies.

Things which angels desire to look into - "Desire" comes from a Greek word (EPITHUMEŌ) that can be used as either a good or bad thing depending on the context (compare James 4:2). Literally it is, "to set the heart upon; to want passionately."

This word describes the intense feelings of the angels as they contemplated the wonders of redemption. This is the same anxiousness of John and Peter when they ran to see the tomb of Jesus (John 20:4-5).

C. THE HEIRS OF THESE BLESSINGS MUST CHANGE THE MANNER OF THEIR LIFE.....1:13-16

1:13 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind - "Gird up the loins" represents the custom of the people in the Bible lands who would gather up their long flowing robes and attach them with a belt to their waist to allow them freedom of motion when they were doing work, starting a journey or preparing for battle.

The Christian is exhorted to "gird up" or "get himself together" and be unhampered in his service to the Lord. This is the gathering up and restraining of all the improper thoughts of the mind, so as not be hindered in the progress toward heaven.

Christ's call to His followers is to give active service!

Be sober - This soberness shows itself in self-control. This person exhibits great restraint in temper, habits of thought and a calm and collected attitude toward different irritations.

And rest your hope fully upon the grace - This "hope" is complete and unchangeable, without doubt and discouragement. Biblical hope has been described as desire combined with expectation and patient waiting. These characteristics are fused into an attitude that is unwavering, complete, lacking in nothing in the assurance that it provides. This hope is looking for the grace, or favor of God, that will be given through Jesus Christ.

That is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ - Literally the idea here is that of being brought. In other words, the object of hope is already on the way. This refers to His appearance on the last day.

1:14 As obedient children - This points to the necessity of obedience. One becomes a child of God through obedience, and in obedience continues as a child of God. The blessings, joy and privileges of being a child of God cannot exist without obedience!

Not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance - These disciples had lived before following after the lusts of the flesh. In the past, this had been done through "ignorance," but now the Gospel had shown them the folly of such a wicked life. They can no longer plead ignorance.

1:15 But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct - This holiness is separation from a life of habitual sin and all worldly defilement.

The verb "be" (GINOMAI) used here is not the ordinary word for simple being, but literally means "to become." This suggests the ushering in of one into a new state of being.

This shows that this is not a state of being that is an automatic result of having obeyed the gospel, but is rather a manner of life obtained through action that includes an ongoing turning away from the ways of the world.

1:16 Because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." - This phrase occurs five times in the book of Leviticus (compare Leviticus 11:44-45; 9:2; 20:7, 26).

The word for "holy" in the Greek language is HAGIOS. The word is used to describe something or someone separated from sin and consecrated to God. The root meaning is "different" or "set apart." The Jewish Temple was holy because it was **different** – the Sabbath day was holy because it was **different** – and Christians are holy because they are **different** from the people in the world.

D. THE BASIS FOR THE BELIEVER'S CONFIDENCE MUST NOT BE FORGOTTEN.....1:17-21

1:17 And if you call on the Father - The "if" in this verse is 1st class conditional which means it is assumed to be true and should be translated as, "since" you call on the Father.

Who without partiality judges according to each one's work - This means that God does not show favoritism in His judgments.

Acts 10:34-35, "Then Peter opened his mouth and said: 'In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.'"

Since God judges according to our works our actions are of vital importance.

Conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear - The Greek word here for "fear" (PHOBOS) is not the terror of a slave, but the awe and respect of an obedient child toward his father.

This fear also recognizes that judgment is coming.

Matthew 10:28, "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

Acts 10:35, "But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him."

Hebrews 10:31, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

1:18 Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold - Here is the reason for everything Peter has said - Christians are not bought with silver and gold the way slaves are (compare Acts 20:28; Ephesians 1:7; Romans 5:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

From your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers - These disciples of God had once followed a manner of life that was handed down to them by tradition from their heathen ancestors.

1:19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot - The reference to a lamb without blemish is from the requirement of the animal sacrifices in the old law of Moses (Exodus 12:5; 29:1).

The example of Christ on earth showed spotless righteousness. He "committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth" (1 Peter 2:22).

1:20 He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world - "He" is Jesus. This verse proves the church was not an afterthought to God. He knew before the foundation of the world that Jesus would suffer, die and then purchase the church with His own blood (compare 2 Timothy 1:9-10; Ephesians 1:3-7). [For additional information please see the appendices - THE CHURCH IN PURPOSE.]

The church was purposed and in the mind of God:

- a. At the birth of Paul (Galatians 1:15-16),
- b. At the time of Moses (Acts 26:22-23),
- c. At the time of Abraham (Ephesians 3:6, "promise" - to Abraham, Genesis 12:1-3) and
- d. Before foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:20).

The premillennial idea that Jesus failed to set up His kingdom the first time and needs to come again to complete the task is blasphemous and contradicted by Scripture.

But was manifest in these last times for you - The phrase "in these last times" refers to the end of the Christian age (compare Hebrews 1:2; 2 Peter 3:3; Jude 1:18; Acts 2:17).

1:21 Who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God - Christ was resurrected and given glory in order to help establish faith.

E. THE HEIRS HAVE CURRENT RESPONSIBILITIES1:22-2:3

1:22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit - The phrase "have purified" comes from the Greek word (HAGNIZŌ) that literally means, "to make clean, having purified." The word is a perfect participle which places the purification act in the past with the results still existing.

Purification of the soul comes through obedience NOT JUST faith. Faith alone has never been sufficient for sanctification (compare Titus 3:5; Romans 6:17; 16:26; John 8:31).

In sincere love of the brethren - "Sincere" means, "not false, not hypocritical." This is a true love. We will have a better understanding of this kind of love if we study the inspired writings of the apostle John.

1 John 3:15-18, "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth."

Love one another fervently with a pure heart - "Love" comes from the Greek word (AGAPAŌ) that describes a love that is full of intelligence and understanding coupled with purpose. "Fervently" is the Greek word (EKTENŌS) that describes an emotion that is intense, vivid, forceful, earnest and pointed. "With a pure heart" is the Greek phrase (EK KARDIA) that literally means, "out of the heart."

1:23 Having been born again - "Born again" is translated as "begotten again" in the Englishman's Greek New Testament. This translation is more correct because it emphasizes the father's part of the reproduction. Jesus taught concerning this new birth:

John 3:1-5, "There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, 'Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.' Jesus answered and said to him, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be

born?' Jesus answered, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'

Not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever - The "corruptible seed" describes the fleshly, while the "incorruptible seed" describes the spiritual. This is the same thought expressed in James which shows that God has begotten the spiritual creatures.

James 1:18, "Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures."

1:24 Because "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away - Verses 24 and 25 are a quote from Isaiah 40:6-8. Man is material and subject to decay, just like the glory of vegetation is destined to pass away.

Peter is not saying that man is not important. Remember man is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). However, Peter wants these Christians to understand that spiritual things are not subject to decay like physical things. Having become a part of the Lord's spiritual family, they should honor that relationship by living a righteous life.

1:25 But the word of the Lord endures forever." - "Endures" means that it abides, remains and exists forever.

Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you - Here we see that this new birth is not some mysterious operation of God acted upon sinful man. It is the simple process of believing and obeying the Gospel.

CHAPTER 2

2:1. Therefore - The word "therefore" is used to introduce the logical result of something that has just been mentioned. Notice the things that Paul has just mentioned:

- a. Because God is holy,
- b. Because you have been redeemed by the blood of Christ and
- c. Because you are a different person (a new man).

There can be no "brotherly love" if any of the following evils mentioned in this verse exist in a Christian's life. All "works of the flesh" interfere with brotherly love.

Galatians 5:19-21, "Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred,

contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."

Laying aside all malice - The Greek word here (KAKIA) is defined as: "malice, ill-will, a desire to injure, wickedness, depravity." It is a moral inferiority, an evil disposition.

All deceit - This comes from the Greek word (DOLOS) meaning, "guile, cunning or craftiness; the intent to deceive or mislead to your advantage."

Hypocrisy - The Greek word translated as "hypocrisy" (HUPOKRISIS) was used to refer to actors or pretenders and their actions.

A Christian who is trying to be righteous, but occasionally sins IS NOT a hypocrite. It is the one who is living like the world while pretending to be a Christian who is the hypocrite.

Envy - This comes from the Greek word (PHTHONOS) defined as, "ill-will created by the sight of the well-being of others."

And all evil speaking - The Greek word here (KATALALIA) means, "slander or defamation of character."

2:2 As newborn babes - The idea here is just as babies long for or desire milk, Christians should long for or desire spiritual food - the word of God.

Desire the pure milk of the word - The Greek word for "pure" here (ADOLOS) is the exact opposite of "deceit" found in verse 1. It means unmixed or sincere.

That you may grow thereby - By partaking of the "pure milk of the word" (God's word) the Christian will mature in their faith (Ephesians 4:11-16).

2 Corinthians 3:18, "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, **are being transformed into the same image** from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord."

2 Peter 3:17-18, "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; but **grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen."

2:3 If indeed you have - In grammar this is a 1st class conditional phrase literally meaning, "*since* you have."

Tasted - Notice this is a small sample. Once the "pure milk" is "tasted" (appreciated) it is found to be appetizing and delicious. The desire for it grows.

That the Lord is gracious - This means, "good, useful, beneficial." Feasting upon the word causes greater appreciation for the goodness of the Lord.

F. THE HEIRS FORM A SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY2:4-10

2:4 Coming to Him as to a living stone - Peter now changes to another illustration. Christ is like a living stone.

Rejected indeed by men - The Greek word here for "rejected" (APODOKIMAZŌ) means, "to reject after trial and examination." This refers to the rejection of Christ by the Jewish leaders. This was referred to by Jesus in Matthew 21:42, and was prophesied in Psalm 118:22.

But chosen by God and precious - Even though these men had rejected Jesus, God had chosen Him and showed Him to be precious by revealing the eternal riches offered through Him.

2:5 You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood - Peter tells these Christians, who had appreciated the preciousness of Christ, that they were like a spiritual house. They were a "holy" priesthood. It should be understood that, just as there was a priesthood in the Old Testament, there is a priesthood in the New Testament.

- a. In the Old Testament priesthood, the sons of Aaron were the priests who officiated in the worship (Leviticus 1:5, 8, 11).
- b. In the New Testament priesthood, all Christians are priests who participate in the worship (1 Peter 2:9).

To offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ - Why are these called "spiritual" sacrifices and not simply sacrifices?

- a. To distinguish these sacrifices from the sacrifices in the law of Moses.
- b. To conform to the nature of the spiritual house - not a physical house.

- c. To show that these are not physical priests, like Aaron and his sons, but spiritual priests.
- d. To emphasize that the sacrifices are for God who receives the sacrifices.

Hebrews 13:15-16, "Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. But do not forget to do good and to share, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

2:6 I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone - This is quoted from Isaiah 28:16. "Zion" refers to the city of Jerusalem, where the church began (Acts 1:4, 12; 2:14, 47). The cornerstone of a building was vital because it served to unite the walls into one structure. Jesus, as the "chief cornerstone," not only strengthens the building, but unites all of the parts together.

Elect, precious, - Jesus is called "elect" because the word means "picked out or chosen." God chose His Son to be the chief cornerstone of the church. He is a precious stone because of the valuable benefits He furnishes to those who accept Him.

And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame - On the day of judgement the Lord will put to shame all of those who refused to believe and obey Him. Their unbelief shows that they are ashamed of Him (Luke 9:26).

2:7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious - Those who accept Jesus as the Christ realize and appreciate His true value.

But to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone." - The unbelievers do not value Jesus, they value the things of this world. The foolishness of their choice is revealed to all.

2:8 And "A Stone of stumbling and a rock of offense." - No part of the Bible should be interpreted in such a way as to contradict another part of the Bible. God does not want anyone to be lost (2 Peter 3:9). However, man can only be saved through Jesus Christ, and therefore it was necessary for God to send Him into the world. If the teaching of Jesus is so objectionable to some men that they permit Him to become a stone over which they stumble, the Lord cannot be blamed.

They stumble, being disobedient to the word - This describes why certain men stumble; it is at His word. Some people do not like to obey God's word because it interferes with their sinful life and therefore, it becomes a stumbling stone to them (Romans 9:32-33; Matthew 21:42-46; Acts 4:11; 1 Corinthians 1:23).

NOTE: Those who stumble at the word do so because they are disobedient. Disobedience is the natural fruit of unbelief.

To which they also were appointed - This phrase does not mean they were predestined to such disobedience by an arbitrary and immutable decree, but because such stumbling is the inevitable result of unbelief.

The idea is that they were not appointed or chosen to disobey, but they stumble at the word because of their disobedience. Their disobedience is not ordained, it is the penalty for their disobedience that is ordained.

2:9 But you are a chosen generation - The Lord has chosen them because they had been "born again" by their obedience to the gospel and thus became a new generation (John 3:3). Christians are the "chosen" (called out) and now the spiritual Israel.

Compare the following:

Galatians 3:29, "And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."

A royal priesthood - This means a kingly priesthood. Under the law of Moses, the same man could not be both a king and a priest (2 Chronicles 26:18). However, disciples of Christ are said to be both.

Revelation 1:6, "And has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

Christians serve as kings (of a secondary order of course) in that they reign under Christ and the apostles (1 Corinthians 4:8).

A holy nation - The church is a spiritual nation or kingdom ruled by a king, Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:13-14; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; 2 Peter 1:11). Christians are "holy" or consecrated to God by their obedience to the Gospel.

His own special people - This literally means a people for God's own possession; God's own people.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and **you are not your own**? For you were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

Someone once wrote, "In any museum we find quite ordinary things – clothes, a walking stick, a pen, books, pieces of furniture – which are of value only because they were once possessed by some great person. It is so with the Christian. The Christian may be a very ordinary person but he acquires a new value because he belongs to God."

That you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light - "Proclaim" comes from the Greek word (EXAGGELLŌ) that means, "to declare abroad, to publish or to make known by praising or proclaiming, to celebrate."

Isaiah 12:4-6, "And in that day you will say: 'Praise the LORD, call upon His name; declare His deeds among the peoples, make mention that His name is exalted. Sing to the LORD, for He has done excellent things; this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in your midst!'"

2:10 Who once were not a people but are now the people of God - This is a quote from Hosea 2:23. Paul also quoted this Old Testament verse in Romans 9:25-26, and applied it to the Gentiles, as Peter apparently does here.

The Gentiles (before they obeyed the gospel), were "not a people" in the sense that they were scattered through all the nations, with separate languages, governments and customs.

Who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy - Now with their obedience to the gospel, they were made into a holy nation with common interests, obligations, government and King.

III. CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS2:11-3:12

A. IN THE PAGAN WORLD 2:11-12

2:11 Beloved, I beg you - "Beg" is from a Greek word (PARAKALEŌ) that means, "to call to one's side."

As sojourners - This refers to those who live in a place without the rights of citizenship. Christians are regarded as citizens of Heaven (Philippians 3:20), who are dwelling on earth for the time being.

And pilgrims - This refers to those who come from a foreign country into a city or land to live by the side of the natives. Both of the terms in this verse refer to temporary dwellers.

All Christians, as well as the servants of God in the Old Testament, are "strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Hebrew 11:13).

Abstain from - The word "abstain" is a translation of the Greek word (APECHOMAI) that means, "to hold one's self off, to refrain." This involves control.

Fleshly lusts which war against the soul - Following after fleshly lusts is to be governed by sinful human desires and not by the teachings of God's Spirit.

Romans 7:23, "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

James 1:14-15, "But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death."

The soul must be protected.

Proverbs 22:24-25, "Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man do not go, lest you learn his ways and set a snare for your soul."

1 Thessalonians 5:23, "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2:12 Having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers - The "Gentiles" in this verse refers to the unconverted heathen, not the Gentiles who had obeyed the gospel. These heathens would often speak evil of the Christians, because Christians would not join them in their wicked practices (1 Peter 4:4).

They may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation - This expression ("day of visitation") can be used of any visitation or action of God as a rewarder OR as an avenger.

The phrase "day of visitation" refers to the persecutions the Christians faced. In these times the heathen would see how the disciples were patient and law abiding, and these actions would show the true strength of the Christian's faith and as a result these pagans would give God the glory.

B. IN THE STATE.....2:13-17

2:13 Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme - This refers to the laws of the government. We should obey the laws of the land, but only if the laws do not contradict God's laws (compare Acts 5:29; Matthew 22:21; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Timothy 2:2).

2:14 Or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good - "Punishment" comes from the Greek word (EKDIKĒSIS) that literally means vengeance. This passage has shown God's twofold purpose for all governments:

- a. Punishment of evil doers and
- b. To praise them that do well.

**WHAT ABOUT CAPITAL PUNISHMENT?
Romans 13:1-7**

Governments do not take their own vengeance, they are merely enforcing the authority granted to them by God. Albert Barnes once wrote, "When a magistrate inflicts punishment on the guilty, it is to be regarded as the act of God taking vengeance on him; and on this principle alone is it right for a judge to condemn a man to death. It is not because one man has by nature the right over the life of another, or because society has any right collectively which it does not as individuals; but because God gave life, and because He has chosen to take it away when a crime is committed, by the appointment of magistrates, and not by coming forth Himself visibly to execute the laws." It is God who told mankind, "Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man. Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man" (Genesis 9:5-6). Pay careful attention to this command. Man is required to execute the judgment of God against a man who has committed murder.

It is true that some governments are evil. After all, the government in control at the time Paul wrote was the Roman government which was corrupt and persecuted Christians.

Yet, that government, even though evil, was allowed to function, because God had a long-term purpose in mind. "By me kings reign, And rulers decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, All the judges of the earth" (Proverbs 8:15-16). There are times when God allows a bad ruler to take control of a country to punish that country. But even in its corruption the Roman government still kept a measure of law and order in its borders.

When a government is evil, we are commanded to not follow it into evil. But at the same time, where its laws are not against God's, we are commanded to still follow the government.

2:15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men - "Silence" is a translation of the Greek word (PHIMOŌ) meaning, "to muzzle." How should a Christian respond to enemies who speak against them? When Plato, the ancient Greek philosopher (427 – 347 B.C.), was told a certain person was making slanderous charges against him, he responded – "I will live in such a way that no one will believe what he says."

2:16 As free - To be "free" means that they had been delivered from the bondage of sin. However, that did not mean they had the liberty to ignore all manner of Christian service. Only in Christ is a person so free from sin and self that they can become as good as they must be as servants of Christ.

Someone once wrote, "Any great Christian doctrine can be perverted into an excuse for evil. The doctrine of grace can be perverted into an excuse for sinning to one's heart's content. The doctrine of love of God can be sentimentalized into an excuse for breaking His law. The doctrine of the life to come can be perverted into an excuse for neglecting the world. And there is no doctrine so easy to pervert than that of Christian freedom."

Yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice - A man who was using his Christian "liberty as a cloak" would claim to be a citizen of heaven while not obeying the laws of the land, or he would be guilty of speaking against the rulers in a disrespectful way (Romans 6:1-23).

But as bondservants of God - As servants of God they were called to serve and obey and this meant living upright and respectful lives.

2:17 Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king - In grammar this is an imperative, it is a **command**. In other words, "It must be done!" All four commands here are present tense, meaning continuous action; keep on honoring all people, keep on loving the brotherhood, keep on fearing God and keep on honoring the king.

All people should be treated with love and concern. A real danger can occur when we no longer see these individuals as people, real live human beings that need to be prayed for and helped as much as we can in light of eternity.

C. IN THE HOUSEHOLD2:18-3:7

2:18 Servants, be submissive - "Servants" is from a Greek word (OIKETĒS) used to describe household servants.

To your masters with all fear - This describes masters with authority.

Not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh - The "good and gentle" masters are fair, patient and merciful, while the "harsh" masters are unfair and wicked (compare Ephesians 6:5-8; Colossians 3:23).

The Christian should perform his work in such a way that he could show his efforts to God without being ashamed!

In this section God gives instructions for slaves and masters. In studying these verses, we must keep in mind that slavery was widespread in the Roman world at this time. For example, scholars have estimated 30-40% of the population of Italy were slaves in the 1st century. That would be upwards of two to three million slaves in Italy alone not including the slaves in the rest of the empire which are estimated to be around 10-15% of the total population. [For additional information please see the appendices - DID PAUL ENDORSE SLAVERY? by Eric Lyons, M.Min.]

2:19 For this is commendable - "Commendable" is from the Greek word (CHARIS) that is often translated as "grace." We have God's grace or favor as a result of these actions.

If because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully - If we accept suffering without seeking vengeance and striking back, we are pleasing to God.

2:20 For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? - There is no glory if we suffer punishment for the sins we have committed.

But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God - If we are mistreated for doing what is right it is true persecution. If Christians patiently and faithfully endure persecutions they are worthy of reward.

2:21 For to this you were called - The phrase "to this" refers back to doing well and being punished for it (compare John 15:20; 2 Timothy 3:12).

Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps - The Greek word here for "example" (HUPOGRAMMOS) refers to the practice of teachers providing an example of lettering for their students to copy. In this way the students would learn the proper way to form the letters.

Jesus suffered and He suffered unjustly, but this did not provoke Him to sin. Sometimes Christians must suffer when they stand up for their religious convictions. This can be on the job, at school or socially.

Although Christians may suffer on account of their beliefs this does not relieve them from their responsibility to stand up for what is right.

It may be that standing for what is right will not turn out for our best interest in **this** life, but it will in the next!

"Follow" comes from the Greek word (EPAKOLOUTHEŌ) meaning, "to follow (close) upon, to follow after, i.e. to imitate his example." We should follow the example of Jesus, as if we were walking exactly behind Him. His steps should be ours - steps of love, truth, forgiveness, righteousness, etc. and we should place our feet as precisely as possible where His were. However, we should remember that His steps led to the cross. So, we should never be surprised when persecution comes our way (2 Timothy 3:12).

2:22 Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth - There is an allusion here to Isaiah 53:9. Jesus passed each and every test of temptation (compare 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 7:26). If He who was perfect, suffered persecution (and He did), then surely His imperfect followers should expect the same.

2:23 Who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten - Jesus had the power to strike back, but He never succumbed to the temptation to retaliate (Matthew 26:52-54).

But committed Himself to Him who judges righteously - Like Christ, we should let God the Father get even for any wrongs committed against us (compare Matthew 5:38-48; Hebrews 12:3; Isaiah 1:24).

2:24 Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree - The position of the pronoun is emphatic, Jesus, Himself, bore our sins, He alone offered Himself. The word "bore" is translated from a Greek word used in the Septuagint (Greek translation of the Old Testament) of a sacrifice.

The Lord not only died on our behalf; He also died in our stead. The fact that Jesus gave His life in our place is clearly taught here, as well as elsewhere in the Scriptures (Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45; 1 Timothy 2:6).

The word "tree" in this verse simply refers to the wood of the cross (compare Hebrews 1:3; Acts 5:30-31).

That we, having died to sins - Sin no longer has control over the life of a Christian (compare Colossians 3:1-3; Romans 6:1-6). This does not mean that a Christian is incapable of occasionally committing a sin.

Might live for righteousness - This means living in the service of righteousness. That state or condition of righteousness exists when one keeps the commandments.

By whose stripes you were healed - Peter reminds them of the pain Jesus endured for them. He suffered so man could have forgiveness of sin. The Greek word here for "stripes" (MŌLŌPS) describes, "a bruise, or wound that trickles with blood."

2:25 For you were like sheep going astray - Peter describes their previous condition as if they were wandering sheep. A Christian can fall from grace! You cannot stray if you are already astray!

But have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls - The term "shepherd" is used to emphasize the Lord's nonstop vigilance, care and protection. The Lord is the Shepherd of our souls:

- a. In His love He cares for us.
- b. In His power He protects us.
- c. In His wisdom He guides us.

The "overseer" is one who oversees, as a shop foreman or boss.

CHAPTER 3

Peter has already admonished different groups; the church to abstain from fleshly lusts (1 Peter 2:11-12), Christians to be obedient citizens (1 Peter 2:13-17), and servants to be subject to their masters (1 Peter 2:18-25). Now he speaks to the wives, especially those whose husbands are not Christians.

3:1 Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands - "Likewise" is from a Greek word (HOMOIŌS) meaning, "in the same manner." The things Peter is about to teach is in harmony with the principles just taught concerning Christian slaves being subject to their masters. In the same manner, wives are to be constantly submitting (present participle, middle voice) themselves to their own husbands.

The Bible teaches that the husband is the head of the wife.

1 Corinthians 11:3, "But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, **the head of woman is man**, and the head of Christ is God."

Ephesians 5:23, "For **the husband is head of the wife**, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body."

This is God's order of creation (1 Timothy 2:13) and it was instituted in the penalty following man's first sin in the garden (Genesis 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:14).

Christian women with heathen husbands might be tempted to despise their husbands and exhibit contempt for them, feeling obligated only to those Christian men with whom they associate in the church. The effect of such an attitude would be disastrous, not only to the church but to the family and society in general.

That even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives - In the original language this attitude of the husband implies a degree of antagonism in addition to disobedience, plus an element of stubbornness. The idea is that he is not allowing himself to be persuaded.

The phrase "without a word" is not saying that the Bible, or the gospel message, is not needed to convert the husband. This is simply emphasizing the power of her Christian example. This does not mean she cannot discuss religion with her husband, but she should not try to use nagging to convince him of the truth. She is to be a proper example of godliness to win him over.

3:2 When they observe your chaste conduct - The language used here refers to an eyewitness who uses the information he has received through close observation. These unbelieving husbands would be able to witness for themselves the godly behavior of their wives, and give credit for that behavior to the influence of Christianity. "Chaste" comes from the Greek word (HAGNOS) that means, "sacred, pure or modest."

Accompanied by fear - There are three possible meanings here concerning this "fear." It could be:

- a. Her fear (respect and awe) for God,
- b. Her respect for her husband or
- c. The respect she has for the other duties commanded; that of a pure lifestyle.

3:3 Do not let your adornment be merely outward - Modesty in personal dress and manners is to spring from inward righteousness and holiness.

Marcus Quintilian, a first century Roman educator (35-100 A.D.), made these comments about immodest clothing, "A tasteful and magnificent dress, as the Greek poet tells us, lends added dignity to the wearer: but effeminate and luxurious apparel fails to adorn the body, and only reveals a sordidness of the mind."

Arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel - There is nothing inherently wrong with braiding the hair or wearing gold or putting on fine apparel. Peter is condemning the practice of some women in the culture of the day, who would make an elaborate effort to weave costly jewelry into their hair and wear certain types of clothes to draw attention to themselves as objects of lust and not as vessels of righteousness.

This verse should be approached in much the same way as John 6:27.

John 6:27, "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him."

If this passage is taken literally it condemns a man who works for his food. However, when interpreted correctly it simply teaches that a man is not to put his priorities on material things. Instead we are to give our greatest attention to those things which will lead to spiritual growth and eternal life. In much the same way, 1 Peter 3:3-4 is warning that women can be guilty of putting their priorities on material things.

3:4 Rather let it be the hidden person of the heart - "It" here refers to the adornment of holiness that comes from within. The key is righteous living from a pure heart.

1 Timothy 2:9-10, "in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or

gold or pearls or costly clothing, but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works."

With the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit - "Quiet" is a translation of the Greek word (HĒSUCHIOS) describing tranquility arising from within and results in no disturbance to others; no sign of rebellion or resentment.

Instead of concentrating on and emphasizing things that would draw men away from God, Christian ladies are to work on developing the godly attributes that would draw men to God!

There is nothing more beautiful than a good woman who demonstrates godliness in her life. However, there is nothing uglier than an attractive woman who has lost all sense of virtue, honor and modesty.

Proverbs 11:22, "As a ring of gold in a swine's snout, so, is a lovely woman who lacks discretion."

Which is very precious in the sight of God - This emphasizes to us what is truly valued in God's eyes. It is not those things the world thinks are precious.

3:5 For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves - The lives of godly women down through the ages serves as an example of proper conduct.

Being submissive to their own husbands - Part of their godly conduct was being submissive to their husbands.

3:6 As Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord - "Lord" is used here simply as a title of respect, not worship. The grammar in this phrase (present durative participle), shows that this was not one isolated incident in her life, but instead it reveals her constant attitude toward her husband. It shows she continually respected him.

Whose daughters you are - This is not referring to them as the natural descendants of Sarah, but in a spiritual sense as they follow her example. "You are," literally means, "you became." In a sense they became daughters of Sarah by following her steps.

If you do good - Sarah's spiritual daughters are those who develop an attitude of continual submissiveness to their husbands.

And are not afraid with any terror - "Terror" is the shrinking, shuddering fear of one who is in the grip of extreme apprehension. This means the wives should not obey their husbands because of fear, but because they love and respect them.

They are also not to be frightened away from this course of action as their chosen path. Even if their unbelieving husbands object to their changed life and threaten them, they are to be strong in their faith and submissive in all other things.

3:7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding - This describes the full knowledge of the marriage relationship. Each spouse must show proper respect and appreciation for the other, and both must fulfill all the needs of their spouse.

Giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel - "Giving honor" means to assign honor. It is recognizing the value of something. This same Greek word for "honor" (TIMĒ) is translated as "precious" in 1 Peter 1:19. Christian husbands are to regard their wives as precious and are to assign to them the value that is their due.

What does Peter mean when he says the wife is the "weaker" vessel? This does not mean that the woman is weaker spiritually, morally or intellectually. It simply refers to the usual physical weakness the woman has in comparison to a man.

And as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered - Notice that the husband and wife are heirs together. The inheritance is not reserved for the man.

Galatians 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

The phrase, "prayers may not be hindered" implies that when husbands and wives are both Christians, they will normally engage in prayers together in their homes. However, these mutual times of prayer would be hindered if their love and care for each other was not also mutual.

We should notice that when responsibilities are commanded for one class of people there are also responsibilities for the offsetting class:

Slaves	-	Owners / Masters
Parents	-	Children
Wives	-	Husbands
Elders	-	Members

D. IN THE CHURCH.....3:8-12

3:8 Finally - This indicates the end of this section. The following exhortation is to "all," not to any one special group.

All of you be of one mind - This means like-minded, united in spirit, similar in disposition, harmonious. It refers to a lack of strife or contention.

Having compassion for one another - This is the attitude that leads one to rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep (Romans 12:15).

Love as brothers - Christian's love for one another is to be like that which brothers and sisters would show to each other. We are to love our brothers and sisters in Christ in a godly way (compare John 13:34-35; 1 John 2:7, 9; also compare John 3:16 with 1 John 3:16).

Be tenderhearted - This describes the quality of being compassionate and full of mercy.

Be courteous - Literally this is humble-minded. It is not being forward or self-seeking. It is the opposite of arrogance and pride.

3:9 Not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling - This refers to an attitude of seeking vengeance (compare Proverbs 17:13; Matthew 5:34; Romans 12:17-21; 1 Corinthians 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:15).

But on the contrary blessing - Literally this means "be a blessing." We must constantly strive to be a blessing to those we come into contact with every day.

Knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing - We want God to be loving and merciful to us so we must be loving and merciful to others.

[In this section (1 Peter 3:10-12) Peter now quotes Psalm 34 and tells us we receive a blessing in return when we do good.]

3:10 He who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit - The good Christian will control his tongue.

James 1:26, "If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless."

Psalms 39:1, "I said, 'I will guard my ways, lest I sin with my tongue; I will restrain my mouth with a muzzle, while the wicked are before me.'"

3:11 Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it - To "turn away from evil" is to avoid evil. To do this we must actively seek a better way.

1 Thessalonians 5:22, "Abstain from every form of evil."

We must "seek peace" with both God and our fellow man.

Romans 12:18, "If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men."

Romans 14:19, "Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another."

Hebrews 12:14, "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord."

Notice that peace must be pursued. To "pursue it" comes from the Greek word (DIŌKŌ) that literally means, "to run swiftly in order to catch a person or thing, to run after." It speaks of one, who being in a race, "runs swiftly to reach the goal."

3:12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil - God does watch over us. The Lord sees everything at all times and in all places.

Psalms 11:4, "The LORD is in His holy temple, The LORD's throne is in heaven; His eyes behold, His eyelids test the sons of men."

Proverbs 5:21, "For the ways of man are before the eyes of the LORD, And He ponders all his paths."

Proverbs 15:3, "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Keeping watch on the evil and the good."

God has His eyes on the righteous for their good, like a loving father watching over his children. God's ears are also ready to listen to the prayers of His servants, but He will have no respect for the desires of the evil doers.

IV. CHRISTIAN SUFFERING AND SERVICE3:13-4:19

A. THE BLESSINGS OF SUFFERING WRONGFULLY3:13-17

3:13 And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? - Why would anyone want to hurt a benevolent person who does only good? As the next verse shows, Peter is not saying that Christians who live godly lives will never experience difficulty or persecution.

A person who is zealous for good, striving to be a blessing to others, will make such a tremendous impact on those around him that even non-religious people will often value and protect him.

Often those who are seeking worldly ways are too preoccupied in their evil pursuits to find time to cause good people any lasting harm. However, by being good, Christians may influence these worldly men for good or even help them to obey the gospel.

3:14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed - Regardless of the difficulties Christians may face because of their faith and devotion to God, heaven and all of its glories are still theirs, and worth it!

"And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled." - This a quote from Isaiah 8:12. In other words, Christians should not be swayed to disobedience or agitated by the threats of their adversaries. Peter is saying to have complete composure in the face of bitter and determined enemies (compare 1 Peter 2:20).

3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts - Literally this means we are to set aside Christ in our hearts as Lord. We are not to set Him apart in our hearts and forget Him, but set Him **apart and above** all other interests.

We must bear in mind, at all times, that Jesus is our Lord, Master, Owner, King and Savior. You should determine right now that you are going to serve and obey Him regardless of the cost.

And always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you - The truth needs to be defended! Some like to say the truth can defend itself. Yes, but in order for the truth to defend itself it must be lived, taught and proclaimed. How can the truth defend itself if it is never shown or preached?

2 Timothy 4:2, "Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching."

The Christian's mission is to give a clear presentation of God's plan of salvation whenever possible.

With meekness and fear - The defense given is not with arrogance, but with a gentle attitude free from scorn, haughtiness and bitterness.

This principle applies whether in a home Bible study or a formal debate. The most powerful argument for Christianity is a godly Christian life.

The "fear" spoken of here is fear of God and the judgment.

3:16 Having a good conscience - The Greek word here for "conscience" (SUNEIDŌ) is actually a compound word. It combines the Greek word (SUN) meaning "together with" and the Greek word (EIDŌ) meaning "to know." It is literally a "knowing together with one's self."

The conscience is given to us by God to help serve as an inner judicial regulator to provide feelings of right and wrong. It provides thoughts of either approval or condemnation depending on the circumstances.

Our conscience should make us feel good when we do what we think is right, and bad when we do what we think is wrong. However, it can only serve as a good regulator if it is educated in the truth of God's word.

That when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed - These are not formal accusations the enemies make, but wild and unfounded ones.

Those enemies who indulge in such foolishness will eventually be put to shame, because they will be exposed as liars and slanderers of those who do good.

The church should strive to have a good name (reputation) in the community, BUT not by failing to preach the truth or condemn sin.

3:17 For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil - If this suffering happens, it is better for it to be for doing good rather than for doing evil. If someone suffers for doing wrong, they deserve their punishment.

Regardless of what happens, doing His will is still better. God always has some purpose in mind when He allows His people to suffer for doing good. The Christian understands that such suffering can serve a purpose, and that purpose involves their good.

B. THE POWERFUL EXAMPLE OF CHRIST 3:18-22

3:18 Christ also suffered - Jesus is our example and we must walk in His footsteps.

Once for sins - This is not His sins, but the sins of mankind. The Greek word for "once" (HAPAX) means, "once for all time!"

Notice the only other times this Greek word is used (1 Peter 3:20; Jude 1:3; Hebrews 9:26, 28; 10:2).

The just - The Greek word here (DIKAIOS) is singular referring to the righteous Jesus.

For the unjust - The Greek here (ADIKOWN) is plural referring to the unrighteous (all mankind).

Romans 5:6, "For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

2 Corinthians 5:21, "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

Hebrews 9:28, "So Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation."

That He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit - There are some religious groups who use this passage to deny the bodily resurrection of Jesus. However, please notice the following verses:

Luke 24:38-39, "And He said to them (*after His resurrection*), 'Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.'"

John 2:19-21, "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' Then the Jews said, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?' But He was speaking of the temple of His body."

3:19 By whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison - This refers back to the "Spirit" in verse 18. "By whom" can also be translated as "in whom."

IMPORTANT: Peter is not saying that those who were the object of this preaching were in a disembodied state and in prison **WHEN THE PREACHING WAS DONE!** He is saying that such was the case **WHEN HE WROTE** this letter! The period in which they lived in the flesh and when the preaching was done is clearly stated in the next verse.

3:20 Who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water - Admittedly this can be a difficult passage to understand.

THERE ARE THREE POSSIBLE WAYS TO INTERPRET THIS PASSAGE:

- a. That Jesus Himself actually went and preached to those in hades during the three days His body was in the grave and He limited His preaching to those who were disobedient during the time prior to the flood.
- b. That Jesus went to hades in the spirit and preached to all the souls so there would be no place in the universe into which the message of grace had not gone.
- c. That Christ was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit and that the preaching was done when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah. These people did not believe Noah's inspired preaching and were in prison (hades) on the day Peter wrote this letter.

Conclusion: Number "3" is the correct interpretation. These "spirits" were once in the flesh; they were disobedient: the period of their disobedience was "while the ark was being prepared;" and during this period Christ preached to them.

In what way did Christ preach to them?

We must understand that what one does through an authorized agent, he is said to do himself (1 John 4:1), hence Christ, in the person of Noah, preached to these rebellious people during the period in which the ark was being constructed: and these, having rejected the preaching, died in disobedience and were under restraint in the Hadean realm when Peter wrote this letter.

Were saved through water - The water is what destroyed the sin of the world while they were in the ark. The water bore them up and thus kept them safe from the destruction of the flood.

3:21 There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism - An "antitype" is a fulfillment or completion of an earlier truth revealed in the Bible. An antitype in the New Testament is foreshadowed by a type in the Old Testament (the same way Adam was a type of Christ - Romans 5:14). Noah's salvation was the type and baptism is the antitype. The "antitype," which is baptism, is what saves us now!

TYPE

- A. The waters of the flood bore the ark up and delivered Noah and his family from the destruction of the sinful world.
- B. The flood waters separated those who were saved from those who drowned being lost in their sin.
- C. The flood destroyed the evils of the world and enabled Noah and his family to emerge into a new existence.

ANTITYPE

- A. Baptism is the final condition in a plan of salvation in which one is able to escape the condition of being lost.

Mark 16:15-16, "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.'"

- B. Baptism designates the line between the saved and the lost.
- C. In baptism the "old man of sin" is buried and from its watery grave one comes forth to "walk in newness of life" (compare Romans 6:3-4).

[For additional information please see the appendices - THE TRUE LIKENESS.]

Not the removal of the filth of the flesh - Baptism is not a physical cleansing. If baptism were simply the washing of the flesh, like a bath, we could immerse everyone against their will and save them. But, baptism that saves involves a spiritual cleansing, it is connected with the conscience.

But the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ - "Answer" is from the Greek word (EPERŌTĒMA) that is defined as, "an earnest seeking or craving." It is an intense desire or longing for something. That which is desired is a good conscience toward God. When a sinner is taught that he must be baptized for the remission of his sins, and he has the desire to do right, he will not have a good conscience until he obeys this command.

This clearly eliminates infant baptism! Since biblical baptism is an "answer of a good conscience toward God," infant baptism is eliminated because infants do not have a functioning conscience.

Notice in this verse that it is "**through** the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Without the resurrection of Christ, baptism is meaningless and worthless.

Romans 6:3-5, "Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore, we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection."

3:22 (Jesus Christ) who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God - The "right hand" is the position of honor, authority and inheritance.

Matthew 28:18, "And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.'"

Angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him - "Made subject to Him" - Jesus has all authority (compare Matthew 28:18-20; John 17:2; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:22-23; 3:10; Colossians 2:10). The point is Christ has already triumphed over death, authorities, powers, etc.

CHAPTER 4

C. SUFFERING IN THE FLESH 4:1-6

4:1 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh - Peter reminds them of the suffering of Jesus as he begins this next section. He is still addressing the unjust suffering his readers were facing. However, he now begins to emphasize the evil character of their enemies. He also encourages them to fight against their own former evil habits and pagan practices.

Arm yourselves also - Christians must be prepared for the suffering that will surely come their way.

2 Timothy 3:12, "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."

With the same mind - This refers to the thoughts or the will. Christians are to be motivated by the same attitude of Jesus in the suffering that He endured (compare Philippians 2:5-8). Christians should be willing to suffer for Jesus because He suffered for them.

For he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin - Obviously this does not include all suffering or suffering by all people: the context limits it to the suffering of righteous people as they imitate Christ.

One who has embraced the mind of Christ, and whose life is so influenced by Him that he suffers persecution, is not in danger of giving in to the weaker temptations of the flesh.

The teaching expressed in this sentence does not refer to Jesus! It refers only to faithful Christians, because they are the ones who have ceased from sinning.

4:2 That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh for the lusts of men, but for the will of God - The "rest of his time in the flesh" refers to that portion of the Christian's life remaining on this earth. "Lusts of men" describes the desires of those who are evil.

4:3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles - They had done this before obeying the gospel. It is called the "will of the Gentiles" because it was the lifestyle which characterized the Gentile nations. The Jews were guilty of many sins but not usually the same type as the Gentiles.

When we walked in - This phrase is a perfect participle referring to a course of life that they have now put behind them.

Lewdnness - This is from the Greek word (ASELGEIA) meaning, "unbridled lust, excess, lasciviousness, shamelessness." The prominent idea here is shameful conduct.

Lusts - This is from the Greek word (EPITHUMIA) meaning, "desire for what is forbidden, craving, longing."

Drunkenness - This is from the Greek word (OINOPHLUGIA) that literally means an excess of wine. In 1 Thessalonians 5:6-8, God commands every Christian to be sober. This would include being free from the influence of intoxicating beverages.

1 Thessalonians 5:6-8, "Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be **sober**. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be **sober**, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation."

Please see the following verses from the book of Proverbs concerning wine:

Proverbs 20:1, "Wine is a mocker, Strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise."

Proverbs 23:20, "Do not mix with winebibbers, or with gluttonous eaters of meat."

Proverbs 23:29-31, "Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly."

Revelries - The Greek word here (KŌMOS) is used to describe a drunken procession dancing through the streets of the city. These revelries were often intended as religious observances, especially in the worship of Bacchus, Demeter and the false god Zeus in Crete.

Drinking Parties - This Greek word (POTOS) is used to describe a drunken banquet.

Abominable idolatries - The word "abominable" here means unlawful. This phrase describes the unlawful worship of idols and all the wicked, and often obscene, practices that are included with this type of pagan worship.

4:4 In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation - Literally this is, you do not flock together with them. It describes a flock, pack or herd gathering together. "Flood of dissipation" describes the life of one who lives recklessly and in abandonment of morality. The Greek word was used for military personnel when they went on leave.

Speaking evil of you - This comes from the Greek word (BLASPHĒMEŌ) from which we get the word blasphemy. Those in the world think their way of living is correct and that all normal people should live in this same way, seeking the sinful pleasures in life. When they see how Christians live they think it is not normal and that something is wrong with Christians. So, they make accusations.

4:5 They will give an account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead - In other words, they are not going to get away with it! God is "ready" to judge. The "living" and the "dead" are spiritual terms not physical terms. The Gentiles (verse 3), were considered to be dead in trespasses and sins before the preaching of the Gospel to them.

Ephesians 2:1-3, "And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted

ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others."

4:6 For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead - This refers to those who were spiritually dead.

That they might be judged according to men in the flesh - On the day of judgment men will be judged according to the way they lived while "in the flesh" or before they died.

2 Corinthians 5:10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."

But live according to God in the spirit - This is Peter's response to the skeptics who would say, "Christians die just like the rest of us; so, what is the advantage in being a Christian?" Peter is explaining that those who have died (the dead) are judged in the flesh like men, by suffering physical death; but because the gospel was preached to them (while alive, when they responded), these Christians are now living in the spirit like God.

SECOND CHANCE AFTER DEATH?

Some have tried to use 1 Peter 4:6 to teach that the dead who are lost will be given a second chance. However, this is a false teaching! There is nothing in this verse or the rest of the Bible that would support such a foolish theory. Nowhere in the Bible do we find anyone having an opportunity to make their lives right with God AFTER they have died and left this earth. Our chances for salvation are only available while we are "in the flesh." Once we die there are no more chances.

Hebrews 9:27, "And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment."

Notice the verse again:

1 Peter 4:6, "For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."

What does, "those who are dead" mean? This passage and 1 Peter 3:18-20 must be interpreted the same in order for these sections to make any sense.

The "dead" are the **spiritually** dead. They are "judged" according to the way they lived while "in the flesh" or before they died (2 Corinthians 5:10).

Translation

For indeed this good news was preached to spiritually dead men in order that they might be judged on the one hand according to men in the flesh and on the other hand might live according to God in the spirit.

Conclusion

Some see 1 Peter 4:6 as the "gospel of the second chance." However, this is false teaching. There is nothing in the Bible that would support such a theory. In fact, all of the Bible's teaching is against such a theory. Nowhere in the Bible do we find anyone having an opportunity to make their lives right with God **after** they have died and left this earth!

D. THE URGENT NEED FOR HOLY LIVING.....4:7-11

4:7 But, the end of all things is at hand - This could mean either the end of the world OR the end of Jerusalem. However, it does not seem likely to refer to the end of Jerusalem.

- a. First, the end of Jerusalem would not be the end of **all** things.
- b. Second, the end of Jerusalem would be a great calamity for the Jews and Jewish Christians, but the Gentiles and Gentile Christians would not be directly affected by it.

Therefore, be serious - This refers to soberness. It is having self-control and being balanced in thought and disposition. It is not being flighty or carried away by our own notions or by the attacks of others.

Watchful in your prayers - The word "watchful" has the idea of "safe" or "saved" in it. It means to keep in mind a safe condition. Notice the "prayers" is plural! This includes prayers of all kinds, both public and private. In other words, do not quit praying!

4:8 And above all things have fervent love for one another - The Greek word translated as "fervent" was used for a runner who stretches to reach the finish line. This describes a constant and overflowing love. It emphasizes the intensity that should characterize Christians in their love for one another.

It is having the desire to do good to others, even an enemy, acting toward him in the same way that God, through His Son's sacrifice, acted toward mankind who hated and despised Him and refused to serve His Son.

for "Love will cover a multitude of sins" - This is from Proverbs 10:12. To "cover" the sins, does not mean you help others to hide their sins. That would make you as guilty as them. The Christian's love for their brethren should cause them to help restore those brethren who have fallen into sin. If the fallen can be convinced to repent, then God will forgive them and, in this way, "cover" their sins.

James 5:19-20, "Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and **cover** a multitude of sins."

4:9 Be hospitable to one another - The Greek word translated as "hospitable" is a compound word that includes both friends and strangers. This would be especially important for travelers.

Without grumbling - This means without complaining, either openly or secretly.

4:10 As each one has received a gift - This would include physical (material) gifts that God had given them and the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit given to Christians in the first century.

Miraculous abilities were given to Christians in the first century by the laying on of the apostle's hands (Acts 8:17-19). This was the only way a Christian could have the ability to perform a certain kind of miracle. When the last apostle died, and the last Christian they had laid their hands on died, the miraculous gifts came to an end (1 Corinthians 13:10).

Minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God - "Manifold" means many and varied (compare 1 Peter 1:6). Why were they commanded to be "good stewards" of God's grace?

A "steward" was one who was placed over the household of another. He might be either a slave or a freeman, but the entire estate of the wealthy master was placed in his care. He only had to give an accounting to his master for the way he managed the estate.

In the same way, God by His grace has bestowed blessings on us and we are stewards of those blessings. One day we too will be required to give an accounting to God for the way in which we have used these blessings.

4:11 If anyone speaks - This is a 1st class conditional phrase. It literally means, "since a man speaks." Since Christians were speaking to others about the gospel message they should carefully choose their words.

Let him speak as the oracles of God - He should speak as the word of God speaks! In other words, preach and teach the whole council of God (Acts 20:27). The "oracles" here refers to the authorized deliverers of God's word for the early church – apostles, prophets, and inspired teachers.

The word "oracles" was used at that time to describe the sayings of heathen deities. Peter makes use of it here to show a contrast between the words of these false gods, and the words of the one true God (Acts 7:38; Romans 3:2; Hebrews 5:12).

If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies - This is a 1st class conditional phrase again, literally meaning, "since" a man does minister. To minister means to serve (compare Colossians 3:23). Serving "with the ability which God supplies" is serving the needs of the people in the way God desires. We should use the strength God has given us to serve others (compare Proverbs 3:5). "Supplies" means to totally supply all needs!

That in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever - By doing these things the glory will go to God who is the giver of all talents, and all will be accomplished through Christ.

1 Corinthians 10:31, "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

Colossians 3:17, "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him."

Amen - "Amen" literally means "so be it." The word "Amen" started as a Hebrew word (Numbers 5:22), which was transliterated into Greek and then eventually into English. The word comes from a Hebrew root word which means "to build up or support; to be firm or faithful, to trust or believe; to be true or certain." It is also used as an adverb at the beginning of a speech to mean "surely, of a truth, truly" (Matthew 5:18; Mark 3:28; John 3:3). At the conclusion of a sentence it is used to mean "so it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled." When the word is used as an adjective it means "firm or true." Some dictionaries claim that when "Amen" is used at the end of a prayer it means approval of what is being said. However, our approval does not make it true. It is more correct to think of it as "this is true, or may it come to pass, or may it be fulfilled."

Peter now goes back to the subject of the coming persecution. This is the third set of exhortations:

- a. The first was in view of the special privileges his readers were enjoying.
 - b. The second was in view of the special relations in the state and in society.
 - c. Now, the third is given in view of the sufferings they are called to endure.
-

E. ENCOURAGEMENTS IN SPECIAL SUFFERING.....4:12-19

4:12 Beloved, do not think it strange - Many people have the wrong idea that as long as they are trying to serve God no troubles will ever come into their lives. However, there are times when being a Christian will cost something, maybe *everything* (compare 1 Corinthians 10:13; Hebrews 4:16; 2 Peter 2:9).

Concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you - The phrase "fiery trial" is used to emphasize the severity of the trial (compare Revelation 18:9). The Greek word translated as "try" here describes placing a precious metal into a crucible and then heating it with fire to separate the dross from the pure metal.

It is the faithful Christian who will be persecuted – not the Christian who compromises with the world (2 Timothy 3:12). If a Christian is not facing persecution he is probably compromising with the ways of the world.

4:13 But rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings - The rejoicing is not at the prospect of suffering, but being able to be a partner with Christ in suffering.

That when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy - If a faithful, Christian shares in his Master's suffering he can expect to have a part in His glory when the day of redemption comes.

Matthew 5:10-12, "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

The trials and sacrifices a Christian must make to remain faithful to the Lord will all be worth it when they stand before Him on the last day.

4:14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you - This is a 1st class conditional phrase. It literally means, "since" you are reproached. To be reproached it be reviled or to be mocked. This blessing is because of the Christian's service and devotion to Christ.

For the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you - Here we see two different designations for the Holy Spirit. He is referred to as the Spirit of glory and the Spirit of God. Notice the phrase. "rests upon you." The verb "rests" in this verse is of special significance. It is translated from the same word used in the Greek version of the Old Testament to emphasize the abiding presence of the Lord.

Isaiah 11:1-2, "There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the LORD shall **rest** upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD."

On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part, He is glorified - From the enemies come blasphemies against the Spirit, but through the actions of faithful Christians the Holy Spirit is glorified. Since the Holy Spirit is promised to those who are faithful, and abides with those who are persecuted, His presence is a token of the blessedness of those who suffer for righteousness' sake.

This obviously requires that Christians are faithful (compare Matthew 5:10-12; Hebrews 4:16; James 4:6-7).

4:15 But let none of you suffer as a - It is only when we suffer for our righteousness that we are blessed, not when we suffer as a result of our sins.

Murderer - This is the unauthorized taking of a human life. It does not include the power to meet out capital punishment that is given by God to the government (Romans 13:4).

Thief - In the culture of the first century, stealing was a common crime, particularly among the slaves of society.

Evildoer - The word "evildoer" literally means, "a violator of the law, or criminal." This includes all infractions of the law not specifically named in this context.

Or as a busybody in other people's matters - The Greek word here (ALLOTRI-EPISKOPOS) is a compound word meaning, "overseeing" things that "belong to another." The idea is of one who seeks to spy out the private concerns of others. This forbids all intrusion into those things that do not concern us.

We must not be guilty of interference in the affairs of others. However, this does not condemn our spiritual concern for those who have been overtaken in a sin (Galatians 6:1-2). The action being condemned here is trying to run the lives of others by our wishes.

4:16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian - To suffer as a Christian is to suffer for BEING a Christian! The term "Christian" is found three times in the Bible (Acts 11:26; 26:28 and here, 1 Peter 4:16).

Some think this term (Christian) was given by enemies to the followers of Christ as an insult. However, there is no evidence to support this idea. It is certainly not used that way in this passage.

"Christian" can be defined as a "follower of Christ" or "one who is purchased by Christ."

Let him not be ashamed - There is a certain amount of shame connected with going to jail and being a fugitive from the law even if one is in the right. However, the Christian who is imprisoned or sought by the law because of his faith, is to hold his head high and is not to allow such things to weaken his faith.

But let him glorify God in this matter - This would probably be better translated as, "let him glorify God in that name." This is the name God wants His servants to wear (compare Isaiah 62:2). Also see Romans 1:16; 2 Timothy 1:7-8; Revelation 21:8.

4:17 For the time has come - They are not to be ignorant anymore (compare Acts 17:30).

For judgment to begin at the house of God - This describes a severe trial. The "judgment" is the sentence of suffering which is sent on the church to test or prove it.

This shows the readiness of God to test, and in a sense, judge His own people. In such sufferings the Christian will be saved only by perseverance (compare James 1:12).

The phrase "house of God" emphasizes that the church is the family of God (compare 1 Timothy 3:15; Hebrews 3:6). Where the privileges and blessings are the greatest, is where judgment will begin and be the strongest (compare Ezekiel 9:6).

And if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God - If God is so willing to try His own people, what will be the destiny of sinners? Persecution is coming!

4:18 Now, "If the righteous one is scarcely saved, where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?" - This is a quote from Proverbs 11:31 (compare Matthew 24:32). It is the same message as in the previous verse.

The meaning of "saved" here could be either flesh or spirit. If "saved" refers to the flesh it means there will barely be any life left after or during the persecution. The meaning of "scarcely" is with great difficulty, toil and pain!

4:19 Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator - Committing their souls to God is to **rely** on God as Christ did when He was on the cross.

"Commit" comes from the idea of placing a treasure into safe and trustworthy hands. The Christian is to trust God's providence and deposit his soul's keeping with God.

When times of affliction are a Christian's condition he must learn to lean heavily on the strong and sustaining arm of his loving Father. This refers directly back to 1 Peter 2:23.

CHAPTER 5

V. CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE 5:1-11

A. CORPORATE DISCIPLINE 5:1-6

5:1 The elders who are among you - "Elders" serve as overseers for the local congregation in the government established for the church by Christ. That is why we read that the apostles had "appointed elders in every church" (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5).

Elders (Acts 20:17; 1 Timothy 5:19) are also referred to as bishops (1 Timothy 3:1-2), overseers (Acts 20:28), pastors (Ephesian 4:11), rulers (Hebrews 13:7, 17), shepherds (1 Peter 5:2) and the presbytery (1 Timothy 4:14). The different terms are used to emphasize different aspects of the same office. [For additional information concerning these terms please see the appendices - THREE DIFFERENT GREEK WORDS USED FOR THE SAME OFFICE.]

I exhort, I who am a fellow elder - Peter evidently served as one of the elders in a local congregation.

And a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed - Peter's "exhortation" is based on three considerations:

- a. Peter was also an elder (not a "Pope").

Notice, that Peter did not refer to his office as "Pope." The office of an apostle is referred to many times in the New Testament, BUT the office of "Pope" is never mentioned or even alluded to.

- b. He was a witness of the actual sufferings of Jesus.

One cannot witness to something he has not seen, heard, touched, etc. Peter was a witness to the sufferings of Jesus because he was there and saw the things Jesus suffered.

- c. He shared with these saints, to whom he was writing, the hope of ultimate glory.

Peter had a confident expectation to share in the glory that will come at the last day.

5:2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you - The elders are referred to as shepherds to emphasize the total work of shepherding. It includes guiding, guarding, feeding... and a whole lot more! [For additional information please see the appendices - THE ELDERSHIP.]

Serving as overseers - It takes authority in order to take the oversight of anything. Elders are obligated to direct the affairs of the local congregation committed to their care.

For the congregation, or any individual in it, to refuse to recognize this oversight, when properly exercised by duly qualified and appointed elders, is rebellion against God Himself.

Hebrews 13:17, "Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you."

There is no New Testament teaching on the oversight of elders extending beyond the congregation in which they have been made elders. Elders have authority over those of their own congregation of which they have been chosen.

Not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly - An elder serving for "dishonest gain" would be guilty of greed and would be showing an eagerness for immoral gain (compare 1 Timothy 3:3; 5:17; Titus 1:7,11). Elders must always serve with an attitude to "give," not to "get."

5:3 Nor as being lords over those entrusted to you - This means not with an attitude of tyranny or haughtiness. "Lords" is used in the sense of lording one's position over others. It is an attitude of arrogance.

But being examples to the flock - This does not mean the elders can **only** serve by example, without overseeing authority. The elders are given complete authority to rule over the congregation, to make sure God's word is being respected and followed (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears - Elders are shepherds of the flock and they must never forget that there is a Shepherd over them - Jesus Christ. The title of "Chief Shepherd" belongs only to Jesus, not to an apostle or any other man.

You will receive the crown of glory - "Crown" comes from the Greek word (STEPHANOS) that describes the crown given to a winner in an athletic contest. It is the victor's crown (1 Thessalonians 2:19). It is a crown of exultation. The Christian's crown is:

- a. The crown of righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8).
- b. The crown of life (James 1:12).
- c. The crown of glory - a glorious crown (1 Peter 5:4).
- d. The crown of rejoicing (1 Thessalonians 2:19).

That does not fade away - The Greek word used here describes a flower that never fades. This phrase is used in contrast to the physical crowns given by men that are made of material that fades away and loses its glory or beauty.

5:5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders - Elders is used here as the office, but the teaching would still be valid in a general sense and include younger people submitting to those who are older.

Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility - Being "submissive" does not imply that there is some kind of authority that members have over each other. It simply means that each member of the church should act in a way to please his brothers and sisters in Christ. This attitude demonstrates the true spirit of humility that receives God's favor.

For "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." - This is a quote of Proverbs 3:34. Notice this refers to resistance from God against those who are prideful. The humble receive His grace.

5:6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God - The Christian must be willing to take a low place of service in the kingdom. He is not to exalt himself above his fellow Christians and is never to show any haughtiness or pride in his behavior (compare Matthew 23:12). To the Romans and Greeks in the first century, humility was a sign of weakness.

That He may exalt you in due time - The exaltation promised in this verse comes at the judgment.

B. PERSONAL DISCIPLINE 5:7-11

5:7 Casting all your care upon Him - This does not mean that we are to be thoughtless about the necessities of life. It means that Christians should be confident that their interests are God's interests and that they should not be overly anxious about their future.

For He cares for you - A Christian understands that God is loving and will care for the future when each day is spent faithfully serving Him. While the Christian lives in a state of humility, hoping for future exaltation, he is not living without a source of strength and support from God.

5:8 Be sober, be vigilant - To be "sober" means to be serious minded and being "vigilant" refers to one being watchful and on guard (compare 1 Peter 1:13; 4:7; 2 Timothy 4:5).

Because your adversary - The Greek word here for "adversary" (ANTIDIKOS) is used to describe an opponent in a lawsuit as in a court room. There is a great trial taking place in all of our lives. If we obey God's plan of salvation we have Jesus as our advocate.

The devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour - The term "devil" is from the Greek word (DIABOLOS) that describes one who is, "slandorous, and accuses falsely." Peter here depicts our enemy as a dangerous animal (compare Matthew 4:1-2; 13:39; 25:41; Luke 8:12; John 8:44; 13:2; Ephesians 4:27; 6:11).

5:9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith - Christians are not to wait passively for the Lord to subdue Satan for them. They are to put up a valiant fight and trust in the Lord for help.

James 4:7, "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

Knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world - It is not just Christians who face the dangers of the devil. If man does not run into the house of soberness and watchfulness, the "lion" (Satan) will devour his soul.

5:10 But may the God of all grace - Since "grace" means the unmerited favor of God, it is appropriate for all the favors listed in this verse to be recognized as coming from Him. This is especially true as it pertains to the favor of saving us from our sins, when justice would demand that we be condemned (Romans 3:23; 6:23).

Who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus - The calling that takes place is not an individual calling, separate and apart from God's word. Man is called to obedience by the message of the gospel.

2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He **called** you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

We are called by His own glory and virtue (2 Peter 1:3).

After you have suffered a while - Suffering is a part of the Christian's life (2 Timothy 3:12).

Perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you - There is a benefit that comes from the trials of this life. To "perfect" means to be complete or mature in Christ. There shall be no defect remaining (compare 1 Corinthians 1:10; Matthew 4:21; Luke 6:40; Galatians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians 3:10; Hebrews 10:5; 11:3; 13:21 and negative - Romans 9:22). "Establish" means being confirmed in the faith. "Strengthen" means being strong in the Lord. "Settle you" signifies giving one a firm and stable position in the service of Christ.

5:11 To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever - This is giving the glory to God that is due to Him. God has dominion over all the limited dominions of men!

Amen - The word "Amen" started as a Hebrew word (Numbers 5:22), which was transliterated into Greek and then eventually into English.

The word comes from a Hebrew root word which means "to build up or support; to be firm or faithful, to trust or believe; to be true or certain."

It is also used as an adverb at the beginning of a speech to mean "surely, of a truth, truly" (Matthew 5:18; Mark 3:28; John 3:3).

At the conclusion of a sentence it is used to mean "so it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled." When the word is used as an adjective it means "firm or true."

Some dictionaries claim that when "Amen" is used at the end of a prayer it means approval of what is being said. However, our approval does not make it true. It is more correct to think of it as "this is true, or may it come to pass, or may it be fulfilled."

VI. CONCLUSION.....5:12-14

5:12 By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly - "Silvanus" is the Latin spelling for Silas. He first appears as one of the leading men of the church at Jerusalem (Acts 15:22), as an inspired teacher or prophet (Acts 15:32).

It appears he was a Roman citizen (Acts 16:37) and he was one of a delegation appointed to go with Paul when he returned to Antioch with the letter to the Gentiles concerning the meeting at Jerusalem (Acts 15:22; 15:32).

He was also selected by Paul as a companion on his second missionary journey (Acts 15:40; 17:10). While in Berea, he was left behind with Timothy, when Paul proceeded to Athens (Acts 17:14), and we hear nothing more about his movements, until he rejoined the apostle Paul at Corinth (Acts 18:5).

Exhorting and testifying - This indicates the twofold purpose of this letter.

That this is the true grace of God in which you stand - The conclusion reached from the truths set forth in this letter, is that the brethren were standing in the true grace of God. There is an emphatic message here for them to stand fast and do not give in!

5:13 She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you - We know that ancient Babylon was completely destroyed never to be rebuilt, according to both prophecy and history. Therefore, the term "Babylon" is being used figuratively and is for this reason of uncertain identity (perhaps Rome).

Some translations render this "the *church that is* at Babylon," but the literal Greek is actually, "she in Babylon." It seems reasonable that this is an individual when we consider that this section is composed of greetings from those individuals known by Peter.

"Elect" refers to the saved or chosen (Colossians 3:12-13; Titus 1:1). In what way are the saved chosen? God chose a **class** of people, not individuals to save. God has already chosen or predetermined that He will save those who obey Him (Hebrews 5:9). The **obedient ones** will be saved!

And so does Mark my son - This is apparently a reference to John Mark who served as an assistant to Paul and Barnabas on their first evangelistic journey (Acts 13:5; 13:13).

Barnabas wanted to take John Mark on the second journey (Acts 15:37), but Paul refused to take him because he had left the first journey and had not gone to the work (Acts 15:38-39). John Mark was with Paul at his first imprisonment and Paul asked the Colossians to welcome him (Colossians 4:10).

Peter probably calls Mark his son because he had converted him. He was his "son in the faith" in the same way as Timothy was to Paul (1 Timothy 1:2).

5:14 Greet one another with a kiss of love - Peter emphasize that the greeting between brethren should be pure and genuine. An expression of true Christian love. In the culture of the day, a kiss was a part of the standard greeting. This was the eastern manner of greeting, just as the hand-shake is the manner of greeting in the west.

Peter's command concerning a "kiss of love" was a clear restriction against impure motives during the greeting. If people greet one another with a kiss it must be a kiss of love. Notice Paul's similar expression:

Romans 16:16, "Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you."

"Holy" means "pure, sanctified and godly." Such greetings could obviously provide an opportunity for lust or impure thoughts. Paul's command concerning the "holy kiss" was given to regulate a practice already in existence, rather than establishing a new law demanding that all Christian must kiss when they greet each other (see Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20 and 2 Corinthians 13:12).

Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus - The Christian should remember that when persecution comes, the only place of peace is in Christ!

Amen - "Amen" literally means "so be it." The word "Amen" started as a Hebrew word (Numbers 5:22), which was transliterated into Greek and then eventually into

English. The word comes from a Hebrew root word which means "to build up or support; to be firm or faithful, to trust or believe; to be true or certain." It is also used as an adverb at the beginning of a speech to mean "surely, of a truth, truly" (Matthew 5:18; Mark 3:28; John 3:3). At the conclusion of a sentence it is used to mean "so it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled." When the word is used as an adjective it means "firm or true."

END

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER BACKGROUND

I. GENERAL

- A. The emphasis in Peter's second epistle is on false teachers and false teaching.
- B. It is a letter of warning.
- C. Peter's cure for false teaching is true spiritual knowledge.

II. EVIDENCE OF AUTHORSHIP

- A. External evidence for Peter's authorship:
 - 1. This epistle has less historical support for its genuineness than any other New Testament Book.
 - 2. However, there is early evidence for it in Jude's epistle and so no other support is needed.
- B. Internal evidence for Peter's authorship:
 - 1. The internal evidence is stronger than the external.
 - 2. The writer calls himself Peter (2 Peter 1:1).
 - 3. There is similarity with First Peter, although some question how strong this is.

III. BACKGROUND AND RECIPIENTS

- A. The recipients of this letter are less specific than 1st Peter, but 2nd Peter is most likely a follow-up letter to the same people (2 Peter 3:1).
- B. It was written in Peter's mature years, perhaps near his death (2 Peter 1:13-15).

IV. OCCASION AND DATE

- A. The primary occasion for this epistle is dealing with the false doctrine of Gnosticism.

1. Gnosticism comes from the Greek word GNOSIS defined as knowledge.
2. The Gnostics taught that they had received secret knowledge that ordinary people did not understand.
3. Gnosticism also had a misunderstanding of flesh and spirit.
4. They taught that flesh is all evil, and therefore they did not believe that Jesus came in the flesh.

[For a deeper study of this topic please see the appendices - GNOSTICISM.]

B. Date

1. It is believed by many that 2nd Peter is older than the Epistle of Jude since Jude covers much of the same material that is found in 2nd Peter.
2. False teaching is treated as more of a future problem to some extent in 2nd Peter, while the book of Jude treats it as present issue.
3. Peter may have written this letter from prison in Rome before his death (see 2 Peter 1:12-15).
4. 2nd Peter was probably written about A.D. 66-67.

V. PURPOSE AND PLAN

A. Purpose

1. To urge readers to grow in their Christian character.
2. To encourage them to be patient as they await the Lord's return.
3. To warn them against being "led away with the error of the wicked" (2 Peter 3:17).
4. To show them that life cannot be separated from doctrine.

B. Plan

1. Peter wants them to grow in "the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).

VI. THEMES

- A. A call to grow in their Christian attributes (2 Peter 1:5-7).
- B. The Reliability of the Scriptures (2 Peter 1:20-21).
- C. Warnings against false teachers (2 Peter 2:1-2).
- D. The reality of Christ's return and the day of judgment (2 Peter 3:10).
- E. An exhortation to live holy lives being prepared for Christ's return (2 Peter 3:14).

VII. KEY VERSES

- A. 2 Peter 1:3
- B. 2 Peter 1:20-21
- C. 2 Peter 3:9

**SECOND PETER
OUTLINE**

I. Greetings 1:1-2

II. True Knowledge..... 1:3-21

III. False Knowledge2:1-22

IV. The Present Challenge3:1-18

**SECOND PETER
EXPANDED OUTLINE**

I. GREETINGS.....1:1-2

II. TRUE KNOWLEDGE1:3-21

A. The Quest for a Godly Life 1:3-4

B. The Growth in Christian Attributes 1:5-11

C. The Christian’s Knowledge 1:12-21

III. FALSE KNOWLEDGE2:1-22

A. What May Be Expected from the False Prophets.....2:1-3

B. What They May Expect from God2:4-10

C. A Description of Ungodly People.....2:11-22

IV. THE PRESENT CHALLENGE3:1-18

A. A Reminder3:1-2

B. An Explanation3:3-10

C. An Exhortation.....3:11-18

SECOND PETER EXPOSITION

CHAPTER 1

Two ideas stand out in the first eleven verses of this chapter.

1. Christ has committed to the apostles all things which pertain to life and godliness, giving us the right to participate in the divine nature.
 2. This privilege is only obtained with much diligence.
-

I. GREETINGS..... 1:1-2

1:1 Simon Peter, - Peter's name had been Simon before Jesus renamed him (John 1:41-42; Matthew 16:16-18). Sometimes, as here, he was referred to as Simon Peter.

A bondservant - The Greek word here for "bondservant" (DOULOS) is defined as "a slave." As a slave all of his time belonged to his master. Christians, as God's servants, cannot compartmentalize their time and activities (some belonging to God and some to themselves) – all belongs to God and Christians must act accordingly.

And Apostle of Jesus Christ - The literal definition of an apostle is, "one sent on a special mission." Peter fully proved his apostleship by the miracles he did and the powers he demonstrated.

It should be remembered that only the apostles could lay their hands upon Christians to give them the power to work miracles through the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17-21). Notice the phrase, "signs and wonders and mighty deeds" (2 Corinthians 12:12).

To those who have obtained like precious faith with us - The Greek word used here for "obtained" indicates that which is received by divine appointment and not through human exertion or merit. "Like precious faith" means equal in value or standing. "With us" is used to include either the apostles or Jews, or both.

By the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ - The word "righteousness" simply means right-ness. Here it refers to God's plan of salvation. Notice Peter says, "our God and Savior Jesus Christ." This passage proves the unity of the godhead (also see 1 Thessalonians 3:11 and 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17)

in the Greek). [For additional information please see the appendices - COPULATIVE "KAI".]

1:2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you - The phrase "be multiplied" means "made to abound." The "grace" (favor) of God comes through the knowledge of God. However, 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. Grace and peace are multiplied to the Christian as he comes to know God and His Son Jesus Christ better and better.

In the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord - The Greek word for "knowledge" here (EPIGNŌSIS) means, "precise and correct knowledge." Such knowledge comes from the inspired word of God, not the philosophies of men.

II. TRUE KNOWLEDGE 1:3-21

A. The Quest for a Godly Life..... 1:3-4

1:3 As His divine power has given - The Greek word for "given" in this verse (DŌREOMAI) is a much stronger word than the Greek word (DIDŌMI) that simply means, "to give." This Greek word has the meaning of "to grant" or "to bestow" as a gift from a king.

To us all things - Notice that this does not allow for any FUTURE REVELATIONS! If we have been given "all" things in the Scriptures nothing remains to be given. Those who falsely claim they have some additional revelation are actually implying that they know more than God.

The Gnostics were a group of false teachers. Gnosticism comes from the Greek word GNOSIS defined as knowledge. The Gnostics taught that they had received secret knowledge that ordinary people did not understand. Gnosticism also had a misunderstanding of flesh and spirit. They taught that flesh is all evil, and therefore they did not believe that Jesus came in the flesh. [For a deeper study of this topic please see the appendices - GNOSTICISM.]

That pertain to life and Godliness - "Godliness" is the quality or practice of conforming to the commands of God; devoutness and moral uprightness. This is the conduct necessary to preserve and maintain a proper spiritual life that is pleasing to God.

Through the knowledge of Him who called us - The calling that takes place is not an individual calling, separate and apart from God's word. Man is called to obedience by the message of the gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14). We are called through the gospel message by His own glory and virtue.

There is also no indication in God's word that preachers or elders (pastors) today receive a special "calling." [For additional information please see the appendices - ARE WE CALLED?]

By glory and virtue - "Glory" refers to honor and dignity and "virtue" means excellence or a condition of completeness.

The Greek word for "virtue" here describes power under control. A wild horse does not have "virtue" until all of his intrinsic power is brought under the control of his master (compare Philipians 4:8; 1 Peter 2:9; 2 Peter 1:5).

1:4 By which have been given to us - It is through the "glory" and "virtue" mentioned in the previous verse that promises have been granted to man.

Exceedingly great and precious promises - The promised things, like salvation and blessings, are "great" because no one but the Lord can bestow such favors, and they are "precious" because all the wealth in the world could not purchase them. God cannot lie, therefore if we obey His plan of salvation, He will grant unto us the forgiveness of sins. No special hidden knowledge or unrevealed rules are required for salvation.

that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature - There are three ways this can be interpreted consistently with the Scriptures:

- a. Christians become like God as they grow spiritually (compare Colossians 3:10, 1 Peter 1:14-19).
- b. Christians partake of the divine nature by the blood of Christ (compare Hebrews 2:11; 3:1).
- c. Christians partake of the divine nature as the Holy Spirit dwells within them (compare 1 Corinthians 6:19).

Having escaped - The Greek word here is a 2nd aorist active participle literally meaning, "having escaped by fleeing, having fled." When is this done? At baptism, as part of obeying God's plan of salvation. In the Scriptures we find that God's plan for salvation has five requirements.

- a. The first requirement is to **hear** the saving message of salvation (Romans 10:17). In other words, we must learn the truth before we can obey it.
- b. The second requirement is to have **faith** (belief) that Jesus is indeed the Christ the Son of God (John 8:24; Mark 16:15-16).

However, this is not the only requirement. Faith alone will not save (James 2:14, 17, 24).

- c. The third requirement of God's plan is **repentance**. The sinner is required to repent, which is composed of sorrow for sin and a change of will that results in a changed life (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 2 Corinthians 7:10).
- d. The fourth requirement is **confession**. The sinner is required to confess their faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God (Acts 8:37; Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:10).
- e. The fifth requirement is **baptism** (Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:18-19; Romans 6:3-4; 1 Peter 3:21). We must be baptized for the remission (forgiveness) of our sins (Acts 2:38).

The corruption that is in the world through lust - Sinful corruption is in the world and it operates through lust. Only those who are partakers of the divine nature escape its damaging effects.

B. THE GROWTH IN CHRISTIAN ATTRIBUTES 1:5-11

[For additional information in this section please see the appendices - SPECIAL STUDY 1 PETER 1:5-7.]

1:5 But also for this very reason - This phrase means the following information is based on what has already been said. Peter will explain that it is not enough to simply become a Christian. One must add to their faith the practices and qualities that are named.

Giving all diligence - "Giving" means, bringing in or providing. "Diligence" comes from the Greek word (SPOUDĒ) meaning, "with zeal, earnestness and with haste." It is eagerly striving to accomplish something. Diligence requires thoughtful activity.

Add to your faith - "Faith" is not only belief, but also a commitment to the requirements and demands of Christ.

Faith alone has never been enough for righteousness. The demons have faith but they are not saved (James 2:19). Righteousness requires faith and obedience working together.

There is really no reason for the confusion in the religious world today concerning the issue of faith and works. One extreme says faith only and the other extreme says works only. The Bible is clear that neither extreme is correct. God's word teaches that we are counted as righteous when faith and works of obedience combine (Galatians 5:6; James 2:18, 22).

Virtue - "Virtue" is moral excellence, goodness, or righteousness. A virtuous person has a good moral quality and a determination to do what is right.

Knowledge - This is from the Greek word (GNŌSIS) that means, "having general intelligence and understanding." This is knowledge concerning the will of Jesus Christ (as revealed in His word). The knowledge required is gained by the practice of virtue (compare John 8:32; Romans 10:2-3; Ephesians 5:15-17).

This is referring to the basic knowledge of the gospel. The Christian must add these qualities to the gospel message revealed in the New Testament, not to the so-called "higher knowledge" of the Gnostics.

1:6 Self-control - This is from the Greek word (EGKRATEIA) meaning, "self-government, discipline and the ability to control one's life in all of its parts."

Someone once said, "Self-control is when reason fights against passion and prevails." The perfect example of self-control is Jesus Christ enduring the crucifixion.

Hebrews 12:2, "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Matthew 26:53, "Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?"

Perseverance - This is from the Greek word (HUPOMONĒ) meaning, "the positive resistance to evils and a steadfast bearing up under them." The Christian not only "bears up" but "contends" against all evils. Self-control leads to and perfects patience because only those who discipline themselves are able to endure patiently the trials of life with perseverance.

Godliness - "Godliness" requires conforming to the commands of God. It is the conduct necessary to preserve and maintain a proper spiritual life that is pleasing to God. Godliness is when a Christian fulfills his duty to God, the church, his family and the lost.

1:7 Brotherly kindness - This comes from the Greek word (PHILADELPHIA) meaning, "the proper goodwill, help and affection shown to brethren in Christ, especially in times of need and distress." Brotherly love makes patience easy.

Love - This is a translation of the Greek word (AGAPĒ) meaning, "affection, good will, and benevolence." The principal meaning of the word in this passage is to have a sincere interest in the welfare of others. This is also the attitude that recognizes the debt we owe to God the Father and Jesus Christ for our redemption.

It is important to observe that it was the inspired apostle Peter's intention to show that each of these attributes grows out of, and is produced by the one that precedes it.

Notice, the special grouping of these attributes -

a. Those which are necessary to form the Christian character:

- 1) Virtue,
- 2) Knowledge,
- 3) Self-control and
- 4) Perseverance.

b. Those which reveal a true follower of Christ:

- 1) Godliness - a servant of God,
- 2) Brotherly kindness - a member of the family of God and
- 3) Love - well prompted toward all men.

As seen by this passage, no attribute can stand alone! Each is possessed only as it is able to produce and make permanent the other attributes without which the Christian character cannot exist.

1:8 For if these things are yours and abound - Not only should these qualities be a part of the Christian's life, but they should "abound."

You will be neither barren nor unfruitful - "Barren" is from the Greek word (ARGOS) meaning, "free from labor, at leisure or lazy."

"Unfruitful" comes from the Greek word (AKARPOS) meaning, "without fruit, not yielding what it ought to produce" (compare Matthew 7:15-23; John 15:1-8; Philippians 1:11; Colossians 1:10; Titus 3:13; Hebrews 13:15).

In the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ - The knowledge of the truth can only produce good results if it is **acted** upon. If a disciple is not active in making use of the knowledge gained in Christ his life will bear no fruit unto God. This is a tragic and dangerous condition. Jesus declares that all "trees" that do not bear fruit will be cut down and cast into the fire (Matthew 7:19).

1:9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness - "Shortsighted" means, "nearsighted." This would be only seeing what is near - forgetting salvation and heaven.

Someone said, "It is easy to become short-sighted in life, to see things only as they appear at the moment and become unable to take the long view of things, to have our eyes so fixed upon earth that we never think of the things beyond."

"Blindness" here is referring to spiritual blindness (compare Mark 8:18; Revelation 3:17).

And has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins - In other words, he does not fully appreciate the salvation he gained with his obedience to the gospel and he does not see the necessity for it now (compare Psalm 32:1-2; 103:1-22).

1:10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent - Because of the things presented in verses 5-9 they are to be even more diligent. In other words, they should with haste make even more effort than they did before.

To make your call and election sure - The "call" or "election" here is not an arbitrary choosing. God does not arbitrarily choose some individuals to be lost and others to be saved. God has predestined or predetermined that He will save a class of people - those who obey Him. We have been given free will by God to place ourselves into the class of those who obey.

It is God who calls and elects; but He calls by His gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14) and He elects only those who place themselves in the way of salvation through obedience to His will (Matthew 7:21). God's call is the invitation. The election is man's acceptance. This is exactly the opposite of what Calvinism teaches!

"Sure" comes from the Greek word (BEBAIOS) meaning, "stable, firm, steadfast, established." This is done through human effort.

This is a thorough and complete repudiation of the doctrine that teaches the impossibility of falling away - it is impossible to make "sure" that which has never been in doubt. The fact that it can be **made** sure implies that our salvation is not automatically sure.

For if you do these things you will never stumble - "These things" refer to what has just been stated in the previous verses. "**If**" is the key word here. "If" a Christian continues in his faithfulness, he will never fall (compare 1 Pet 4:17-19).

Peter is not saying a Christian will never sin! In a way, Peter is saying that Christians are like soldiers marching on the way to heaven, and being faithful soldiers, they will not leave the ranks and be left behind.

1:11 For so - This phrase means, "thus, in this way."

An entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ - No one will be denied heaven if they follow these commands (compare Matthew 25:34; 2 Timothy 4:18; Acts 14:22). The "everlasting kingdom" refers to the church after Christ has delivered it up to God in heaven (1 Corinthians 15:24).

C. THE CHRISTIAN'S KNOWLEDGE..... 1:12-21

1:12 For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things - To "remind" them does not mean that they had completely forgotten. This is Peter encouraging them to do what they had already been taught.

Sometimes we forget how blessed we are until a tragedy comes to someone close to us and causes us to reflect on our own lives. It is not that we have totally forgotten, but the tragedy causes us to focus our attention on the blessings.

Though you know and are established in the present truth - Teachers often need to repeat the same warnings and instructions over and over again. Not necessarily for the purpose of imparting new information, but in order to remind

Christians what they already know. If we fail to do this as Bible teachers we are guilty of negligence.

- 1:13 Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent - The Greek word here for "tent" (SKĒNŌMA) literally means, "an encampment, tabernacle or habitation." Peter uses it here to refer to his physical body.

The use of the word "tent" comes from the journeys of the Patriarchs in the Old Testament. They did not have a permanent dwelling place, but lived in tents. In much the same way our physical bodies are only temporary.

To stir you up by reminding you - The phrase "to stir you" is used to represent raising someone who is sleeping soundly. Peter did not want them to be sleeping, **spiritually**.

- 1:14 Knowing that shortly I must put off my tent - This phrase can mean one of two things:

- a. His death is near, or
- b. When his death comes it will come swiftly.

It would seem most likely that Peter is speaking of the nearness of his death. There is no way to know for sure, but uninspired history tells us his death was by crucifixion which would be a slow death.

Just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me - There is no record of when this occurred. It is possible this refers to the words Jesus spoke to Peter after the resurrection.

John 21:18-19, "Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish. This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, 'Follow Me.'"

- 1:15 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease - In the Greek the phrase "after my decease" is a compound word (EX-ODOS) that literally means, "road out." He is speaking of his exodus from life.

- 1:16 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables - Certain Jews taught "fables" or myths to their listeners and deceived many people. Peter makes it clear that he was not depending on such trickery in his teaching. Often Paul also found it

necessary to warn the people about listening to such deceptive teachers (1 Timothy 1:4; 4:7; 2 Timothy 4:4; Titus 1:14).

when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ - In the Greek the phrase "power and coming" is constructed in such a way to form almost one idea (compare Matthew 25:31-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10). The "coming" in the Greek is a technical term for the coming of a king or other high official or dignitary.

but were eyewitnesses of His majesty - In Peter's day, the Greek word for "eyewitness" here (EPOPTĒS) was used of those who were initiated into the highest order of mysteries of the heathen religions. Such were called "beholders" from the fact that they had attained to the highest degree possible.

He is saying that he (and also James and John) had been admitted to the highest degree of evidence in being privileged to see with their own eyes the glory and majesty of the transfiguration of Jesus.

It seems that Jesus had an especially close relationship with these three apostles who were often mentioned together (Luke 8:51; Matthew 26:37; Mark 5:37; 14:33).

1:17 For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory - This refers to the transfiguration of Jesus (compare Matthew 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-36).

"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" - The voice of God from the cloud makes clear the lesson to be learned. Jesus has all authority! No longer should one look to the law of Moses or the words of the Old Testament prophets for direction concerning what should be done (Hebrews 1:1-4; 12:24).

When the voice finished speaking, Jesus was alone (without Moses and Elijah). Jesus standing alone showed the divine pattern man is to follow. The old law is not to be followed. Jesus is the sole source of all authority in religion.

The lesson for us today is that the old law is not the standard. We must follow the teachings of the New Testament alone without any additions (Galatians 1:6-9; Jude 1:3; Revelation 22:18-19; Proverbs 30:6; Deuteronomy 9:2; 12:32).

1:18 And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain - Each of them (Peter, James and John) were both eyewitnesses and earwitnesses. They saw and heard.

In Luke's account of the transfiguration we see, "two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah" (Luke 9:30) - Many theories have been developed to explain why these three were transfigured before Peter, James and John. The significance of this event becomes clearer when we remember that Moses was the great lawgiver and Elijah was the great prophet. They were used to show that Jesus had ultimate authority (Luke 9:35). This would provide clear evidence to Peter, James and John that Jesus was more than just another lawgiver or prophet. This event left no doubt that Jesus was greater and superior to all, even to Moses and Elijah.

1:19 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed - The prophecy was confirmed by what he had witnessed and was now passing on to his readers. This was additional evidence and would serve to strengthen, corroborate and to make sure their faith, that was already existing.

Which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place - The prophecies were like a candle or lamp in a dark room or on a deserted road at night. The light can make objects which were unseen before, clear. The light enables us to see many things which would otherwise be invisible. The apostle Peter was advising his readers to take heed to the prophecies that had been made.

Until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts - As the darkness flees before the light, so the gloom of a sinful world fades at the coming of the morning star (the Sun: Jesus Christ). Peter is saying they needed the lamp of prophecy until the full light came, which is the fulfillment of the prophecy in Christ.

Notice this does not refer to the final return of the Lord. Peter seems to be saying that the prophetic word, confirmed to the apostles by the voice from heaven, and to Christians generally by the apostolic witness, shines like a guiding lamp, until the fuller light of day dawns upon the soul, as the believer led by the word realizes his need to repent and obey the Master.

1:20 Knowing this first that no prophecy of Scripture - This would include all prophecy, whether in the Old Testament or in the New Testament.

Is of any private interpretation - This literally means, "to become, to spring into being, to arise, to originate." Therefore, no prophecy comes or springs into existence by means of private interpretation. Peter is explaining that the prophets did not create of themselves the prophecies. They were not the original source. They merely revealed what they had been told by the Spirit of God.

The private interpretation refers not to those who would read the prophecy, but to those who delivered it, the prophets themselves. The passage deals exclusively with the manner in which the prophets received and delivered the messages for which they were instruments in the hand of God.

When the passage is properly understood it should cause us to study the Bible with deep reverence knowing that it is of Divine origin. It is God's word to man.

The fact that God's word reveals truths which the human mind could not have originated, is a good reason to study it with great diligence and prayer. This verse is not teaching that man cannot, and should not, attempt to understand the Bible.

1:21 This verse restates the information in verse 20. It is stated again for emphasis.

For prophecy never came by the will of man - No true prophet creates a prophecy himself. This is referring to its origin. True prophecy came from heaven, not man.

But - No true prophecy ever originated from man, BUT here is where the prophecies did originate.

Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit - The prophets spoke what God put into their mouths to speak. "Moved" (PHEROMENOI) is a present passive participle meaning "to bear or carry along" as a sailing vessel being moved along by the wind. The prophets were passive instruments in the hand of God, being directed what to reveal by the Holy Spirit.

There are some who think that only the thoughts, or concepts, were what the inspired writers were given and then they were allowed to put these concepts down in their own words. However, this is wrong! God's Spirit dictated the **words** (using the prophet's own styles and idioms) to say what was required!

1 Corinthians 2:12-13, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in **words** which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

1 Corinthians 2:12-13 shows that the "words" (not just the thoughts) are inspired (also compare Exodus 24:4; Jeremiah 26:2; 23:16; 2 Samuel 23:2; Matthew 5:18; 10:20; Mark 13:11; Luke 16:17; John 14:16; 16:13; Acts 1:16; 4:25; 7:38; 15:13-17; 1 Corinthians 14:37; Galatians 1:11-12; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:13; 3:16-17; Revelation 22:18-19).

Noted comments by A.A. Hodge and B.B. Warfield:

"...it is self-evident that, just as far as the thoughts of Scripture relating to any element or topic whatsoever are

inspired, the words in which those thoughts are expressed must be inspired also. Every element of Scripture, whether doctrine or history, of which God has guaranteed the infallibility, must be infallible in its verbal expression.

Thoughts are wedded to words as necessarily as soul to body. ... Besides this, the Scriptures are a **record** of divine revelations and as such consists of words...Infallible thought must be definite thought, and definite thought implies words."

[*Inspiration*, A.A. Hodge and B.B. Warfield, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1979 (reprinted from an 1881 edition), pp. 21, 22.]

CHAPTER 2

III. FALSE KNOWLEDGE2:1-22

A. WHAT MAY BE EXPECTED FROM THE FALSE PROPHETS2:1-3

Peter had just referred to the sure word of prophecy of the Old Testament and the fact that the Scriptures of the Old Testament were from God and not the mere interpretations of men.

However, in spite of the Divine origin of the Scriptures, the people still needed to contend with false prophets.

2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you - The word "but" is used to show that these false prophets stand in opposition to those inspired men who were guided by the Holy Spirit.

Notice that Peter does not say "false prophecy" but "false prophets." He names them as individuals because what they offered was not "prophecy" but "myths." The Old Testament informs us there were false prophets among the Israelites and New Testament Scripture tells us it will be no different in the church.

Jeremiah 14:14, "And the LORD said to me, 'The prophets prophesy lies in My name. I have not sent them, commanded them, nor spoken to them; they prophesy to you a false vision, divination, a worthless thing, and the deceit of their heart.'"

1 John 4:1, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world."

The fact that the first century church had to deal with false prophets, as we do today, should not surprise us. In every generation there have been false prophets who seek to lead God's people astray.

Who will secretly bring in destructive heresies - The Greek word for "secretly" (PAREISAGŌ) means, "covertly or in a sneaky way, so that the naive and uninformed people will not recognize what these teachers are doing."

It is as if spies were sneaking into the camp. It carries the idea of "slipping in by the side of" and indicates that these teachers had slyly introduced their false doctrines by the side of truth in such a way to deceive those who believed them.

The "destructive heresies" were opinions bringing destruction.

- a. They were **heresies** because they were false and
- b. **Destructive** because they brought ruin upon all who accepted them as well as on those who taught them.

What should we know about false teachers?

- a. They will twist the truth and teach what they think will bring themselves popularity.
- b. They will cunningly seduce souls into beliefs that are contrary to the Scriptures.
- c. They will always present themselves as model Christians as they lead other souls away smoothly and slowly into their false beliefs.
- d. Many times, they will take strict biblical teachings that are hard to follow and present alternate positions that will seem "more compassionate."
- e. They will always claim they love Christ and are serving Him with all their hearts.
- f. They will deceive themselves into believing that what they teach is truth.
- g. They will always lead souls away from Christ rather than to Him.

- h. They end up denying Jesus who had saved them and entice others to follow their evil ways.

Even denying the Lord who bought them - This is probably referring to Christians who had been swallowed up by the philosophies of the Gnostics (compare Matthew 10:32-33; Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 6:20). The Gnostics taught that Jesus did not come in the flesh. However, there are many ways to be guilty of denying the Lord.

Having denied the Lord three times (Matthew 26:69-75), I wonder how Peter felt as he wrote these words.

And bring on themselves swift destruction - In other words, this was their own doing. Their "destruction" will be "swift" in that the Lord will not hesitate to punish them for their wickedness when the time comes.

- 2:2 And many will follow their destructive ways - The Greek word here for "destructive" (APŌLEIA) means, "destroying, utter destruction." This includes all types of immorality.

The false teachers lead Christians into blatant immorality. Their "destructive ways" show that they literally do not care about the judgment of men, or God.

Their false teachings even brought true Christianity into disrespect with the nonbelievers.

Because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed - This is the damage that will be done to the church. Many nonbelievers did not engage in such immoral practices and they assumed these false teachers were teaching actual Christianity. Therefore, Christianity was looked down upon by these misled people.

The false teacher desires to put his ideas in the place of the truth of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the false teacher is in actuality usurping the place and authority of Christ.

False teachers cunningly manipulate their doctrines and it is when these doctrines are disguised as truth that they become so dangerous to uninformed souls.

- 2:3 By covetousness - This unlawful desire for personal gain was the motive which influenced these false teachers.

They will exploit you - The Greek word for "exploit" here (EMPOREUOMAI) means, "to use a person or a thing for gain." Peter is saying that these false teachers will use them to accomplish their selfish goals.

With deceptive words - In the Greek, "deceptive" words (PLASTOS) means, "to mold as in clay or wax." In this verse it is the molding of words by false teachers to fit their vain imaginations. Words artfully crafted together for the occasion in order to deceive.

For a long time, their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber - From the very beginning this type of person has been condemned. It may appear to us they are getting away with it, but God has not forgotten. They will pay for their evil deeds which the next few verses show.

B. WHAT THEY MAY EXPECT FROM GOD2:4-10

2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned - God's judgment is sure! If God punished angels who sinned, and they are beings superior to men and have been in the very presence of God, how can lowly man possibly escape the judgment when he deliberately and willfully sins against God?

There have been many different theories about the nature of this sin of the angels. However, the Bible does not reveal this information. There are certain things we simply have not been told in the Bible about these angels:

- a. What the **nature** of their sin was,
- b. **When** they sinned and
- c. The **number** of those who sinned.

But cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness - The Greek word for "hell" found here (TARTAROŌ) is also used in Greek mythology of the place of restraint and punishment for the souls of wicked men after death. The nature of that place is the same as that which characterized the rich man in "torments in hades," separated by a great gulf from the righteous (Luke 16:19-31).

It is reasonable to assume that these two ("hell" and "torments") are the same, and that these places are the same, and that TARTARUS is that compartment in the Hadean realm where wicked spirits are reserved (kept in restraint) until the day of their final condemnation. [For additional information please see the appendices - Chart: WHERE DO WE GO WHEN WE DIE?]

To be reserved for judgment - This literally means being reserved for the final judgment.

Who Are These Angels Who Sinned?

There are some who say that Genesis 6:2-4 tells of a wicked association between angels and women, and that the sin of the angels was fornication "with the daughters of men."

- a. There is no reference made to angels in that passage,
- b. Jesus shows us in Matthew 22:30 that angels are sexless,
- c. In the context, the "sons of God" are actually the descendants of Seth and
- d. The "daughters of men" are the descendants of Cain.

Others believe these are the angels referred to by Jude.

Jude 1:6, "And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day."

Notice the following:

- a. The angels were originally holy,
 - b. They sinned,
 - c. The occasion of their sin was in their abandoning their "proper habitation" and
 - d. As a result, they were cast down to a place of bondage.
-

2:5 And did not spare the ancient world - This "ancient world" refers to those who lived at the time of the flood. They were wicked men and God did not spare them from the destruction of the flood.

But saved Noah, one of the eight people - Noah was spared because he was a man who had faith (Genesis 6:8) and was willing to obey God (Genesis 6:22; 7:5).

Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their wives were the only people saved from the flood (Genesis 6:18).

A preacher of righteousness - This explains to us that Noah was a preacher "while the ark was being prepared" (1 Peter 3:19-20). He was the first evangelist we read about in the Scriptures. He condemned the unrighteousness and corruption in his day and encouraged the people to repent.

Bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly - The Greek for "world" here refers to the people of the world, not the physical earth.

This was Peter's second illustration showing that God's judgment is sure. In this example we see the magnitude of His judgment. Out of the multitudes who lived in the world at that time (perhaps in the millions) only eight souls were saved. The people being in the majority did not mean they set the standard for morality! God has all authority, He is the Lawgiver and the Judge, and those who turn from Him and live in rebellion to Him will answer for it.

2:6 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes - This is the third illustration showing the certainty of God's judgment and punishment of the wicked (Genesis 13:13).

Perhaps the easiest sin to fall into is the sin of conforming to the ways of the world. It is always easy to be like others, but not always easy to be different.

Condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly - The punishment of these evildoers was not only for their own sakes, but also to serve as a warning to others (see 1 Timothy 5:20).

1 Timothy 5:19-20, "Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses. Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, **that the rest also may fear.**"

2:7 And delivered righteous Lot - The language here is saying that Lot was "righteous" or just. Many condemn Lot for his choosing what seemed to be the better land when Abraham gave him the choice (Genesis 13:10). But notice God's word says here that Lot was "righteous" or just.

These three illustrations should shock us. However, one of the problems plaguing society, and even the church, is that many are no longer shocked by sin.

Who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked - The Greek word here for "oppressed" literally means to be exhausted by the conditions in which he lived.

This third illustration shows that man can live righteously before God (compare verse 5) even when surrounded by sinful men. Lot was not perfect and neither was Noah, but they were trying to live the way God commanded them to live. Even though he was in the midst of vile sinners, Lot kept himself separated from their rebellion and God delivered him.

2:8 For that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds - This is exactly what we would expect of a godly person dwelling among evil people. Seeing their evil deeds and hearing their vile language would be tormenting to any person who is righteous, as was Lot. Notice Lot was tormented by "seeing" and "hearing."

Someone once said, "No man needs to be a slave of the environment in which he lives. Lot was willing to make a clean break with his environment. He was prepared to leave it forever. It was because his wife was not prepared to make the clean break that she perished."

2:9 Then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations - God does not promise there will not be trials, even for the godly. However, if a disciple is faithful, God will care for him and help him to overcome. How?

1 Corinthians 10:13, "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."

Hebrews 4:16, "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

And to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment - This shows that punishment for the "unjust" is certain. Evil men will not always get the punishment they deserve in this life, but they will certainly be punished after the judgement.

2:10 And especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority - They greedily reached for the unlawful works of the flesh and they despised all authority with contempt. Any efforts made to restrain them, in their wild rebellion, was despised by them.

They are presumptuous - This comes from the Greek word meaning, "shameless and irreverent in their daring."

Self-willed - This means, "self-satisfied, self-pleasing and a self-loving spirit." This even includes worship that is done according to man's will and not God's will (Colossians 2:23).

The person who is self-willed will always emphasize his own opinions and will not even consider the rights, opinions and interests of others or even the commands of God.

They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries - In the Greek, "dignitaries" would literally include anything or anyone that is glorious. However, in this context it may be directly referring to angels when we consider Peter's words concerning their dignity and glory in the next verse.

- a. However, there is no strong reason to interpret it in only this way.
- b. By implication it would also include evil men of exalted rank.
- c. In this case, we should respect their rank but not them personally.

In this section (2 Peter 2:4-10), Peter has painted for us a picture of an evil man:

- a. He is a desire-dominated man,
- b. He is an audacious man (daring in his sin),
- c. He is a self-willed man.

This evil man insists on living in one world - the physical. To him the spiritual world does not exist!

C A DESCRIPTION OF UNGODLY PEOPLE 2:11-22

2:11 Whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord - Here we see the contrast between "angels" and those who "are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries." The angels are careful to avoid bringing accusations against those who are blatantly wicked.

Even though we are sometimes required to tell some people that they are hypocrites, backsliders, liars or even adulterers, it must NEVER be done with a malicious motive. The truth must always be spoken in a loving and gentle way.

Ephesians 4:14-16, "That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, **speaking the truth in love**, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the **edifying of itself in love.**"

2:12 But these like natural brute beasts, made to be caught and destroyed - Man was created as a rational being, able to think logically and to reason correctly, but these men were acting as though they were animals. They were like savage beasts who had no control over their desires.

- a. They are not concerned about what is right or wrong or in the best interest of others.
- b. They viciously seek to fulfill their own sinful desires at the cost and destruction of others.

Speak evil of the things they do not understand - This seems to be referring to matters of religion when compared with the context where Peter is talking about false teachers (2 Peter 2:1).

And will utterly perish in their own corruption - A savage animal that rushes about killing wantonly must be destroyed. The false teachers will be self-destructed. They will perish in their own corruption.

2:13 And will receive the wages of unrighteousness - This refers back to verse 12.

Romans 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

As those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime - Usually men hide their sins under the cover of darkness, but these men are so depraved they sin openly without any embarrassment (compare Jeremiah 3:3).

They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you - They are a disgrace to Christian fellowship. They are like the animals with blemishes that made them unfit to be offered to God as a sacrifice under the Old Law. These men were so depraved they actually rejoiced in the way they had deceived their victims while participating in the fellowship of sharing a meal with them.

2:14 Having eyes full of adultery - Literally this means that they have an adulteress constantly before their eyes, and they can see no other thing but her. This graphic term describes a man who is unable to look at a woman without regarding her as an object of lust (compare Job 31:1; Matthew 5:27-29).

And that cannot cease from sin - These false teachers have trained their hearts to be full of lust. These men have trained themselves to desire more and more of the things which they have no right to desire let alone the right to have.

Enticing unstable souls - The Greek word for "enticing" here means, "to trap with bait." They were targeting the weak Christians and the new converts.

They have a heart trained in covetous practices - Literally this means they had exercised themselves in covetous practices. They have actually taught their minds to concentrate on nothing but forbidden desires.

They have trained their hearts to be completely focused on fulfilling their desires. Like an athlete who has diligently disciplined himself to think and act so that every part of his body responds to one thing.

And are accursed children - This describes their immaturity. If a person dedicates himself to these fleshly pleasures he will damage himself in bodily health, spiritual health and mental character. They were "children" in the sense of their character.

Ephesians 2:1-3, "And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the **sons of disobedience**, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others."

2:15 They have forsaken the right way and gone astray - The Greek word for "forsaken" here (KATALEIPŌ) means, "to leave behind, to depart from, to abandon." These men had once been faithful, but had "gone astray." This means to step aside from the pathway of righteousness.

"Going astray" means that you strayed from being right. The doctrine of "once saved always saved is wrong!" A Christian can fall from grace.

Following the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness - Balaam acted as if the wealth, offered to him by king Balak to curse Israel, could not convince him, but he yielded and went in the direction of sin (Numbers 22:31-35).

Balaam prophesied a blessing for Israel instead of a curse, but he later suggested to the Moabites that they should seduce the Israelites to commit fornication (Numbers 31:16; Revelation 2:14).

Like Balaam with Israel, false teachers today seduce Christians away from Christ's way, which in essence is causing them to break their pledges of loyalty to Christ.

2:16 But he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet - This shows Balaam had already made up his mind. He would not listen to the voice of God, so God spoke to him through the donkey.

It was sheer "madness" for a prophet of God to curse God's people without God directing him to do so.

2:17 These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest - False teachers promise so much and their teaching sounds so good, but their promises are empty (verse 18) and their followers suffer great disappointment.

Imagine the disappointment the thirsty traveler feels when he comes to an oasis or spring only to find it has gone dry. Or a farmer as he watches the storm clouds roll by when he is in desperate need of water. They both thought their needs were going to be met, but instead their disappointment is increased far more than it would have been otherwise.

For whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever - Since these pretenders are like clouds without rainfall, they deserve to go into another form of blackness or gloom, and that is eternal darkness which is being reserved for them.

Matthew 22:13, "Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into **outer darkness**; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

2 Peter 2:4, "For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of **darkness**, to be reserved for judgment."

2:18 For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness - This refers to swollen, arrogant speech that causes the weak to be tempted through lewdness (lasciviousness).

The ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error - This refers to new converts!

2:19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption - These false teachers were enticing new Christians with freedom from the restraints of Christianity. However, this liberty actually enslaves. They were slaves selling bondage!

The only way to be truly free is to be free in Christ and that requires obeying His commands. We gain freedom from sin and spiritual death when we submit to **serve** the one true Master.

For by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage - One cannot serve Satan and call Jesus his master.

Matthew 7:21, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."

Luke 6:46, "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?"

Romans 6:16, "Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?"

2:20 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world - This is another way of saying, they had obeyed the gospel. Peter is talking about saved Christians.

Through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ - Notice that knowledge is required for escape and salvation.

John 8:31-32, "Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, 'If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and **the truth shall make you free.**'"

[This verse refers to the "Lord **and** Savior Jesus Christ." The article "and" indicates that Jesus is both Lord and Savior. For additional information please see the appendices - COPULATIVE "KAI".]

They are again entangled in them and overcome - Peter gives a warning that some of those who had once enjoyed the blessings of salvation had been entangled in sin and fallen from grace. This clearly refers to those who had been saved. One cannot become "**again**" entangled in something IF he has never escaped!

The later end is worse for them than the beginning - The punishment these individuals will experience will be "worse" because they had once known the blessings of salvation that had been theirs in Christ (compare Matthew 11:20-24;

Luke 11:24-26; Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:26-31). The saddest people in eternity will be those who ALMOST made it to heaven.

2:21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness - Literally this is "not to have fully known." This emphasizes the fact that these teachers had enjoyed a full understanding of the principles of Christianity which they now rejected. Now their punishment will be far greater than it would have been if they had never known the truth.

Every teacher of God's word should never forget the responsibility which this knowledge brings! (see James 3:1).

The "way of righteousness" is another name for the gospel.

Than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them - "It" is "the way of righteousness" that refers to the whole Christian system (compare 1 Corinthians 10:1-12; Hebrews 3:12-18; 6:6; 10:26,38-39; Jude 1:4-6).

2:22 But it has happened to them according to the true proverb - It is possible that the proverb about the dog comes from Proverbs 26:11, and the proverb about the sow comes from a Gentile source.

"A dog returns to his own vomit," and, "A sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire" - These two animals were held in great contempt in the culture of the first century. The dog was looked upon as a filthy scavenger, and the sow was seen as an abomination. It is not unusual for animals to act so foolishly, but men are expected to have more sense.

These people had escaped the defilements of the world, but now they had returned to the filth of sin. The point is: "Why would you go back to the thing that made you sick in the first place?"

CHAPTER 3

IV. THE PRESENT CHALLENGE 3:1-18

A. A REMINDER..... 3:1-2

[For additional information concerning this section please see the appendices - 2 PETER 3: SECOND COMING.]

3:1 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle - By referring to this as his "second" epistle, it shows that the people he addressed in 1 Peter 1:1 and 2 Peter 1:1 are the same.

In both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder - The phrase "stir up" comes from a Greek word (DIEGEIRŌ) meaning, "to rouse one up, as if a person is sleeping." "Pure" comes from a Greek word (EILIKRINĒS) meaning, "to judge by sunlight." In other words, when it is examined in the sunlight it is found to be pure (sincere).

3:2 That you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets - The "holy prophets" refers to both those of the Old Testament and the New Testament (Matthew 3:1-2; 10:16-20; John 16:13; Acts 2:14; 11:27-28; 13:1; 15:32; 21:9-10). The truthfulness of each is the same. The prophets "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21), and the apostles spoke "as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4).

And of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior - We must recognize the difference between the "words" of the prophets and the "commandment" of the apostles of the Lord. The words of the Old Testament prophets foretold of the Messiah, but the commandment of the Lord is what directs us today.

Hebrews 1:1-2, "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;"

The false teachers were speaking their own uninspired words, while the apostles were speaking the words given to them by the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 16:13).

B. AN EXPLANATION.....3:3-10

3:3 Knowing this first - Peter now makes a contrast between the holy men of God and the false teachers. The men of God had prophesied concerning the end of the world and the return of the Lord. The false teachers were denying both.

The false teachers had two things they used for their denial:

- a. The long delay in the fulfillment and
- b. The stability of the earth.

That scoffers will come in the last days - "Scoffers" is literally mockers and by implication a false teacher. They ridiculed the idea that Jesus would return and that His return would signal the end of the world (compare Matthew 20:19; 27:29-30,41; John 15:18-20).

The "last days" refers to the Christian age. A careful study of the New Testament reveals that the "last days" started when God began to speak to man through His beloved Son and will continue until Jesus comes again (Acts 2:16-17; Hebrews 1:1-2). We are living in the "last days" now. and no one knows when the final coming of Jesus will be (Matthew 24:36, 42, 44).

Walking according to their own lusts - They were living to fulfill their own sinful desires (compare 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 4:1-5).

3:4 And saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?" - There was a Hebrew expression which implied that the thing asked about did not even exist. For example, "Where is there justice in our courts of law?"

Obviously, this was mocking:

- a. Outward mocking - verbal and
- b. Inward mocking - by their everyday actions they were showing their inward derision.

For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation - This was not a true statement, as we will see, but they claimed that no changes had occurred since the beginning.

Their argument was – "Our universe is so stable that such events as the second coming of Christ would not, or could not happen." Peter will argue, "Don't take God's mercy and longsuffering as evidence that His judgment will never come."

3:5 For this they willfully forget - The Greek grammar here is present active showing that their ignorance was designed and willful. Literally they were simply wishing they were correct. They were willfully ignorant of their error.

That by the word of God the heavens were of old - It was by the word of God that the "heavens and earth" were created (Genesis 1:1), and by which also the earth and water were separated from each other (Genesis 1:9-10).

The Genesis account of the creation is literal! It is not a myth or an allegory. The emphasis here in this verse is the phrase, "by the word of God" (compare "God said" Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26).

And the earth standing out of water and in the water - This Greek word (GἜ), translated as "earth," refers to the physical earth (planet).

3:6 By which - This refers to the water of Genesis 7:11 in the flood, "...all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened."

The world - Here Peter uses the Greek word (KOSMOS) that refers to that order or harmonious arrangement of things in which man lives and moves. This does not refer to the physical earth or planet (GĒ).

That then existed perished - The Greek word used here (APOLLUMI) means, "to destroy." It does not mean to annihilate. This same word is translated as "lost" in other places.

Luke 15:6, "And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was **lost!**'"

Luke 15:32, "It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was **lost** and is found."

This is the idea of:

- a. Ruin NOT extinction and
- b. Loss of well-being, NOT loss of being.
- c. Compare 2 Peter 2:1, 3; 3:7, 9, 16; Luke 16:3-6; 1 Peter 1:7.

Peter is denying their argument that the world has always continued just as it was from the beginning. Had they forgotten the flood? Things have not always been the same. His words of warning are that God has "destroyed" the world before and He will do it again!

3:7 But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word - God's word keeps all things in existence (Hebrews 1:3) and this verse shows that His word will destroy everything. God's word is not void!

Isaiah 55:11, "So shall My **word** be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."

Please notice that the word "earth" here is the same Greek word (GĒ) that is used in verse 5!

Verse 5 is talking about the earth (and universe) that God spoke into existence in Genesis 1. This verse shows that the **same** earth (and universe) will one day be destroyed.

The contrast is not between verses 5 and 7 but between 6 and 7. The harmonious arrangement of the world (KOSMOS) that then perished, but the universe that now exists will someday be destroyed.

There are some who teach that the world will only be "destroyed" like it was in the flood.

That is, in the flood the EARTH was not physically destroyed, only the people who lived on it. They say it was simply a cleansed earth. They believe the same will be true at the fulfillment of this passage, that when Jesus returns in judgment the earth will only be cleansed.

BUT NOTICE: in verse 6 it was the KOSMOS (world) that was destroyed and in verse 7 it will be the GĒ (earth) AND the heavens (sun, moon, stars) that will be destroyed! What was made in verse 5 is what is going to be destroyed in verse 7, NOT what "perished" in verse 6.

"Preserved" comes from the Greek word (THĒSAURIZŌ) that literally means, "stored up." It is already stored up for fire.

2 Thessalonians 1:7-8, "And to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in **flaming fire** taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men - The physical earth will remain until the day of judgment because man is to live on it until then. After the judgment it will not be needed.

3:8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing - The Greek here is literally, "let not this one thing escape you."

With the Lord - This phrase means in His sight or how He regards things (compare Psalm 90:4).

One day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day - Eternity has no measurement of time. Man thinks of events as being slow, but God knows no time in this sense.

This is Peter's second answer to the scoffers. He shows that the delay is relative and means nothing since God does not regard time as we do.

This verse has nothing to do with the way God **counts** time.

Some religious groups mistakenly use this to prove the Judgment will be a literal thousand years. However, it is clearly not being used in a literal sense.

This also has nothing to do with the "days" of Genesis 1. This verse does not serve as a formula or conversion rate. It would be a mistake to take every verse that mentions a certain number of days and convert it to thousands of years. Peter is simply saying that mankind thinks about time differently than God.

3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness - The Greek word (BRADUNŌ) translated as "slack" means, "to delay, be slow or loiter." It is being late with reference to an appointed time of meeting.

Just because some false teachers think the delay of the Lord' judgment is proof there will be no judgment, does not make it so! Just because God does not work within man's framework of time does not prove He does not exist, nor that He will not carry out His promise.

But is longsuffering toward us - This points to God's mercy as another reason for the delay.

Not willing that any should perish - The Greek word used here (APOLLUMI) means, "to destroy." It does not mean to annihilate (see verse 6). This same word is translated as "lost" in other places.

But that all should come to repentance - This proves that the false doctrine of Calvinism is totally wrong! He will save ALL who come to repentance and obey Him (compare Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30-31; 2:38; 1 Timothy 2:4; Revelation 22:17).

Time is opportunity – In that day when we run out of time we run out of opportunity to repent and be right with the Lord. We also run out of time to help others.

3:10 But the day of the Lord - This refers to the day in which He will appear in the clouds for the purpose of raising the dead and instituting judgment (compare John 5:28-29; 1 Corinthians 1:8; Philippians 1:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:2).

Will come as a thief in the night - Judgment will come as a thief because of its:

a. Suddenness and

- b. Unexpectedness.
- c. Compare Matthew 24:36,43-44; 1 Thessalonians 5:2; Revelation 3:3.

There will be no announcements or signs for the final judgment. We know this does not refer to the destruction of Jerusalem, because Jesus had given the people several signs for its destruction:

- a. "Wars and rumors of wars" (Matthew 24:6),
- b. "False christs" (Matthew 24:24; Mark 13:22) and
- c. The "abomination of desolation" (Matthew 24:15)

When the Christians saw the Roman army surrounding Jerusalem, they knew the destruction of Jerusalem had come and they fled the city before the slaughter began.

In which the heavens will pass away with a great noise - See verses 5 and 7 for "heavens." The Greek word for the phrase "pass away" (PARERCHOMAI) means, "to perish" (compare Matthew 24:35; 5:18; Luke 16:17). The phrase "with a great noise" comes from the Greek word (RHOIZĒDON) meaning, "with a great noise as if a crash."

And the elements will melt - "Elements" here are, "the elements from which all things have come, the material causes of the universe." The Greek word translated as "melt" (LUŌ) means, "break (up), destroy or dissolve." This same word is used in 1 John 3:8 about the works of the Devil. Did Jesus simply **renovate** the works of the devil? No, they were destroyed!

1 John 3:8, "He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested, that He might **destroy** the works of the devil."

With fervent heat - This comes from the Greek word (KAUSOŌ) meaning, "to set on fire, to burn up, to be **consumed** by heat."

both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up - The "earth" (GĒ) here refers to the planet (compare verses 5 and 7). The "works" refer to all of the works of both God and man. "Burned up" comes from the Greek word (KATAKAIŌ) meaning, "to consume wholly, burn up, utterly."

Some versions mistakenly translate this word as, "exposed or laid bare" However, if it is simply "exposed or laid bare," then it is "exposed" and "laid bare" for God's complete destruction of it.

C. AN EXHORTATION.....3:11-18

Peter concludes answering the scoffers about the second coming of the Lord and the destruction of the earth, and now admonishes his readers to realize the coming destruction and judgment and to live accordingly. They are to live holy and godly lives before God and man.

3:11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved - "Dissolved" is the same Greek word (LUŌ) that means, "destroyed" (see "melt" in previous verse).

what manner of persons ought you to be - This is a weak translation of the Greek. It should be translated as "what manner of persons **must you be.**" It is not just what we "ought" to do, but that we "must" do to be prepared for the judgment (compare Luke 2:49; John 3:9; Acts 4:12; 5:29; 9:6; 16:30; Hebrews 11:6).

In holy conduct and godliness - In other words, everything we do, we should do as God's word has directed us.

3:12 Looking for - This carries the idea of anticipation and eagerness (compare Luke 1:21; Acts 3:5; 10:24; 1 Corinthians 16:22; Matthew 25:1-13).

Hastening the coming of the day of God - "Hastening" implies both eagerness and desire. Some think this refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, but it is impossible to believe Peter is telling Christians to earnestly desire the destruction of Jerusalem, and all of the horrors that would accompany it. What kind of encouragement and joy could that possibly bring them?

However, it would be a great comfort for them to know that the day of their redemption was coming ("the day of God" - compare 1 Corinthians 15:24). That is what they were to expectantly look for and earnestly desire.

2 Timothy 4:8, "Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all **who have loved His appearing.**"

Because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat - This is when the destruction already described in verse ten will occur. The Greek word for "melt" here in verse twelve is different than the one translated "melt" in verse ten. This is a much stronger word! The Greek word here (TĒKŌ) means, "to liquify." This does not leave anything after the destruction has been accomplished.

It should be noted that these are the actual, real events that will take place when Jesus returns!

3:13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise - What is this promise that has been made?

Isaiah 65:17, "For behold, I create **new heavens and a new earth**; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind."

Isaiah 66:22, "'For as the **new heavens and the new earth** which I will make shall remain before Me,' says the LORD, 'So shall your descendants and your name remain.'"

Revelation 21:1-2, "Now I saw a **new heaven and a new earth**, for **the first heaven and the first earth had passed away**. Also, there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

Look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells - Notice that the "new heavens" and "new earth" will exist AFTER the world has been destroyed by fire. This will be the new home for the righteous (compare Matthew 13:41-42; Revelation 20:15; 21:1-5, 8). Simply stated this is the new dwelling place for God and man.

The "new" in this verse is from the Greek word KAINOS. There are two words for "new" in the New Testament - KAINOS and NEOS. Preacher, Guy N. Woods makes the following point:

"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."

As to the substance of it, Thayer describes "new" as, "of a **new kind, unprecedented**, novel, uncommon, unheard of."

The "new heavens" and "new earth" is a descriptive phrase referring to the Christians home in heaven with God. This cannot refer to a **renovated** physical earth. Notice these words:

Matthew 24:35, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."

Isaiah 66:22, "'For as the **new heavens and the new earth** which I will make **shall remain before Me,**' says the LORD, 'So shall your descendants and your name remain.'"

Note the phrase, "remain before Me." The original "heavens and earth" will NOT remain!

Revelation 20:11, "Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face **the earth and the heaven fled away.** And there was found no place for them."

John 14:1-3, "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house (*heaven*) 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 to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."

This earth is not the Christian's home!

Philippians 3:20, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus, we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words."

DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

There are some who believe 2 Peter 3:1-13 is discussing the destruction of Jerusalem and not the end of the world.

In answer to this position consider the following:

1. If this is talking about the destruction of Jerusalem, why the question asked by the "scoffers" in verse 4?
 - a. These mockers referred to the stability of the earth as an argument against the Lord's coming.
 - b. Other cities had been destroyed.
 - c. Other nations had ceased to exist.
 - d. So, when they said, "all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation," they had to be referring to the stability of the earth.
 2. Peter answers their objection stated in verse 4 by his reply in verse 5.
 - a. Peter shows that the world (KOSMOS - that refers to that order or harmonious arrangement of things) had been destroyed by water,
 - b. Which shows Peter is talking about a calamity of a universal nature.
 3. "The heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water" has to refer to the literal earth and skies and to what is being destroyed in verse 7.
 4. Verses 6 and 7 show that as the world (KOSMOS) was destroyed, so the physical heavens and the earth (GĒ) will be literally destroyed.
-

3:14 Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things - We should be forward looking or considering these things that will take place in the future.

Be diligent - The Greek word here for "diligent" (SPOUDAZŌ) means, "to use speed, to make effort, to be prompt or earnest."

It is clear that since there is to be a new heaven and a new earth, and since that new heaven and new earth are to be the home of the righteous, then obviously we must seek with all our heart, mind and strength to be worthy to live there.

To be found by Him in peace - This is peace with God and with man (compare Romans 5:1-2; James 4:4).

Without spot - This means, "undefiled and spotless" (compare Philippians 2:15).

And blameless - This means, "unblemished and not condemned." It does not mean moral perfection. However, it means not having any legitimate charge standing against us which has not been made right with God.

3:15 And consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation - "Longsuffering" is God's mercy extending time for man's salvation, NOT the breaking of His promise as the scoffers claimed (2 Peter 3:3-4)! Compare Acts 13:26; Romans 11:11; Hebrews 2:3.

As also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you - This means that not only was Peter familiar with the writings of Paul, but also those to whom Peter sent this letter knew Paul's writings. Peter was close to Paul and expressed his love for him calling him "beloved brother." Notice this was after Paul had "withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed" for his hypocrisy (Galatians 2:11-14).

The "wisdom given to him" refers to divine wisdom (inspiration) (compare 1 Corinthians 2:13; 14:37; Galatians 1:12-17; Colossians 2:3).

3:16 As also in all his epistles - It is possible Paul's letters were being read throughout the churches at this time. They would have had a much wider circulation by now than just to the churches to which they were originally addressed.

Speaking in them of these things - The phrase "these things" refers to the same things Peter was addressing in this letter (compare Romans 2:4; 3:25; 9:22-23; 11:22).

In which are some things hard to understand - Peter does not say ALL of Paul's writings were (or are) hard to understand.

- a. Neither does he say they are impossible to understand.
- b. Nor does he say they (or we) need someone to interpret Paul's writings for them (or us).

The ones who had serious difficulty understanding what Paul wrote were those who were untaught and unstable in their convictions who twisted the Scriptures.

Which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction - "Untaught" describes those who were ignorant or unlearned. "Unstable" describes those who were not settled in their principles or views. He is referring to those without definite, steadfast convictions. "Twist" comes from the Greek word (STREBLOŌ)

meaning, "to distort, pervert, torture, or turn from the proper position." For example:

- a. Paul's teaching on grace was twisted into an excuse and even a reason for sin (Romans 6:1-2).
- b. Paul's teaching concerning a Christian's freedom in Christ was twisted to justify following after the lusts of the flesh (Galatians 5:13).
- c. Paul's teaching concerning faith has been twisted into an argument for salvation by faith only (Romans 4:1-5; see James 2:14-26).

Someone once said, "One of the most tragic things in life is when a man twists Christian truth and Holy Scriptures into an excuse for doing what he wants to do instead of taking them as a guide for doing what God commands him to do" (compare Matthew 7:21; Galatians 1:6-9; Hebrews 5:9).

God wants us to do four things with the Bible:

- a. Read it,
- b. Interpret it correctly,
- c. Use it in our lives and
- d. Defend it (teaching).

As they do also the rest of the Scriptures - Peter (by inspiration) places Paul's teachings on an equal level with all the Old Testament Scriptures. Therefore, Paul's writings are also on the same inspired level with the rest of the New Testament.

3:17 You therefore, beloved, since you know these things beforehand - To be "forewarned" is to be "forearmed," and such was the purpose of Peter's admonition here. The Bible is FILLED with warnings (compare Acts 20:28-31; 1 Corinthians 10:12; Galatians 5:4; etc.).

Beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked - Peter warns these Christians to not fall away as had others. Some of the faithful were actually falling from their steadfastness (grace).

If, as some claim, one cannot fall from grace, it is very difficult to understand what Peter is saying here! The "once saved always saved" doctrine also makes the "Parable of the Soils" meaningless (Matthew 13:19-23). The doctrine of "once saved always saved" also makes many

other passages meaningless which refer to the possibility of a Christian falling from grace (compare Matthew 13:5,9,33; 1 Corinthians 10:12; Galatians 2:13 - Peter and Barnabas; Galatians 5:4; 1 Corinthians 9:27).

Christians can only escape the destruction of the wicked by being constantly on guard against the "error of the wicked." God's wrath will come to the wicked "full strength" (see Revelation 14:9-10).

3:18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ - "Grow in the grace" means to increase in the favor of the Lord. Notice that this is coupled with knowledge. Our favor with the Lord will increase only as our knowledge of Him and His word increases. "Grace" is used here to sum up all the favor of God which increases toward us as we advance in stature as His children. To grow in "knowledge" is to become better informed in the doctrine of Christ and to enter more fully into sympathy with His cause.

In conclusion Peter is telling them (and us) at least three things:

- a. The Christian is one who is forewarned. He knows both the "right way" and the "wrong way" and cannot plead ignorance.
- b. The Christian is to have a developing life. He is to grow in grace and experience God's overall care.
- c. The Christian is to be rooted and founded in the faith, given "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3).

This verse is the key to the whole book!

To Him be the glory both now and forever - All honor and worthiness should be assigned to the Lord forever (without end).

Amen - "Amen" literally means "so be it." The word "Amen" started as a Hebrew word (Numbers 5:22), which was transliterated into Greek and then eventually into English. The word comes from a Hebrew root word which means "to build up or support; to be firm or faithful, to trust or believe; to be true or certain." It is also used as an adverb at the beginning of a speech to mean "surely, of a truth, truly" (Matthew 5:18; Mark 3:28; John 3:3). At the conclusion of a sentence it is used to mean "so it is, so be it, may it be fulfilled." When the word is used as an adjective it means "firm or true."

Some dictionaries claim that when "Amen" is used at the end of a prayer it means approval of what is being said. However, our approval does not make it true. It is more correct to think of it as "this is true, or may it come to pass, or may it be fulfilled."

END

APPENDICES	112
1 PETER.....	113
The Church in Purpose	113
Did Paul Endorse Slavery?	116
The True Likeness	121
Three Different Greek Words Used for the Same Office	124
The Eldership.....	125
2 PETER.....	129
Copulative Kai.....	129
Are We Called?	130
Special Study: 2 Peter 1:5-7.....	132
2 Peter 1:5-7	134
Faith	134
Virtue.....	140
Knowledge.....	142
Self-Control / Temperance.....	146
Perseverance	151
Godliness	156
Brotherly Kindness.....	161
Love	166
Where Do Go When We Die?	169
2 Peter 3: The Second Coming of Christ.....	170
False Brethren.....	172
Gnosticism	177

THE CHURCH IN PURPOSE

A. The church was in the purpose of God as early as the birth of Paul.

1. “But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me, even from my mother’s womb, and called me through his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood...” (Galatians 1:15-16a). From this scripture we learn that God separated Paul from the time of his birth to preach the gospel among the Gentiles. Certainly, God knew that the preaching of the gospel of Christ would result in the establishment of the church in communities where it is preached. To say that God purposed that Paul should preach the gospel, but did not know that such preaching would result in the founding of churches of Christ is unthinkable.
2. The word of God is the seed of the kingdom (Luke 8:11). Preaching the word of God is sowing the seed of the kingdom (Matthew 13:19,23). When the seed of the kingdom is sown in the hearts of people and allowed to have its way, children of the kingdom will be the result (Matthew 13:38). A group of children of the kingdom in any community constitutes the kingdom in that place. And since the kingdom is the church (Matthew 16:18-19), it follows that this group of children of the kingdom produced by the preaching of the gospel, is the church in that community. It was in the purpose of God that Paul should preach Christ among the Gentiles and since this preaching results in the establishment of churches of Christ, it follows that the purpose of God included the establishment of churches of Christ through the preaching of the gospel by Paul. Since he was separated in the mind of God for this work from the time of his birth, we know that the church was in the purpose of God as far back as the birth of Paul.

B. The church was in the purpose of God in the time of Moses. “I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come; how that the Christ must suffer, and how that he first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles” (Acts 26:22-23). Here we learn that the prophets, including Moses, foretold the suffering of Christ on the cross. Paul tells us that Christ purchased the church with his own blood shed on the cross (Acts 20:28). Is it possible that God knew that his Son would suffer on Calvary, but did not know that he would purchase the church with his blood shed in that suffering? John saw the “four living creatures” and the “four and twenty elders” fall down before Christ, the Lamb, and sing his praises, saying, “For thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the

earth” (Revelation 5:9-10). The people who are purchased with the blood of the Lamb are made to be a kingdom. Did God know in the time of Moses that the Christ would suffer, but did not know that through his suffering men would be purchased and that those so purchased would constitute the kingdom, the church? Such a conclusion is unthinkable. God knew and purposed in the time of Moses that the church should be purchased through the suffering of Christ.

C. The church was in the purpose of God in the time of Abraham. Paul tells us that there was revealed to him a mystery which was not so clearly made known in other generations, “to wit, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel” (Ephesians 3:6). The promise here mentioned is the promise made to Abraham that all nations were to be blessed in his seed (Genesis 12:3; 22:18; Ephesians 2:11-22). It is in fulfillment of this promise that we have all gospel blessings (Acts 3:25-26; Galatians 3:7-9). The one body is the church (1 Corinthians 12:13). When God told Abraham that all nations were to be blessed in his seed, Christ (Galatians 3:16), he meant that the Gentiles were to be fellow-heirs with the Jews; they were to be fellow-members of the body, which is the church (Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18); and fellow-partakers with the Jews of all that is included in the promise to Abraham. And all these blessings were to come to the Gentiles through the gospel of Jesus Christ of which Paul was made a minister and a preacher. God could not plan for the Gentiles to be fellow-members of the body which is the church without planning the existence of the church. So, we conclude that the church was included in the purpose of God when he made the promise to Abraham.

D. The church was in the purpose of God before the foundation of the world. The expression “foundation of the world” has been interpreted by some to mean the beginning of the Christian dispensation. But Paul’s use of it in Ephesians 1:4, seems to be a parallel with the expression “eternal purpose” in Ephesians 3:11. Peter speaks of Christ being foreknown before the foundation of the world, but manifested “at the end of the times” for our sake (1 Peter 1:20). The manifestation of Christ refers to his coming in the flesh, which was the period just preceding the Christian dispensation. But Peter speaks of the “foundation of the world” as a time prior to “the end of the times.” Jesus said the blood of all the prophets shed from the foundation of the world would be required of his generation and then added that this includes all the prophets from Abel down to Zachariah (Luke 11:50-51). From his use of the expression we learn that the foundation of the world must extend back as far as Abel, so it must refer to the creation of the world. Now for the proof that the church has been in the mind of God since before the creation of the world.

1. Paul says that it is God’s eternal purpose that the wisdom of God is to be made known to “the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places”

through the church (Ephesians 3:11; 1:19-20). So, the church is included in the eternal purpose of God.

2. Paul teaches us that God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blemish before him in love (Ephesians 1:4). But in Ephesians 5:25-27, we learn that it is the church for which Jesus gave himself that is to be “holy and without blemish” (Compare Titus 2:14). So, the chosen of Ephesians 1:4, is the church of Ephesians 5:27. And therefore the church was in the purpose of God before the foundation of the world. Paul speaks of this same purpose as including the called (2 Thessalonians 2:14) and the justified (1 Corinthians 6:11) and those who are yet to be glorified (Romans 8:28-30).
3. Peter says we are redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ “who was fore-known indeed before the foundation of the world” (1 Peter 1:20; Compare 2 Timothy 1:9-10). From the context we learn that he was foreknown as a lamb through whose blood we would be redeemed. Is it possible that God could have foreknown that Jesus would suffer as a lamb in sacrifice for the redemption of our souls from sin and yet did not know that the redeemed would constitute the church? Such a conclusion would be false and ridiculous. So, from this we learn that before the creation God knew man would sin, that he would give his Son to suffer for man’s sin, and that those redeemed by the blood of Christ would be his kingdom, his church (Revelation 5:9-10). So, the church was included in the purpose of God from before the foundation, creation, of the world. It is not an afterthought with God; it is not something hurriedly arranged to meet an emergency on account of God being unable to accomplish what he had attempted at the time the prophets said he would do it. The church, next to heaven itself, is the climax of all God’s gracious purposes to show the exceeding riches of his kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

From, The Church, by Roy H. Lanier Sr. (Gospel Advocate Company, 1956). Copied with permission from the author.

Did Paul Endorse Slavery?

by Eric Lyons, M.Min.

Thousands of years prior to the establishment of the Lord's Church, and long before Paul addressed the conduct of Christian slaves in the first century, various forms of slavery were commonplace. In fact, virtually every ancient civilization used slaves.¹ Slavery was prevalent enough in Babylon in the 18th century B.C. to be mentioned numerous times in the Code of Hammurabi.² The Egyptians enslaved hundreds of thousands of Israelites in the 16th century B.C. (Exodus 1; cf. Numbers 1:46). Historians estimate that, by the time Paul wrote his New Testament epistles in the first century A.D., five to eight million slaves resided within the Roman Empire,³ including 15-25% of the total population of Italy.⁴

“SLAVERY”—A BROAD TERM IN THE FIRST CENTURY

The English term “slave” is translated from the Greek word *doulos*. Some translations use the term “servant” (or “bondservant”), but *doulos* is best translated “slave” (especially since “in normal usage at the present time the two words [“slave” and “servant”—EL] are carefully distinguished”).⁵

So what is meant by “slave” or “slavery”? Americans often envision ancient slavery as the kind of oppressive bondage that was popular among many slave owners in North America in the 18th and 19th centuries, when millions of Africans were stolen from their homelands and shipped across the Atlantic. Certainly, some first-century slavery was similar, but often it was quite different. For example, slavery in New Testament times was not based on race. Many foreign soldiers and their families became slaves after being captured during times of war.⁶ What's more, “some became slaves because they could not pay back the money they had borrowed. The government would also take people into slavery if they could not pay their taxes. There were also many cases of poor people selling their children as slaves to richer neighbours.”⁷

Consider the fact that the ancients would likely interpret certain modern American practices as forms of “slavery.” For example, hundreds of thousands of Americans who work, labor nearly one-third of every year **for the government**. That is, Americans are **forced** by the government **with the threat of fines and imprisonment** to pay over 100 days wages to local, state, and federal governments every year in the form of taxes. Many Americans hand over more money to the government each year than they spend on food, clothing, and shelter combined.⁸ According to irs.gov, U.S. citizens who fail to pay government-mandated taxes can be prosecuted and imprisoned for up to five years. And what about the military draft—“the practice of **ordering people by law to serve** in the armed forces”?⁹ To this day, all 18-25-year-old males in the U.S. are required to register with the Selective Service System in case of “a

crisis requiring a draft"¹⁰—a draft in which thousands or millions of men would be forced to go to war, and possibly die for their country, whether they wanted to or not.

Please understand, I am not suggesting that we should defraud the government, or that we should refuse to submit to its authority if the draft is reinstated. I am simply suggesting that “slavery” was broadly defined in the first century. When people ask questions such as “Did Paul endorse slavery?” we must understand that there were various kinds of slavery in the first century, including some forms that resemble certain practices today which may be generally accepted and morally justified.

DEFINE “ENDORSE”

Did Paul “endorse” slavery? The word “endorse” means “to publicly or officially say that you support or approve of (someone or something).”¹¹ To endorse is to advocate or champion an idea, a thing, or a person. Did Paul “endorse” slavery? Did he champion it or publicly promote it as one advocates a particular product or political candidate? No, at least not the kind of slavery most people think of when they hear the term.

In truth, Paul specifically condemned “kidnappers” (*andrapodistais*) or “menstealers” (KJV) as lawless and insubordinate individuals who practice that which is “contrary to sound doctrine” (1 Timothy 1:10). Danker, et al. defines this kidnapper as a “slave-dealer.”¹² Far from endorsing such activity, Paul groups these men-stealing, slave traders with murderers, liars, and other ungodly sinners (1 Timothy 1:9-10).

Yet, five chapters later Paul wrote: “Let as many bondservants [*doulos*, slaves] as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed. And those who have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren, but rather serve them because those who are benefited are believers and beloved. Teach and exhort these things” (1 Timothy 6:1-2). What did Paul instruct Timothy to teach the various Christian slaves in the first century? To respect, honor, and even serve their masters (i.e., to set a good example of Christianity before them).

PAUL ENDORSED GODLY SUBMISSION, NOT SINFUL FORMS OF SLAVERY

Paul’s instruction for slaves to honor their masters is perfectly consistent with the rest of God’s Word regarding all Christians submitting to those in positions of authority. To the Christians living in the heart of the Roman Empire, Paul taught: “Let **every soul** be subject to the governing authorities.... Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor” (Romans 13:1,7; cf. Matthew 22:21).¹³ Similarly, Peter wrote: “Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether to the king

as supreme, or to governors.... For this is the will of God.... Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king” (1 Peter 2:13-17). Was the Roman Empire corrupt in many ways? Certainly. Was a Christian’s submission to Rome a blanket endorsement of the Empire? Not at all. But Christians were (and are) to be humbly compliant.

God expects all Christians to have a spirit of submission. Children are to submit to their parents (Ephesians 6:1-3). Young people are to be submissive to older people (1 Peter 5:5). Wives are to submit to their husbands (1 Peter 3:1-2). Members of local churches are to submit to their overseeing elders who rule over them (Hebrews 13:17; Acts 20:28). Local shepherds are to submit fully to the Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:1-4). In short, all Christians, including those in leadership positions, are to “be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for ‘God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble’” (1 Peter 5:5). And, yes, God expects His people to humbly “submit...to every authority instituted among men,” whether to kings or to slave masters (1 Peter 2:13,18, NIV).

SUBMISSION FOR A HIGHER PURPOSE

God did not create the practice of slavery. Furthermore, Paul’s inspired instructions regarding a slave’s submission to his master were not given because God favors a master over his slave (Galatians 3:28), or because He simply wants some people to have harder lives than others. The specific purpose that Paul gave for Christian slaves submitting to their pagan masters was “so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed” (1 Timothy 6:1).

Imagine if Christian slave after slave in the first century became less submissive to their masters as they learned more about the equality of all mankind (Genesis 1:26-27). Consider how the reputation of Christianity would have been greatly tarnished in the eyes of the unbelieving world if Paul explicitly taught that all slaves should be set free. As William Barclay noted: “For the Church to have encouraged slaves to revolt and rebel and rise against their masters would have been fatal. It would simply have caused civil war, mass murder, and the complete discredit of the Church.”¹⁴

God, in His infinite wisdom, commands all men to do their best to make the most for the cause of Christ **in whatever situation** they find themselves. “Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called. Were you called while a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it. For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord’s freedman. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ’s slave” (1 Corinthians 7:21-23). Whether a person becomes a Christian while in slavery or in a terrible marriage, God wants His people to change from the inside out and have a positive spiritual impact on others. **Be obedient** to parents, husbands, governing officials, and yes, even slave owners. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works **and glorify your Father in heaven**” (Matthew 5:16). Rather than giving people reasons to curse Christ and His doctrine, be obedient

to all those in positions of authority “for the Lord’s sake” (1 Peter 2:13). Be honorable at all times so that you may “put to silence the ignorance of foolish men” and “by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation” (1 Peter 2:15,12; cf. 3:1-2). In short, “humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time” (1 Peter 2:6).

TAKING PAUL’S TEACHING TO ITS LOGICAL CONCLUSION

Over time, with the spread of Christianity (cf. Acts 19:10,26; 21:20) and with increasing numbers of slave masters becoming Christians, the physical lives of many slaves would have improved dramatically. As slave owners with honest and good hearts learned (1) to love the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and (2) to love their neighbors (including their slaves) as themselves (Matthew 22:36-40), they would give up “threatening” (Ephesians 6:9). As Christian slave owners contemplated treating others how they want to be treated (Matthew 7:12), they would give their slaves “what is just and fair,” knowing that they, too, had a Master in heaven (Colossians 4:1). As slave owners submitted to Christ, they would be transformed by the Gospel, learning to be “kindly affectionate” to everyone (Romans 12:2,10), including all those who served them. In short, far from endorsing sinful slavery, Paul’s teachings, **taken to their logical conclusion**, would eventually lead truth-seeking masters and government officials to help bring an end to any kind of cruel, sinful captivity.¹⁵

ENDNOTES

¹ “History of Slavery” (no date), *History World*, www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?historyid=ac41.

² “Code of Hammurabi, King of Babylon” (no date), https://archive.org/stream/cu31924060109703/cu31924060109703_djvu.txt.

³ Walter Scheidel (2007), “The Roman Slave Supply,” p. 6, <https://www.princeton.edu/~pswpc/pdfs/scheidel/050704.pdf>.

⁴ Scheidel, pp. 3-6.

⁵ Frederick William Danker, William Arndt, and F.W. Gingrich (2000), *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago: University of Chicago), p. 260.

⁶ John Simkin (2014), “Slavery in the Roman Empire,” *Spartacus Educational*, <http://spartacus-educational.com/ROMslaves.htm>.

⁷ Simkin.

⁸ Scott Greenberg (no date), *Tax Foundation*, <https://taxfoundation.org/tax-freedom-day-2016-april-24/>.

⁹ “Conscription,” *Merriam-Webster.com*, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/conscription>, emp. added.

¹⁰ “Who Must Register” (2008), Selective Service System, <https://web.archive.org/web/20090507213840/http://www.sss.gov/FSwho.htm>.

¹¹ “Endorse,” *Merriam-Webster.com*, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/endorse>.

¹² Danker, et al., p. 76.

¹³ All bold text in Scripture quotations has been added for emphasis.

¹⁴ William Barclay (1956), *The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon* (Philadelphia: Westminster), p. 141.

¹⁵ For a more extensive response to questions regarding slavery, and especially slavery in the Old Testament, see Kyle Butt (2005), “Defending the Bible’s Position on Slavery,” *Reason & Revelation*, 25[6]:41-47, June, https://www.apologeticspress.org/pub_rar/25_6/0506.pdf.

<https://apologeticspress.org/apPubPage.aspx?pub=1&issue=1262#>
Copyright © 2018 Apologetics Press, Inc. All rights reserved.

THE TRUE LIKENESS 1 Peter 3:21 (ASV)

“. . . When the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water; which also after **A TRUE LIKENESS** doth now save you, even baptism. . .”

This passage speaks of that period of time in human history when so sinful was the entire race that God actually regretted that He had created man. Because of his sinfulness man came under the righteous judgment of God and was ultimately destroyed. The floods came and wicked men perished under the wrath of an angry God. Only eight souls escaped the punishment brought upon the rest of society—and the Apostle Peter says they were saved “through water.” We need to understand Christian baptism which Peter says is “**A TRUE LIKENESS**” of the waters of Noah’s salvation.

If all religious men could objectively consider the allegory, the figure, the parallel used by the Apostle, then all contrary discussion relative to baptism would automatically cease. Maybe we can at least understand the confusion of many, not that we justify— simply understand, because even we do not understand so clearly the **LIKENESS** between the flood and baptism.

In fact, I doubt that we would have discovered any relationship between the flood and baptism, if that parallel had not been expressly pointed out in the revelation of God. The wild, raging flood that destroyed the ancients and the gentle waters of baptism hardly seem to have anything in common. Maybe the connection between the two is not as obvious as other figures and types presented in the Word of God, but it is nonetheless real. I do not mean that the connection is ambiguous—it is only necessary that we do a little more than superficial thinking to appreciate the very definite harmony between these two widely separated events.

Perhaps the first reason for our confusion is in relation to the salvation of Noah and his family. On the surface it would seem that it was not the water at all that saved them, but rather the ark. And further, it seems that the great dangers facing the Noah family was the very water itself—to which Peter strangely attributes saving powers. It actually appears that the water was the threat rather than the means to salvation, the disease rather than the cure.

However, if we think of Noah’s greatest danger being the flood itself, then we certainly have missed the grand design of God in bringing the flood upon the earth in the first place. We must not think of Noah’s salvation as being physical, that is simple salvation from death by drowning. If it had been the purpose of God to preserve the lives of those eight souls, He could have accomplished it more easily by preventing the flood than by bringing it and its attendant dangers upon the world. Why jeopardize the eight lives He seeks to save by subjecting them to the perils of a universal flood? The flood **HAD to be,**

to save Noah from the real danger facing him. God waited patiently for 120 years to bring this flood—while the ark was “**A PREPARING.**” What object did the Almighty have in all those stupendous arrangements? The answer to this question is vital to our understanding of both the flood and of Christian baptism.

Noah’s salvation was spiritual! The real danger facing Noah was present before the flood every came. And it was present at least 120 years prior to the flood. God sent the flood, commanded the construction of the ark, to save Noah—not from the flood of water, but from the **FLOOD OF SIN**—which was the **REAL DANGER**, which also provoked and kindled God’s wrath, which caused Him to repent that He had created man, which caused Him to devise the destruction of the human race. A sin-filled world was the evil that threatened Noah, not the flood. The waters of the flood succeeded in destroying that danger—by destroying all wicked men then living from the face of the earth. The ark did not destroy sin. The water did! The Apostle Peter clearly affirms that Noah was saved “**THROUGH WATER.**” The ark loses its significance when we consider that it only saved Noah’s physical life for a period of time. So, the simple fact is that God employed one flood to purge and destroy another more insidious, condemning and wicked flood. Do not forget the fact that it was the water that destroyed sin and not the ark—else you will likely ignore why Peter said that “baptism doth also now save us.” The ark simply implemented Noah’s physical delivery and was a means of testing his obedience to God’s commands, whereby he was judged worthy of both physical and spiritual salvation.

Now, by way of application, let us remember that our need for salvation is just as real as was Noah’s need. The dangers facing us are the same dangers of those facing him. Noah needed delivery from a world of sin, destined to be destroyed by God’s wrath just as surely as did those of ancient days who “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 through water” (1 Peter 3:20).

For the sake of our salvation, let us not forget what others 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.” The significance of those facts is revealed in the same context, stands a powerful warning to all who live today. The warning lies in the knowledge that “the heavens that **NOW** are, and the earth, **BY THE SAME WORD** have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of godly men” (2 Peter 3:5-7). The implications are obvious! Our world, too, goes! God gave Noah a promise and the rainbow to seal that promise, that He would never again destroy the world by water. But that did not mean that He was sorry He brought the flood—for all His judgments are righteous. Nor did it mean that God must forever condone sin, for yet that the wicked will escape His judgment. He will still punish wicked men—the next time—and by the same authority, the same Word as Peter affirms, He will execute judgment upon all by fire.

Seeing, then, that God once destroyed the world by water because of sin, and seeing that He promised once again to destroy it with fire, what shall be the waters of our redemption, the ark of our escape—how shall we avoid the destruction to come upon the unredeemed? The Apostle says with devotion to his allegory: **“BAPTISM DOTH ALSO NOW SAVE YOU.”** So, our delivery is **“AFTER A TRUE LIKENESS”**, similar to Noah’s deliverance. We too are saved by a flood; we too are saved by water; we are saved by baptism.

Herein we understand many other passages which refer to baptism as “washing away of sins” (Acts 22:16), and “the washing of water with the word” (Ephesians 5:26), and “the washing of regeneration” (Titus 3:5) or even the expression: “but ye were washed” (1 Corinthians 6:11). As the earth in Noah’s day was “washed” clean from sin, so in baptism we are washed clean.

Looking forward to His death, Christ said: “I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished” (Luke 12:50). That baptism, which He met on Calvary, was none other than the wrath of God against sin—which Christ had agreed in covenant with God to bear for man. Messiah met that deluge and He emerged triumphantly and victoriously over it. From that baptism He rose again! So today the salvation of believers lies not in their meeting God for themselves—when He pours out the vials of His wrath against sin. Salvation lies in the believer being found in Christ, the believer’s substitute—who endured those vials of wrath for him. It is then the privilege of all believers to be baptized “into Christ” and “into his death” (Romans 6:3-4). From the ark Noah stepped into a new world, cleansed from sin, purified for his habitation. “Even so” from baptism “we also may walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4). From baptism we step into a new earth under a new heaven, citizens of a new kingdom, subjects of a new and victorious King. Little wonder Peter says: **“BAPTISM DOTH NOW SAVE YOU.”**

- Gerald Paden, reprinted with permission from *Firm Foundation Publishing House*.

Three Different Greek Words Used for The Same Office

1. The Greek word translated “bishop” (episkopos) is one of three different Greek words which are used to refer to the same office. The word episkopos is translated “bishop” in this passage and “overseer” in verses like Acts 20:28. Thus, the terms “bishop” and “overseer” are used interchangeably. According to J. H. Thayer, this word means, “an overseer, a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly, any guardian or superintendent.” Thus, according to the meaning of this word, we see that the bishops in a local congregation have AUTHORITY from God to superintend, oversee and ensure that God’s work in that congregation is done properly (cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13; 1 Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:7, 17). Obviously, they have no authority from God to create laws. That is true because God’s word is our law and we must not add to or take away from it (Galatians 1:6-9; Revelation 22:18-19). However, bishops have the God-given authority and responsibility to ensure that God’s word is taught and implemented properly in the local congregation where they serve (cf. Titus 1:9-14).
2. The second Greek word used to refer to this office is presbuteros. This word is translated “elder” in passages like Titus 1:5 and “presbytery” in 1 Timothy 4:14. This word refers to the age and spiritual maturity of spiritual experience of the men who serve as elders. It is critically important that we understand that the terms bishop, overseer, elder and presbyter refer to THE SAME OFFICE! To see a clear example of that, please turn with me to Titus 1:5-7. Thus, the term bishop (overseer) is used to refer to the elders.
3. The third Greek word used to refer to this office is poimen. As we saw in our study of the background material for this course, this word is translated pastor and shepherd. We also learned that the terms “pastor” and “shepherd” refer to the elders of each local congregation of the Lord’s church. We noted that these terms show that the elders are God’s shepherds who tend (i.e., take care of, guard, feed, etc.) the spiritual flock of God which is His church. But we just learned from our study of Titus 1:5-7 that the term “bishop” (overseer) ALSO refers to the elders of the local congregation. Thus, the terms pastor, shepherd, bishop and overseer ALL refer to the ELDERS (presbyters). Therefore, it is clear that an elder is a presbyter, a bishop, an overseer, a pastor and a shepherd. These are just different descriptive terms which God used to refer to the same office. One of the clearest ways to see that this is the proper understanding is to study 1 Peter 5:1-2.

THE ELDERSHIP

DUTIES:

1. Take heed to yourself (Acts 20:28).
2. Take heed to the flock (Acts 20:28).
3. Feed (tend) the church of the Lord (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4; 1 Timothy 3:2b).
4. Exhort in sound doctrine (Titus 1:9).
5. Watch for grievous wolves (Acts 20:29-31; 1 Timothy 3:14-4:3).
6. Be guided by the word of God (Acts 20:32).
7. Support the weak (Acts 20:35).
8. Consider and decide matters of the church (Acts 15:6).
9. Admonish the church (1 Thessalonians 5:12).
10. Rule well (1 Timothy 5:17; 3:4).
11. Stop the mouths of vain talkers and deceivers (Titus 1:11).
12. Watch for their souls (Hebrews 13:17).
13. Pray for and administer to the sick (James 5:16).
14. Take the oversight (1 Peter 5:2).
15. Be an example to the flock (1 Peter 5:3).
16. Be hospitable (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8 - wives are important!).

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. They shall give account for the souls under the care (Hebrews 13:17).
2. Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required (Luke 12:48).
3. Unless the watchman gives warning, blood is on his hands (Ezekiel 33:6).

QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Blameless - without reproach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6-7).
2. Husband of one wife (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6).
3. Rule well his own house (1 Timothy 3:4).
4. Father of believing and faithful children (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:5).
5. Steward of God (Titus; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2).
6. Given to hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8).
7. Lover of good (Titus 1:8).
8. Sober-minded (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8).
9. Just (Titus 1:8).
10. Holy (Titus 1:8).
11. Temperate - self-controlled (Titus 1:8).
12. Holding the faithful word according to teaching (Titus 1:9).
13. Apt to teach (1 Timothy 3:2).
14. Vigilant (1 Timothy 3:2).
15. Patient - gentle (1 Timothy 3:3).
16. Orderly - of good behavior (1 Timothy 3:2).
17. Good report (good testimony) from without (1 Timothy 3:7).
18. Not self-willed (Titus 1:7).
19. Not contentious (1 Timothy 3:3 ASV).
20. Not soon angry (Titus 1:7).
21. Not given to much wine (KJV), vigilant, temperate (ASV) (1 Timothy 3:2,3; Titus 1:6).
22. No brawler (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7).

23. No striker (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7).
24. No lover of money - not covetous - not greedy of filthy lucre (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 5:2).
25. Not a novice (1 Timothy 3:6).

SIX NATURAL DIVISIONS OF QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Experience
2. Reputation
3. Domestic relations
4. Character
5. Habits
6. Ability to teach and rule

ONE CHILD?

- 1 Timothy 5:4,
- 1 Timothy 5:9-10 and
- 1 Timothy 5:16.

THREE EQUAL TERMS:

ἐπίσκοπος	-	Overseer Guardian Bishop	-	Acts 20:17,28
πρεσβύτερος	-	Elder Presbyter	-	Acts 20:17,28 and 1 Peter 5:1-4
ποιμήν	-	Shepherd Pastor	-	1 Peter 5:1-4

Notice - in these three passages:

ἐπίσκοπος - πρεσβύτερος in Acts 20:17,28

AND

ποιμήν - πρεσβύτερος in 1 Peter 5:1-4

THEREFORE

ἐπίσκοπος - πρεσβύτερος - ποιμήν

When two items are equal to a third item they are also equal to each other. Therefore, these three terms are equal (mean the same thing) and are interchangeable!

Overseer - To look over, to visit (good or bad), and
To organize and govern.

Shepherd - Ruler,
Guide,
Protector,
Companion and
Feeder (not to bring the food to the sheep, but to bring the sheep to where the food is).

COPULATIVE "KAI"

"With nouns connected by KAI. The following rule by Granville Sharp of the century back still proves to be true: 'When the copulative KAI connects two nouns of the same case, if the article HO or any of its cases precedes the first of the said nouns or participles, and it is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always relates to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle; i.e., it denotes a farther description of the first-named person.'"

"The article here indicates that Jesus is both Lord and Savior. So, in 2 Peter 1:1, TOU THEOU HEEMWN KAI SWTEEROS IEESOU CHRISTOU, means that Jesus is our God and Savior. After the same manner Titus 2:13, TOU MEGALOU THEOU KAI SWTEEROS IEESOU CHRISTOU, asserts that Jesus is the great God and Savior." Also, in 2 Peter 2:20, TOU KUPIOU KAI SWTEROS IEESOU CHRISTOU, means of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

Dana, H.E. & Mantey, J. A., A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament, Toronto, Canada: The McMillan Co., 1955, Page 147.

ARE WE CALLED?

There are no biblical indications that preachers or elders (pastors) require a special "calling."

- A. The New Testament gives no indication that a preacher must be called by God in the same way that prophets and high priests were called in the Old Testament (Jeremiah 1:5; Hebrews 5:4). Moreover, the New Testament never applies the terminology of "calling" to preachers or pastors (bishops, elders), but only to the Christian life in general (2 Timothy 1:9; Hebrews 3:1). The Bible makes it clear that all mankind is called to obey by the gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:14).
- B. If the New Testament taught that preachers or elders must be specially called by God, it seems that there would be some sort of discussion of how that happens and how to discern whether one has really been called. Instead, Paul writes, "This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop (pastor, elder), he desires a good work (1 Timothy 3:1). Paul doesn't say, "If anyone wants to be an elder, he must have a special, supernatural, subjective call from God." He simply explains that if anyone wants to be an elder, he desires a good thing. He then goes on to give the qualifications. But having a supernatural calling from God is not given as part of the requirements.

Too often people hear a phrase and make assumptions without intending to do so. People talk about God calling and forget to ask: How does God call people?

"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore, everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me" (John 6:44-45).

"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 unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our report?" So, then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:14-17).

"As you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you

into His own kingdom and glory. For this reason, we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe" (1 Thessalonians 2:11-13).

God calls people to Himself through the message of the Gospel. "For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe" (1 Corinthians 1:21). The calling goes out to all people equally. Whether they heed that call depends on their attitude toward that message, whether they believe it or reject it.

"Called" is another way to say "invited" or "encouraged to come."

"You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory" (1 Thessalonians 2:10-12).

This passage tells us who does the calling: God. It also tells us what we are called to: His kingdom and glory. But it doesn't directly state how that calling takes place.

Unfortunately, people have a habit of filling in missing information with imaginative answers. But we don't have to guess. We merely have to look in other places for the answer.

"But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. It was for this **He called you through our gospel**, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us" (2 Thessalonians 2:13-15).

It is through the teachings in the Bible that we are called by God.

SPECIAL STUDY: 2 PETER 1:5-7

2 Peter 1:5-7, "But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

"GIVING"

Literally: "Bringing in supply."

First word: Giving

Lexicon: To bring in beside,
To bring into play,
Superinduce,
Contribute and
Exhibit in addition.

This is the only place this word is used in the New Testament.

"ADD" - Second action word: Add

Lexicon: To supply further,
Super-add,
Add,
Furnish,
Give,
Gather vigor,
Aid,
Provide,
Minister and
To fully supply.

Compare: 1:11 - Supplied (ministered) abundantly.

The message in the first word is coupled with "diligence" to express the idea of bringing in every effort. We are to bring "into" this relationship ("alongside" what God has done) every ounce of determination we can muster.

This is absolutely essential since God's part is done only on condition that man complies with his part.

The second word originally meant to found and fully support a chorus, lead a choir, to keep in tune and then to supply or provide for all the needs of that chorus.

This word in this form has an accumulative force, "to give lavishly and with generosity!"

"ALL DILIGENCE"

Lexicon:

Speed,
Haste,
Effort,
Eagerness,
Diligence and
Zeal.

Examples:

	<u>New King James</u>	<u>King James</u>
Luke 7:4	Earnestly	Instantly
Romans 12:11	Diligence	Business
2 Corinthians 7:11	Diligence	Carefulness
2 Corinthians 7:12	Care	Care
2 Corinthians 8:8	Diligence	Forwardness
2 Corinthians 8:16	Earnest care	Earnest care
Philippians 2:28	Be diligent	Study
2 Timothy 2:15	Be diligent	Labour
Hebrews 4:11	More eagerly	More carefully

Meaning here:

Make every possible effort with eagerness and with haste because the horrors of hell are imminent!

2 PETER 1:5-7

FAITH
VIRTUE
KNOWLEDGE
SELF-CONTROL
PERSEVERANCE
GODLINESS
BROTHERLY KINDNESS
LOVE

FAITH 2 Peter 1:5

I. Definition and Need of Faith:

A. Lexicon:

Belief,
Trust,
Trusting,
Trustworthy,
Certainty,
Confidence,
Conviction,
Firm conviction,
Reliability and
To rely upon.

B. Biblical:

1. Hebrews 11:6 - *But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*
2. Acts 8:36b-37 - *And the eunuch said, 'See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?' Then Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.' And he answered and said, 'I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.'*
3. Romans 10:9-11 - *If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes to righteousness*

and with mouth confession is made to salvation. For the Scripture says, 'Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.'

4. Hebrews 11:1 - *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

C. Other:

1. Concretely, faith means the “guarantee” which creates the possibility of trust; that which may be relied upon; the assurance of reliability, “assurance.”
2. Faith can denote not only the confidence one has but also the confidence one enjoys.
3. Often the question arises whether “confidence” is not a better rendering for “faith,” for faith can frequently denote the living and dynamic aspect of faith rather than the mere fact.
4. “To believe something” is often interchangeable with “faith in something,” and is thus to be taken in the same sense.
5. “I believe” often means “I believe God’s words.”
6. Faith as “trust” in confidence in the fulfillment of the divine promises.
7. “Trust in God” is very closely related to “hope”.

D. Need:

“Man has a basic need to feel he is permanent. The real point of faith is that it is the turning from the world of becoming and perishing to the eternal God, whereby man finds the certainty which he continually seeks.” Philo.

II. How Faith Is Acquired.

A. We must seek God.

God is under no obligation, except to Himself, to send the gospel to anyone. And God has not left mankind without evidence that He does exist - *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse* (Romans 1:20).

B. If we will love God, He will see to it that the gospel will get to us.

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these he also glorified (Romans 8:28-30).

- C. But how is one called of God?

God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:13b-14).

- D. Faith is acquired by hearing the gospel.

For whoever calls 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...So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:13-14,17).

III. What Faith is Not

- A. Not used of things.

In the literal sense faith is not used of things; it is used only of men and of matters constituted or pursued by them.

- B. Is not faithfulness.

Faith itself is not faithfulness; it is the faith to which one should be faithful.

- C. It is not inspired of God.

Paul, unlike Augustine, never describes faith as inspired. Even though the Holy Spirit is given to the believer, faith itself is not a gift of the Spirit!

- D. A look at faith in the Old Testament compared to faith in the New Testament.

A consideration of faith in the Old Testament cannot overlook the fact that two basically different and even contradictory groups of meanings are used

for man's relationship to God, namely, "fear" on the one side and "trust" on the other.

Nevertheless, their meanings were close and even shaded into one another, so that the fear of God could often be simply an expression for faith (Genesis 20:11; 22:12; Isaiah 8:13; 11:2; Proverbs 1:7; Psalm 19:9; 111:10, etc.). In the contradictory nature of the usage there is expressed the living tension and polar dynamic of the Old Testament relationship to God. This is the fundamental significance for understanding the Old Testament attitude on faith.

Appropriate fear for the Christian is actually "awe" and "respect". If there is a "fear" for the Christian today it is the simple awareness that man does not stand on his own feet. It is his concern now not to fall from grace, whether in frivolity or the pride of supposed security.

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love (1 John 4:18).

Therefore, let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall (1 Corinthians 10:12).

IV. What Faith Is

A. Faith in providence.

Part of the faith in the invisible is faith in the providence of Deity, the immortality of the soul, of one's own citizenship in the divine world and in judgment after death.

B. Believing God's words.

"I believe" often means "I believe God's words".

Not: I believe in a god.

Not: I believe in God.

But: I believe God!

C. Related to hope.

Faith or trust in God is very closely related to "hope".

D. "The faith."

The message itself can be called "the faith".

E. Biblical faith is committal.

Committal is a movement of the will; it is indeed the radical decision of the will in which man delivers himself up as a living sacrifice. It is the act in which man himself really "is," whereas in "works" he always stands alongside that which he accomplishes.

F. A manner of life.

Faith is the manner of life of the person who is crucified with Christ. He can no longer live as an "I", but instead lives in Christ (Galatians 2:19ff).

G. A determiner of conduct.

Faith, when it looks to the end of time is the basic attitude of life which determines all conduct.

H. Is an offense to the world.

For this world, revelation (the Bible) is an offense because it calls this world into question; it is the judgment of the world (John 3:19; 12:31). Biblical faith overcomes this offense and banishes all the autonomous power of man. In a positive fashion it is the grasping of the revelation which comes in the Word.

V. Faith Must Grow

A. Faith is not just an acceptance of teaching.

Faith is not just made up by, nor exhausted by the acceptance of the kerygma (apostolic teaching about Christ) as though this were a mere declaration on joining a new religion. It has to establish itself continually against assaults as an attitude which controls all life.

1. The apostles knew this.

The apostles knew this to be a truth when they said to the Lord, *Increase our faith* (Luke 17:5).

2. Paul.

But having hope, that as your faith is increased, we shall be greatly enlarged by you in our sphere (2 Corinthians 10:15b).

- B. No non-growth.

It is a law of nature that there is no “non-growth”. Everything either increases or decreases. Nothing remains the same: vegetation, land, man’s skills (mental and athletic) and our spiritual status. Whenever a person looks into the Bible they are never the same as they were the moment before. Their heart is either softened by the word or hardened by it.

VI. Results of Faith

- A. “To believe” is “to obey”.

Unbelief can be denoted not merely by πιστεύων (to not believe) but also by ἀπειθων (to not obey - disobedience). Compare the KJV with the ASV in John 3:36.

- B. Works of obedience.

Faith is complete only when it is accompanied by works of obedience - *But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is (absolutely) dead?* (James 2:20).

- C. Action.

Faith is action in the supreme sense.

- D. No longer entangled in sin.

The “forgotten” past is always present with us in the sense of having been overcome. To that degree, recollection (not remorse) is part of faith, whose forgetting is not a putting out of mind but a no longer being entangled.

- E. A turning from evil.

An accomplishment of faith is the reversing and destroying of worldly norms and values. The believer is not taken out of this world, but his turning from the world is a turning from evil (John 17:15).

- F. Is salvation.

That the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith - the salvation of your souls (1 Peter 1:7-9).

VIRTUE **2 Peter 1:5**

I. Definition of Virtue

A. Webster:

Conformity to a standard of right: morality,
A particular moral excellence,
Capitalized - an angel of the fifth highest rank,
A beneficial quality or power of a thing,
Manly strength or courage: valor,
A commendable quality or trait: merit,
The capacity to act: potency,
Chastity, especially in a woman,
(By virtue of; in virtue of: through the force of; by authority of).

B. Lexicon:

Excellence,
Goodness,
Moral excellence,
Moral goodness,
Used of God's power,
Eminence,
Manliness (martial valor),
Merit (honor roll),
Good quality of any kind,
Uprightness or
A gracious act of God.

II. Use of Virtue in Scripture

A. *Philippians 4:8 - Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy - meditate on these things.*

Virtue and praiseworthy things are to dominate our thinking. God describes these things as being:

True,
Noble,
Just,
Pure,
Lovely and
Of good report.

And notice the results in verse 9 - *The God of peace will be with you.*

- B. 1 Peter 2:9 - *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises (virtue) of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.*

Notice how we are to proclaim God's virtues: by being a fitting representative of:

A chosen generation,
A royal priesthood,
A holy nation and
One of God's own special people!

Again, notice the results in the next verse: "Who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy."

- C. 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.*

Here "glory" is the resurrection and "virtue" is God's moral vigor or power under control.

But, the passage may also be translated, "to glory and virtue." Then it would mean that we are called in order to become a glory to Christ and to live a life worthy of being a son or daughter of the great God of the universe.

- D. 2 Peter 1:5 (twice) - *But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge.*

Faith is the undergirding power upon which virtue is added. In nature, virtue refers to the finest and strongest animals which have allowed themselves to be trained. A beautiful and healthy wild stallion which has been saddle broken has virtue. He would still have all the power and beauty he had before but, now it is brought under control. Power under control is virtue!

In men it is moral power, moral energy and the vigor of our souls under the control of God. It is fitness of the soul with courage. Godly virtue can come only to that soul which brings itself under God's control. Virtue is not forced upon us by God but is acquired by our submission to God's will.

III. Results of Virtue

- A. We become a powerful tool for God's use in seeking, saving, restoring and preserving souls for the beauties and joys of heaven eternally.
- B. Here in this world we will truly know we are saved (no doubts at all) and we will have the peace of God that passes all understanding!

KNOWLEDGE 2 Peter 1:5

I. Desire to Know the Truth

- A. *The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God' (Psalm 14:1a). And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased [reprobate] mind, to do those things which are not fitting (Romans 1:28).*
- B. *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind (James 1:5-6 Compare Ephesians 4:14).*

Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened (Matthew 7:7-8).

- C. Virtue: Necessary for growth in knowledge. A moral coward does not want honest biblical answers to life or his sins, especially if they are unpleasant or disturbing.

A moral coward wants answers to escape harsh realities of life. He finds it easier to be ignorant rather than to be informed (Compare 2 Peter 3:5).

- D. We must have honesty and courage in seeking truth:

Test all things; hold fast what is good (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

'Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before my eyes. Cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, reprove the oppressor; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together', says the Lord, 'though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool' (Isaiah 1:16-18).

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:37-38).

II. Understanding of the Truth

- A. A man memorizes the entire Bible, but does he truly know the truth in it?

- B. Knowledge is connected with faith:

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 unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!' But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, 'Lord, who shall believe our report?' So, then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:14-17).

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind (James 1:5-6).

- C. You must know the truth in order to be saved:

And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free (John 8:32).

No one comes to the Father except through Me (John 14:6).

D. To walk as God wants us to walk is to know God's will:

See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is (Ephesians 5:15-17).

III. Diligent Pursuit of Knowledge

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men (Luke 2:52).

A. A price to pay!

1. "Add," "Supply."

But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:5-8).

2. Increased biblical knowledge requires mental perspiration!

3. Regular attendance at Sunday and Wednesday Bible study is good but not enough.

a. Spasmodic Bible study produces incomplete knowledge.

b. Spasmodic Bible study produces mental laziness and an incomplete concern for others.

1) Brethren and

2) The lost.

c. The Bible has depths of meaning the mentally sluggish and shallow minded people cannot understand.

And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation - as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which those who are untaught and

unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures (2 Peter 3:15-16).

You therefore, beloved, since you know these things beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen (2 Peter 3:17-18).

- B. Know how to study!
 - 1. Read the Bible from cover to cover.
 - 2. But separately, and at the same time, use a methodical, systematic method of study!
 - 3. If you do not know how to study (and most do not) find out how.

IV. Practical Knowledge (Life Knowledge - Wisdom)

- A. The Bible does not tell us of all the choices we must make during our lives, nor does it tell us of all the specific problems we must face.
- B. But the Bible does give us all the principles which help us face every choice or problem in life:

Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore, be wise as serpents and harmless as doves (Matthew 10:16).

And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and in discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God (Philippians 1:9-11).

For this reason, we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may have a walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God (Colossians 1: 9-10).

Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one (Colossians 4:5-6).

- C. Beware of zeal without knowledge.

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge (Romans 10:1-2).

- D. My son, if you will receive my words, and treasure my commands within you, so that (if) you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.

For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding; He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly; He guards the paths of justice, and preserves the way of His saints. Then you will understand righteousness and justice, equity and every good path. When wisdom enters your heart, and knowledge is pleasant to your soul, discretion will preserve you; understanding will keep you (Proverbs 2:1-11).

Conclusion

My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but, in deed and in truth. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God (1 John 3:18-21).

SELF-CONTROL TEMPERANCE 2 Peter 1:6

I. Definition and Need of Self-Control

- A. The power of lordship which one has either over oneself or over something (Kittel, Vol. 2, Pg. 339).

Greek idea: The entire person being perfected in which both body and mind are self-controlled.

Difference in Greek idea and Christian: The Greek is centered in man while the Christian is centered in God (Christ).

- B. The disciplined mind and the disciplined body are but parts of a disciplined (self-controlled) character.
- C. *Whoever has no rule over his own spirit is like a city broken down, without walls (Proverbs 25:28).*
- D. We have given lip service to God while bowing down to self-indulgence.

Too often the mind serves only the purpose of devising excuses for what the heart wants to do.

All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any (1 Corinthians 6:12 cf. 10:23).

And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, 'Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you (Acts 24:24-25).

- E. *Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price: therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 cf. Romans 12:1-2).*
- F. Self-control is what Christians need the most and want the least.

What misery it is when we discover there is no divorce from self and that we must live out our lives with a person who does not have self-control!
- G. Elders: *But hospitable, a lover of what is good, soberminded, just, holy, self-controlled (Titus 1:8).*
- H. Those who are not self-controlled do not know or understand true spiritual values. They will not sacrifice their worldly goods for freedom to worship, to think, to speak, but will quickly sell their freedom to worship, to think, to speak for worldly goods!
- I. Many ambitions are not beyond our capacity but beyond our self-control.

II. Use of Self-Control

- A. *Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who*

competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore, I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus, I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified (1 Corinthians 9:24-27).

- B. Our problem is not in knowing what to do, but in the actual use of self-control in our daily living.

Habitual rebellion is for the weaklings not the strong. Neither self-control nor intelligence is needed when one shouts loudly: "No one can tell me what to do!"

Disciplined character belongs to the person who achieves balance by bringing all his faculties and powers under control. There is order, consistency and purpose in his life. As a result, he has poise and grace. He does not panic, nor does he indulge in maudlin self-pity when tossed by crosscurrents. He rises courageously, even heroically, to meet life and conquer it. He resolutely faces his duty. He is governed by a sense of responsibility. He has inward resources and personal reserves which are the wonder of weaker souls. He brings adversity under tribute and compels it to serve him. When adversity becomes too overwhelming and blows fall which he cannot parry, he bows to them, but is not broken by them. His spirit still soars.

- C. Self-control of the mind: Therefore, we must give the more earnest heed to the things that we have heard, lest we drift away (drift out and sink as leaking vessels) (Hebrews 2:1).
- D. We must bring our whole being into subjection including:
 Actions,
 Appetites,
 Emotions,
 Speech and
 Priorities.
- E. Without self-control, even kindheartedness becomes sentimental weakness.
- F. Our bodies are good servants but poor masters!
- G. When life is shortened by any self-indulgence (i.e. gluttony) what will we say on judgment day to a defrauded Master?

III. Perils of Self-Control

- A. Self-control, when not guided by scripture is pure fanaticism.
- B. No amount of self-control will make a sinful heart holy. It will curb some sins and eliminate committing others, but it cannot create a clean heart. Only faith and obedience can do that.
- C. Self-control even in knowledge: *Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies* (1 Corinthians 8:1).
- D. Self-control makes one superior in accomplishments—beware not to feel superior.
- E. The discipline of the Pharisees was too rigid. They were betrayed by their very own virtue of self-control.
- F. Self-control's enemies:
 - Poor habits,
 - Peer pressure,
 - Procrastination,
 - Plain laziness,
 - Excuses,
 - Doubt and
 - Fear.

IV. How to Have Self-Control

- A. *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law* (Galatians 5:22-23).
- B. Christ controlled: *I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me* (Galatians 2:20).
- C. How much control by Christ? Mental as well as physical!

Casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Abstain from every form of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

- D. Christlikeness is the goal in life, not happiness.
- E. “God never required anything of man without providing the means to achieve it!” (R. H. Lanier, Sr.).

Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened (Matthew 7:7-8).

V. Completeness of Self-Control

- A. The finest display of self-control is not a spectacular achievement, but the permanent change in the way we live.

He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city (Proverbs 16:32).

- B. The difference between the self-controlled and the non-self-controlled is the pause between the temptation and the act.

A lack of self-control can stand between us and heaven.

- C. The decision to have self-control must be so powerful and final that it is called a crucifixion!

And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires (Galatians 5:24).

For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live (Romans 8:13).

- D. Spiritual surgery.

And if your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell (Matthew 5:29).

Friendship can become affection, affection love, love lust and the progress be a shock to both. The rugged advice of Jesus to pluck out the offending

eye or cut off the hand or foot is never more appropriate than in this kind of situation. Souls, homes, happiness, influence—all will be saved only by drastic, even ruthless, action. The feelings must not be spared! No quarter must be given! Here again Christians must tolerate not the least vestige of the philosophy of impotence: 'I can't help it.' Emotions may not immediately obey the will, but actions must. In due course, by the grace of God, emotions will follow the lead of disciplined adjustment, strong purpose and decisive stand.

E. Will we give all to obtain self-control?

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field (Matthew 13:44).

F. You have no right to be mediocre if you are capable of something better!

G. If your goal is worthy, and it is, sacrifice is no burden but welcome!

PERSEVERANCE
Patience, Longsuffering
2 Peter 1:6

I. What Patience is Not

A. Apathy or indifference.

1. Lack of feeling or emotion.

2. Lack of interest or concern.

B. Borrowing trouble - "Go ahead persecute me, I'm a Christian."

C. Bearing up under punishment, etc. - because of our own wrongdoing.

For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer for it, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God (1 Peter 2:20).

II. What Patience Is

A. Determination of the will.

Patience implies suffering, enduring or waiting, as a determination of the will and not simply under necessity (ISBE, Vol. 4, Pg. 2263).

B. Patience is active.

The concept of the courageous endurance which manfully defies evil. It has an active content. It includes active and energetic resistance to hostile power, though no assertion of the success of this resistance (Kittle, Vol. 4, pp. 581-582).

C. Steadfast waiting.

Endurance, perseverance, a holding out, enduring affliction, a bearing up under, steadfastness, constancy, and a patient, steadfast waiting for (James M. Tolle).

D. Patience strengthens.

Patience strengthens the spirit, sweetens the temper, stifles anger, extinguishes envy, subdues pride, bridles the tongue, restrains the hand, and tramples upon temptations (Horne).

E. A fortress.

A root of all the goods, mother of piety, fruit that never withers, a fortress that is never taken, a harbor that knows no storms, and the queen of virtues, the foundation of right actions, peace in war, calm in tempest, security in plots (Chrysostom).

F. Emphasized by God.

ὑπομονή: used 32 times in the New Testament (7 times in Revelation).

G. Sound doctrine.

But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience (Titus 2:1-2).

H. Brings forth fruit - (Parable of the Sower/Good Seed).

But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience (Luke 8:15).

- I. A secure soul.

In your patience possess your souls (Luke 21:19). The destruction of Jerusalem.

III. Key to Patience

- A. The main element in patience is our submission to God!

- B. Similar to self-control.

1. Only those who have self-control are able to endure patiently the trials of life.
2. Self-control is holding back while patience is holding on.

- C. Relatives of patience.

1. Faith - *We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure* (2 Thessalonians 1:3-4).
2. Hope - *We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father* (1 Thessalonians 1:2-3).

Patience is the road on which hopes travels.

3. Comfort - *For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope* (Romans 15:4).
4. Joy - *Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy* (Colossians 1:11).
5. Longsuffering (see above). Longsuffering expresses patience in respect to persons, while patience expresses itself in respect to things or events (Trent).
6. Like mindedness - *Now the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus,*

that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 15:5-6).

7. *Well doing - For if these things are yours and abound, you will neither be barren (not idle) nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:8).*

The Christian is not responsible for the results of his work in trying to reach souls, but only for the work itself (1 Corinthians 3:6).

8. *Glory - Eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality (Romans 2:7).*
9. *Salvation - For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; but if anyone draws back, My, soul has no pleasure in him. But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul (Hebrews 10:36-39).*

D. Many relatives in one passage.

We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For he says: 'In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you.' Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

We give no offence in anything, that our ministry may not be blamed. But in all things, we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings;

By purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report,

As deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying and behold we live; as chastened, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you. Our heart is wide open (2 Corinthians 6:1-11).

IV. What About Tribulations?

A. Negative

The Christian who does not have self-control will not have the moral courage to persevere when sorrow, pain, temptation and tribulation actually come upon him.

B. Positive

Patience is not passive. On the contrary, it is active. It is concentrated strength.

C. Paul's example.

But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra - what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution (2 Timothy 3:10-12).

D. Glory in tribulation.

And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us (Romans 5:3-5).

E. The final victory.

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world (John 16:33).

V. Example of Jesus

A. Look to Jesus.

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:2).

B. Patience described.

Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus (Revelation 14:12).

C. The main element - The main element in patience is our submission to the word of God.

D. A minority - Those who have patience will always find themselves in the minority, but what exalted ones they walk with!

GODLINESS **2 Peter 1:6-7**

I. Definition

A. Webster:

Godliness - the state or quality of being godly.

Godly - divine; devoutly conforming to the will of God.

B. Lexicon:

Holiness,

Piety,

Devout,

Reverent,

Religious,

Respect,

To be dutiful towards,

To worship,

To carry out the duties of true religion and

Caution and carefulness in all of the above where directed.

C. Other:

1. Sometimes the word can mean:

- a. Respect for God which shows itself in a very careful carrying out of all the ritual which the worship of God demands.
 - b. Loyalty, not just to anyone or anything but it is always to a royal person.
2. “If we keep in mind that, in that mingled fear and love which together constitute the piety of man toward God, the Old Testament placed its emphasis in the fear, the New places it on the love (though there was love in the fear of God’s saints then, there must be fear in their love now), it will at once be evident how fitly ‘devout’ was chosen to set forth their piety under the old Covenant, who, like Zacharias and Elizabeth, ‘were righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless’ (Lk 1:6), and leaving nothing willingly undone which pertained to the circle of their prescribed duties. For this sense of accurately and scrupulously performing that which is prescribed, with the consciousness of the danger of slipping into a careless negligent performance of God’s service, and of the need therefore of anxiously watching against he adding or to diminishing from, or in any other way altering, that which has been by Him commanded, lies ever in the word ‘devout, godly,’ when used in their religious signification” (Trench, *Synonyms of the N.T.*, p. 174).
3. The root meaning of the word in Greek is “awe” in the presence of that which is more than human. A reverence for that which is majestic and divine.

Beyond this it also implies worship which befits that awe and an active obedience which befits that reverence.

4. Basically, godliness is the right attitude toward God:
- a. The attitude of awe,
 - b. Of reverence,
 - c. Of worship and
 - d. Of obedience.

II. Biblical Use

A. Old Testament:

1. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction* (Proverbs 1:17).

2. *Wealth gained by dishonesty will be diminished, but he who gathers by labor (godliness) will increase (Proverbs 13:11).*
3. *The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of council and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11:2).*
4. *Wisdom and knowledge will be the stability of your times, and the strength of your salvation; the fear of the Lord is His treasure (Isaiah 33:6).*

B. New Testament:

1. *So, when Peter saw it, he responded to the people: 'Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk (Acts 3:12).*
2. *A devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always... And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually (Acts 10:2, 7).*
3. *For as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an alter with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim unto you (Acts 17:23).*
4. *For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come (1 Timothy 4:8).*
5. *But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God (1 Timothy 5:4).*
6. *But godliness with contentment is great gain (1 Timothy 6:6).*
7. *Having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! (2 Timothy 3:5).*

III. The Mystery of Godliness

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory (1 Timothy 3:16).

In the New Testament and in the ancient world a mystery was not something which was mysterious in the sense of being hard to understand. A mystery had been a divine secret, but now it was given to men. The New Testament declares the secret of godliness in Christ and in His Holy Word. All we have to do today to achieve godliness is read, understand and obey God's Word.

IV. The Process of Godliness

A. This process is a changing from yielding yourself to the world to yielding yourself to God (Romans 6:16). Nobody is capable of yielding themselves to God and the world at the same time, even though they try (Matthew 6:24).

B. The changing process described:

1. A changing of citizenship - *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love (Colossians 1:13).*
2. A crucifixion - *Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin (Romans 6:6).*

I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me (Galatians 2:20).

3. A transformation (metamorphosis) - *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God (Romans 12:2).*
 - a. A change from a caterpillar to a beautiful butterfly.
 - b. A change from a low and base existence to a royal and holy existence.

- c. The change is so drastic it is described as “from death to life.” One actually “comes alive.”

V. The Result of Godliness

- A. First and foremost, we become like Jesus in word, thought and deed.
- B. We will be persecuted - *Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution (2 Timothy 3:12).*
- C. But God is our protector:
 - 1. *The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment (being punished), for the day of judgment (2 Peter 2:9).*
 - 2. *No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it (1 Corinthians 10:13).*
 - 3. *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in the time of need (Hebrews 4:16).*

VI. Conclusion

One who is godly is a devout person and shows that piety which is characterized by a Godward attitude. The godly do that which is pleasing to God. It is reverence in action.

Godliness is the right attitude toward God in reverence (Luke 4:6-8), loyalty (John 4: 23-24) and fear (Proverbs 1:7). This fear is awe and respect not dread! Godliness comes through Jesus. To those in the world godliness is still a mystery (1 Timothy 3:16). Christ has given us all that is necessary to put godliness in our lives (2 Peter 1:3).

God is no respecter of persons and does not force godliness on some and not on others. It is to be sought by us! We must seek it as an athlete (1 Timothy 4:7-8) or a soldier (1 Timothy 6:11-12).

Godliness brings many things into our lives. It brings trouble (2 Timothy 3:12-15). It brings power equal to our tasks (Acts 3:12). And best of all it brings God (John 9:31).

If your life is not troubled by other because of your love for God, you are not as godly as you should be!

BROTHERLY KINDNESS **2 Peter 1:7**

I. Definition

- A. Webster: love natural or becoming to brothers.
- B. Lexicon:
 - Brother loving,
 - Brotherly love,
 - Brotherly kindness and
 - Love among Christian believers.
- C. Others:
 - 1. The root word when used with another subject means “to like, to value.”
 - 2. The root word (Φίλος) is never used for man’s love of or for God in the New Testament.
 - 3. And the root word is also never used for erotic love in the New Testament.

II. Study of Φίλος

- A. Definition:
 - 1. Friend of the king.
 - 2. Dearest, love, beloved (no erotic connotation at all).
 - 3. The strongest ties of love (ἀγάπη).
 - 4. Friendship (with the idea of hospitality).
 - 5. Service, concern and sacrifice even to the point of life itself.

6. Includes fellowship and fairness.
 7. Harmony.
 8. Love of your own soul (for its own eternal good).
 9. Φίλος is ἀγάπη personified.
- B. Φίλος is ἀγάπη defined:
1. John 11:3-36 - Lazarus.
 - a. *Therefore, the sisters sent to Him, saying, 'Lord, behold, he whom you love (φιλεῖς) is sick' (v. 3).*
 - b. *Now Jesus loved (ἠγάπα) Martha and her sister and Lazarus (v. 5).*
 - c. *These things He said, and after that He said to them 'Our friend (φίλος) Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up' (v. 11).*
 - d. *Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, 'See how He loved (ἐφίλει) him' (vv. 35-36).*
 2. John 15:13-15 - Friends of Christ.
 - a. *'Greater love (ἀγάπην) has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends (φίλων)' (v. 13).*
 - b. *You are My friends (θίλιο) if you do whatever I command you (v. 14).*
 - c. *No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends (φίλους), for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made know to you (v. 15).*
 3. 2 Samuel 1:26 David's sorrow for Jonathan [a friend (φίλος) is one who has love (ἀγάπη)]. (LXX)
- C. Scriptural usage.
1. Positive aspects:

- a. God is love (ἀγάπη) (1 John 4:8).
 - 1) The Father loves Jesus (φιλει) (John 5:20).
 - 2) God loves us (φιλανθρωπία) (Titus 3:4).
 - 3) “As many as I love, I rebuke (ἐγὼ..... φιλω - emphatic) (Revelation 3:19).

- b. *So, when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of Jonah, do you love (ἀγαπας) Me more than these?’ He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; You know that I love (φιλω) You.’ He said to him, ‘Feed My lambs’.*

He said to him again a second time, ‘Simon, son of Jonah, do you love (ἀγαπας) Me?’ He said to Him, ‘Yes, Lord; You know that I love (φιλω) You.’ He said to him, ‘Tend My sheep.’

He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, son of Jonah, do you love (φιλω) Me?’ Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, ‘Do you love (φιλω) Me?’ And he said to Him, ‘Lord, You know all things; You know that I love (φιλω) You.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed My sheep’ (John 21:15-17).

- c. If we love Jesus, God the Father loves us. *For the Father Himself loves (φιλω) you, because you have loved (πεφιλήκατα) Me, and have believed that I came forth from God (John 16:27).*

- d. It is love for brethren. *Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers (φιλάδελφοι), be tenderhearted, be courteous (1 Peter 3:8).*

- e. James uses Abraham as an example. *And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’ And he was called the friend (φίλος) of God (James 2:23).*

- 2. Wrong use of love:
 - a. *He who loves (φιλων) his life will lose it (John 12:25).*
 - b. *For the love of money (φιλαργυρία) is a root of all kinds of evil (1 Timothy 6:10).*

- c. *Lovers of themselves* (φιλαυτοι), *lovers of money* (φιλάργυροι) (2 Timothy 3:2).
 - d. *Lovers of pleasure* (φιλήδονοι) *rather than lovers of God* (φιλόθεοι) (2 Timothy 3:4).
 - e. Judas betrayed Jesus and said, *Whomever I kiss* (φιλήσω), *He is the one* (Matthew 26:48).
3. Love in us:
- a. *Be kindly affectionate* (φιλόστοργοι) *to one another with brotherly love* (φιλαδελφία) (Romans 12:10).
 - b. *Let brotherly love* (φιλαδελφία) *continue* (Hebrews 13:1).
 - c. Φίλος shows ἀγάπη in our lives. *Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren* (φιλαδελφίαν), *love* (ἀγαπήσατε) *one another fervently with a pure heart* (1 Peter 1:22).

Conclusion of Φίλος.

- A. Paul tells us of the horrible results of not loving in this fashion, *If anyone does not love* (οὐ φιλει) *the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord come!* (1 Corinthians 16:22).
- B. The love of men's souls is complete only when we have brought them into the fellowship of God in Christ and have put them in our own hearts until we share their agonies and joys.

III. Use in Scripture

- A. Old Testament (Septuagint):
 - 1. *But when his brother saw that their father loved* (φίλος) *him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him* (Genesis 37:4).
 - 2. *I love* (φίλος) *those who love* (ἀγάπη) *me, and those who seek me diligently will find me* (Proverbs 8:17).

3. *His watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving (φίλος) to slumber (Isaiah 56:10).*

B. New Testament:

1. *Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another (Romans 12:10).*
2. *But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another (1 Thessalonians 4:9).*
3. *Let brotherly love continue (Hebrews 13:1).*
4. *Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart (1 Peter 1:22).*
5. *Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion one for another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous (1 Peter 3:8).*

IV. Conclusion

A quick review of the preceding attributes (2 Peter 1:5-7) reveals that they are directed to the inner man. But this attribute, “brotherly kindness,” and the final attribute of “love” are directed to others. Christianity is not designed to have its completion or fulfillment in being directed inwardly OR to God only, it is to be fulfilled in:

1. Loving oneself,
2. Loving the brethren,
3. Loving lost souls and above all
4. Loving God.

When we turn our love or thoughts to ourselves or to any “special” interpretation of Scripture, we eventually lose our love for the brethren and the lost in world.

It must also be noted that this love for the brethren is a command! Many have taught that, “This type of love (φίλος) is never commanded, only the ‘higher’ love (ἀγάπη).” But let me remind you that in the passage under consideration in this

study both brotherly love (φίλος) and love (ἀγάπη) are commanded in that Peter, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, has said, “giving all diligence, add!”

LOVE **2 Peter 1:7**

I. Supply Love

- A. Text 2 Peter 1:5-7 (Supply).
- B. Love is added: if this passage ended with brotherly love we would isolate our love and it would become a selfish, narrow, exclusive sentiment (J. Toole).

II. Love: Some Definitions

- A. Ἔρως versus ἀγάπη.
 - 1. Ἔρως: loving something for its worth, and desires to possess and enjoy the object.
 - 2. Ἀγάπη: self-giving and has its source in God’s sacrificial love for man (J. P. Lewis).
- B. It is the love of rational preference, rather than of emotion, showing itself by action (J. P. Lewis).
- C. We talk about “falling in love,” but we might do better to speak of “growing in love.” Falling is one of the few human postures in which one has absolutely no control over himself...maybe its time to start growing in love (John Gipson).

III. Meanings of Love

- A. Anyone can obey rules without love, but your actions are without any value (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).

However, nobody can love and then ignore the rules!
- B. Another meaning of love (Matthew 5:43-48).
- C. Love God and keep His commandments are synonymous.
 - 1. Love God and (+) keep His commandments

- a. Exodus 20:6,
 - b. Deuteronomy 5:10,
 - c. Deuteronomy 7:9,
 - d. Deuteronomy 11:1,
 - e. Daniel 9:10,
 - f. Nehemiah 1:5.
2. To serve him (+), to walk in his ways (+), to love him.
- a. Deuteronomy 10:12,
 - b. Isaiah 56:5-6.
- D. The Bible condemns actions not motivated by love...but the one who fails to do the obligations imposed by God does not love (J. P. Lewis)!

IV. Love of Brethren

- A. Duty to a brother or sister? (Galatians 6:1-2).
- B. Am I your enemy? (Galatians 4:16).

V. Self-Love

- A. Biblical self-love:
 - 1. Leviticus 19:18,
 - 2. Matthew 19:19,
 - 3. Mark 12:31.
- B. Biblical self-love does not equal pride or egotism!
- C. How do we treat (think of) our strengths and abilities? As God's gifts?
- D. How do we treat (think of) our shortcomings and weaknesses? Not pity but seek God's help to overcome them.

- E. Biblical self-love will motivate each of us to prepare our souls for its eternal destiny.

VI. Jesus And Love

- A. Jesus intensely hated sin and just as intensely loved the sinner.
- B. Jesus took no pleasure or joy in evil, only pain and sorrow (J. Toole).
- C. Jesus, the perfect lover of all mankind!
 - 1. Matthew 20:28,
 - 2. Galatians 2:20,
 - 3. Ephesians 3:19,
 - 4. Ephesians 5:2,
 - 5. Ephesians 5:25,
 - 6. Hebrews 2:9,
 - 7. Revelation 1:5.

VII. My Response to Love

- A. Man responds to God's love with love (1 John 4:11,19-21). This love is an obedient love, not a sentimental feeling (J. P. Lewis).
- B. If I love God, and myself, and you are lost:
 - 1. I am filled with compassion for you,
 - 2. I will seek you and
 - 3. I will tell you!

WHERE DO WE GO WHEN WE DIE?



Please watch the free online video available at the following website:
WhereAfterDeath.org

2 PETER CHAPTER 3
THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

- I. Introduction2 Peter 3:1-2**
 - A. Remember - I told you this before!..... 2 Peter 3:1
 - B. Remember the words that were spoken..... 2 Peter 3:2
 - 1. Yes, prophesied by holy prophets, but
 - 2. Commanded by the Lord.

- II. Certainty of the Second Coming2 Peter 3:3-7**
 - A. Beware of scoffers. 2 Peter 3:3
 - B. Beware of uniformitarianism..... 2 Peter 3:4
 - C. They are willfully ignorant
“Earth” 2 Peter 3:5
 - D. The universal flood.
“World” 2 Peter 3:6
 - E. “Earth” preserved 2 Peter 3:7
 - 1. Not for water,
 - 2. But for fire and
 - 3. Judgment of ungodly men.

- III. Reason for the Delay2 Peter 3:8-9**
 - A. 1,000 years - 1 day 2 Peter 3:8
 - B. God is not slow fulfilling His promise 2 Peter 3:9
 - 1. He is longsuffering,
 - 2. He wants none to perish,

- 3. He wants all to repent.

IV. Actual Happenings2 Peter 3:10-13

- A. The Lord will return unannounced..... 2 Peter 3:10
 - 1. The heavens will be destroyed and
 - 2. The “Earth” will be destroyed with fire.
- B. Therefore, we must live righteously..... 2 Peter 3:11
- C. Desire the Lord’s return..... 2 Peter 3:12
- D. A new heaven and a new earth..... 2 Peter 3:13

V. How Christians Should Be2 Peter 3:14-18

- A. Therefore, be found in the Lord..... 2 Peter 3:14
- B. Longsuffering of the Lord - salvation 2 Peter 3:15
- C. The untaught and unstable twist the Scriptures 2 Peter 3:16
- D. Forewarned is forearmed 2 Peter 3:17
- E. Grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord..... 2 Peter 3:18

FALSE BRETHREN

W. S. Boyett

One of the most tragic words in the Greek New Testament is “pseudadelphos,” which we translate “false brethren” in the two places where it appears (2 Corinthians 11:26, Galatians 2:4). The term is a combination of two words, “pseudees” and “adelphos.” The word “pseudees” appears alone in three places (Acts 6:13; Revelation 2:2, 21:8) and in each place is translated “false” or “liar.” The word “adelphos” appears alone 346 times and is always translated by some form of the word “brother.” Bagster defines the word “pseudadelphos” as: “A false brother, a pretended Christian.” Thayer’s definition is: “A false brother, i.e. one who ostentatiously professes to be a Christian, but is destitute of Christian knowledge and piety.” The word “pseudees” is also combined with such words as “apostolos” - apostle, hence false apostles (2 Corinthians 11:13); “didaskalos” - a teacher - false teachers (2 Peter 2:1); “Martur” - witness - a false witness (Matthew 26:60; 1 Corinthians 15:15); “propheetees” - prophet - a false prophet (Matthew 7:15, 24:24); “Christos” - Christ - false Christs (Matthew 24:24; Mark 13: 22).

I know of no place in Paul’s writings where he uses the word “Adelphos” to describe anyone outside the church of the Lord. False brethren then are not without, but within the church. The use of the word “pseudadelphos” in Galatians 2:4 will show this to be true. This passage describes the meeting with the leaders of the church in Jerusalem mentioned in Acts chapter 15. This was a “high level” meeting of the leaders to discuss the question of circumcision. Paul, in addition to being deputed by the church in Antioch to go to Jerusalem, was also directed by the Holy Spirit to go (Galatians 2:2). He took Titus, an uncircumcised Greek, with him. He wisely presented the details of his work among the Gentiles to special leaders of the church, before presenting these facts to the whole group. After presenting the facts to these leaders, no request was made by them that Titus should be circumcised. And this, in view of the fact that false brethren had been secretly introduced into the meeting with the apostles, who obviously complain of Paul not having Titus circumcised.

These false brethren came in “secretly.” They privily sneaked into the “high level” meeting. This type operation is typical of the false. Some of them, while Paul was preaching the gospel in Asia Minor, had gone before the church in Antioch and sowed their seed of false doctrine. When Paul returned to Antioch, he found that these pretenders had the church in an uproar, which resulted in the church sending Paul and chosen men to Jerusalem to consult the apostles about the matter (Acts 15:1ff).

In the Jerusalem meeting the question of circumcision was settled by the authority of the inspired apostles. They sent a letter containing their ruling in the matter to the church in Antioch, and this letter was circulated among the churches of Asia Minor as “the decrees which had been ordained by the apostles and elders that were at Jerusalem” (Acts 16:4). However, this did not stop these false brethren. They continued their efforts to spread their erroneous ideas. Paul mentions them frequently in his epistles. Among the perils he

encountered in his work was “false brethren” (2 Corinthians 11:26). Had these individuals been true brethren that were honestly mistaken, they would have ceased their efforts when the apostles ruled on the matter. Being false, their motive was to promote themselves and they went to great lengths to do so. Paul refers to them as preaching Christ of faction (Greek--“eritheia”) in Philippians 1:17. William Barclay, in his New Testament Word Book, p. 39, says concerning the word “eritheia” as used in this passage: “In Philippi it (the word, “eritheia”) had actually become the moving motive of certain preachers. They were eager rather to show their own greatness than the greatness of Christ.” Paul refers to them again in Philippians 2:21, where he says of them: “For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ.” The preacher who is more interested in becoming a brotherhood hero than in “things of Jesus Christ,” is motivated by “eritheia,” which Barclay says is “the wrong kind of ambition.” Like Simon of old, his heart is not right with God. No wonder Paul calls these “false brethren!” The true gospel preacher is totally committed to exalting Christ, and there is no room in his heart for the selfish ambition that strives to exalt himself.

After Paul and those traveling with him had arrived in Antioch on their return from the Jerusalem meeting, there is no more evidence of any disturbance in the Antioch church. The false brethren did not stand up and defend their position. We find no evidence of their being in Antioch after this. When the true disciples in Antioch heard the reading of the “decrees of the apostles” they “rejoiced for the consolation” (Acts 15:30-31). From what is said about the false brethren in Paul’s epistles, especially 2 Corinthians and Galatians, it seems that they followed the typical pattern of all false teachers. The reading of the “decrees of the apostles” to the brethren in Antioch had spoiled all hope they might have had of success there, so they set out across Asia Minor to “creep in secretly” into other congregations. Paul, in the meeting at Jerusalem, gave no place to these false brethren, “no, not for an hour” (Galatians 2:5). Likewise, in his epistles addressed to congregations of Asia Minor and Macedonia and Achaia, he exposed them thoroughly. There is no record of Paul’s having a public encounter with them after the initial encounter with them in Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-2). But in his epistles, he never passed up an opportunity to expose their error to everyone who might be deceived by it. Unless those mentioned by name in the epistles to Timothy were among these false brethren, Paul never once called their names. In such a case he did not call their names in any epistle addressed to a congregation. He was exposing principles and tactics and not personalities. No doubt, this example would be a good one to follow today.

Paul refers to these false brethren when he says: “Are we beginning again to commend ourselves? or need we, AS DO SOME, epistles of commendation to you or from you?” (2 Corinthians 3:1). In chapter 5:12 he refers to them again as those who “glory in appearance.” In 2 Corinthians 10:10 he says: “For his letters, THEY SAY are weighty and strong; but his bodily presence is weak, his speech of no account.” They were unable to attack the soundness of his teaching, but had to admit that his epistles were mighty and strong. Like almost all false teachers, they resorted to the unchristian method of attacking the bodily appearance and speech of the apostle. This helps us to understand better Paul’s earlier statement about them as those that “glory in

appearance.” To them logic and TRUTH were secondary to appearance. These false brethren were using their own polish in appearance and speech, no doubt, in their efforts to appeal to the people and to calumniate Paul. Like Absalom, they were using their appearance to deceive. Absalom would be a popular preacher in our day, for it is said of him: “But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty; from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him” (2 Samuel 14:25). Absalom used his beauty coupled with flattery, to steal the hearts of the people away from his father, David (2 Samuel 15:1-6). This same thing is being done by false brethren today as they strive to steal the hearts of brethren away from the truth.

They said of Paul’s speech: “His speech is of no account.” “His speech and delivery are utterly contemptible” (Amplified N.T.). Like their counterpart in the church today, these false brethren made rhetoric of more importance than truth. Some months ago, a preacher quoted from N.B. Hardeman in his Sunday sermon. In giving Hardeman credit for the quote, he referred to him as one of the greatest Bible teachers he had ever listened to. The next day one of the members, a highly educated man and leader, entered the preacher’s office. Soon after arriving he said to the preacher: “So you are a Hardeman boy.” The preacher said: “I suppose you refer to my mention of Hardeman Sunday. Yes, I think he was the greatest Bible teacher I ever sat at the feet of.” To which the man replied: “Hardeman never did have anything but a paper degree. He got his degree from Georgia Robertson Christian College, and it never was accredited.” Before leaving he reminded the preacher that he had accredited degrees and that he knew the Bible also. The preacher immediately thought of 2 Corinthians 10:10 and understood. A young man asked a professor if he had heard a certain well-known preacher’s lecture on the errors of the new translations. The professor replied: “He doesn’t have the scholarship to criticize these translations.” This well-known preacher had preached and studied the Bible longer than this professor had been on earth. He met in debate many of the best scholars denominationalism ever produced. Yet according to this professor was not qualified to point out errors in a version because he did not have an advanced degree in theology. The idea that one is not qualified to speak on a subject unless he has advanced degrees in that field is quite popular among us today. In some circles among us one would be reluctant to state the formula of water unless he had an advanced degree in chemistry. This may help to better understand what Paul meant when he said: “Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth” (1 Corinthians 8:1). Knowledge and learning are wonderful when they increase one’s ability without destroying his humility, but when they develop an attitude of snobbery, they are both unbecoming and unchristian. Paul’s answer to those intellectual snobs who so criticized him was: “Though I am not a trained orator, yet am I not deficient in knowledge; indeed, we made this perfectly plain to you in everything” (2 Corinthians 11:6 - 20th Century N.T.).

These false brethren were careful to claim that their work was on the same level as that of Paul. They even disguised themselves as the apostles of Christ. “And what I do I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claims of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as the apostles of Christ. And no

wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So, it is not strange if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds" (2 Corinthians 11:12-15 RSV).

These false brethren were the ones that were troubling the churches of Galatia (Galatians 1:6-8). They were causing the Galatian Christians to apostatize from the gospel and turn to "another gospel." The word "another" appears twice in the A.V. here, but it is a translation of two original terms. One points up numerical difference, and the other qualitative difference. Their gospel was another in that they had perverted it and changed its quality from truth to error. Not another as though there were more than one.

Even the antichrists started out as brethren, for John says of them: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they all were not of us" (1 John 2:19). They did not all possess the same spirit as did the apostles; if they had, they would have continued with them. Note the following from Guy N. Woods: "The antecedent of 'they' is the word 'antichrist,' of the preceding verse. The preposition ek, rendered 'out from,' indicates origin from the center: and these were, therefore, formerly among the disciples, and members of the church. They became apostates from the fold by going out. They were not of the disciples, i.e., they did not possess the same spirit of obedience characteristic of the disciples" (*Commentary on Peter, John & Jude*, p. 244). This gives a good picture of what false brethren really are. They are those in the church who do not possess the same "spirit of obedience characteristic of the (true) disciples," and some remain in the church with the hope of "drawing away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29, 30). This passage is addressed to the elders of the church at Ephesus, and Paul warns them that "from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things." This is the "perverted gospel" of Galatians 1:6-8. Paul wished that these troublemakers would cut themselves off from the church (Galatians 5:7-12). Their counterpart in the church today, while not possessing the "same spirit of obedience characteristic of the disciples," rather than "going out from us," are staying in to continue to trouble and corrupt the church. One recently said: "I hope I can live long enough to correct some of the mistake of the old pioneer preachers of the church." The time is come to "try the spirits whether they be of God" (1 John 4:1). Or as the Ephesian church did: "Try them that say they are apostles...and found them false" (Revelation 2:2). This modern counterpart may not have gone to the point of claiming to be apostles, but we wonder if there are not some: like those in Paul's time, who "glory in appearance." Who are motivated by "eritheia" (Philippians 1:16-17), which Barclay calls "the wrong kind of ambition." Who are "eager to show their own greatness rather than the greatness of Christ." Preachers ought to be ambitious to please, not to be brotherhood heroes. Those who cause "division and offenses contrary to the doctrine which we have learned" should be marked (Romans 16:17). There is an element among us today that tends to mark everyone who does not go along with their liberal scheme as "anti," but they cry loudly when they are called liberals. It is a poor rule that does not work both ways. These have branded those who do not go along with "church support of colleges," "women leading public prayer," etc. as "antis," but they do not want their own rule applied to themselves.

The time has come in the Lord's church that we must take the Divine rule "THUS SAITH THE LORD" and distinguish between the true and the erroneous.

GNOSTICISM

I. Gnosis.

A. Word choice:

The New Testament writers were determined to use prominent words of their time which were used by the people they addressed.

B. Gnosis:

The word usually denotes the act of knowing or the objective knowledge thus acquired.

C. False Gnosis:

This implies a knowledge which is false. It is another knowledge which is not true.

D. Authority:

The true Gnostic (Gnosis) submitted himself (itself) without reserve to the authority of Scripture.

E. Out of reach:

The false Gnostic (Gnosis) claimed to be above the reach of the ordinary.

F. Gnostic:

This term as used in these lessons will refer to the false Gnostic (the heretic).

G. Salvation:

The Gnostic was so zealous for knowledge he would even give up his Christian salvation for it.

II. Heretical Gnosticism.

A. General Character.

1. Higher knowledge - Their common ground was an acquisition of a knowledge higher than that of ordinary believers.

2. Aim - It was to construct a theory of the universe, cosmogony and redemption.
- B. External Origin.
1. Universal thought - from the old fables and philosophies some found what they thought was a uniting bond of truth and the elements of a universal religion.
 2. The result - a number of new systems of religious philosophy sprang up immediately in different countries and exhibited similar characteristics.
 3. Oriental elements - modern historians feel the Oriental elements are the strongest found in the Gnostic systems.
 4. Various roots - There were several contributing ideas:
 - a. Alexandrian Judaism.
 - b. Dualistic Persianism.
 - c. Pantheistic Buddhism.
 - d. Platonic.
 - e. Pythagorean.
 - f. Brahminic.
- C. Classification - There are many ways to classify them and this is only one of them:
1. Those who combined Christianity with Judaism and heathenism.
 2. Those who entirely separated them.
 3. Those who identify it with Judaism but are opposed to heathenism.
- D. History.
1. After Pentecost - during the years following Pentecost great freedom was given to religious thought among the Christians as long as the moral and religious life of the people was not perverted.

2. Second Century - this is the time when Gnosticism in its many forms flourished under very capable teachers.
3. Third Century - during this time Gnosticism lost most of its power even though some individual sects were prospering and a few new ones were springing up.

E. General Principles.

1. Fundamental ideas - there were three ideas that were fundamental to all:
 - a. A supreme being, unconnected with matter and incapable of being affected by it,
 - b. Matter is evil and the source of evil and is opposed to God and
 - c. A series of beings (demi-gods) exist between the supreme God and matter.
2. The Gnostic knowledge - there were four general sources for their knowledge:
 - a. Tradition,
 - b. Christian Scripture,
 - c. Writings of other "enlightened" persons and
 - d. Writings of heathen poets and philosophers.

F. Literature.

1. Original - the original authorities were the ecclesiastical writers of that period, i.e.: Dead Sea Scrolls, etc.
2. Modern - literature on Gnosticism is very abundant.

III. In general they believed:

- A. Matter is evil and spirit is good,
- B. No resurrection of the dead,

- C. Christ did not come in the flesh and
 - D. God is in heaven and has no contact with the world.
- IV. Gnosticism WAS NOT a homogeneous system of either religion or philosophy.
- It actually consisted of many groups holding different opinions drawn from a great variety of sources.
- V. The Gnostic replaced the question, "What must I do to be saved?" with other questions requiring special knowledge such as:
- A. What is the origin of evil? and
 - B. How is the primitive order of the universe to be restored?
- VI. They addressed the problems of:
- A. God and the universe,
 - B. God and providence,
 - C. Christ,
 - D. Intermediaries,
 - E. Redemption and
 - F. Revelation.
- VII. The Gnostic understood salvation to be the "knowing" of these questions and problems along with others. But they also had to know their answers.
- VIII. For a time Christians had referred to themselves as "true Gnostics" with the implication that through Christ they had learned the true wisdom.
- IX. Many Christians were led away by their teachings.
- X. Gnosticism reached its greatest height about 150.
- XI. They were finally defeated about 200 and then began forming their own societies outside the church.
- XII. In meeting their threats, the Christians were forced to distinguish very carefully between genuinely inspired letters and forged works as well as heretical writings.

- XIII. The Greek and Roman gods were identified with their beliefs.
- XIV. Cult practices from all parts of the empire were either adopted or adapted.
- XV. Some of their theories go way back into antiquity from Greece, Egypt, Mesopotamia and India.
- XVI. Some of their beliefs can be traced back to Zoroastrianism.
- XVII. They pictured the spirit of man, stripped of all foreign accretions, finally reaching God. This is an idea which is comparable to the Hindu doctrine of Nirvana.
- XVIII. Add to the Greek mythology and philosophy, the Old and New Testaments, along with the body of apocryphal and pseudopigraphal literature (which developed immediately before and after the time of Christ) and you have the immediate background for Gnosticism.
- XIX. It appears no Gnostic group claimed any exclusiveness as opposed to any other group.
- XX. They also adopted the Docetic teaching which claimed Christ only “seemed” to dwell in a body of flesh and blood. He only had the appearance of being human. His earthly life and the suffering on the cross were unreal.
- XXI. They divided men into three categories:
 - A. Animals (or material men) predestined to destruction (non-Christians),
 - B. Psychic men who could attain salvation with the help of ordinary Christians and
 - C. The spiritual men who were destined to eternal life.
- XXII. Jesus is the revealer of gnostic wisdom. He taught these secret traditions to the elect (apostles).
- XXIII. They claimed their secret knowledge was superior to the Old and New Testaments.
 - A. They also claimed the ordinary believer was not capable of this knowledge.
 - B. You could receive salvation only after you had received this special knowledge.

- C. This special knowledge was based on special revelation.
 - D. The Gnostics, in their pride, turned the gospel into a new philosophy.
 - E. Gnosticism puts “knowledge” in the place of “faith.”
- XXIV. Man was saved by specific knowledge NOT by faith; NOT general knowledge, BUT knowledge of the Gnostic myth.
- THIS WAS ESSENTIALLY SELF-KNOWLEDGE!
- XXV. All Gnostic teachings were a part of the redeeming knowledge which gathers together:
- A. The object of knowledge (the divine nature),
 - B. The means of knowledge (the redeeming gnosis) and
 - C. The knower himself.
- XXVI. Many Gnostics insisted that ignorance, not sin, was what involved a person in suffering.
- XXVII. Sin is not the act and the disposition of the human will in rebellion against God.
- A. It is only a physical fact or quality inherent in the body and in matter everywhere.
 - B. Redemption, therefore, does not consist in the work of Christ for us on the cross, nor the applying of the benefits of that work by the Holy Spirit in the renewal of the man.
 - C. Redemption is simply each man’s efforts to secure emancipation from the flesh (from physical evil).
- XVIII. All who had gone beyond and into Gnosis had gone beyond the church’s teaching and had transcended the authority of the hierarchy.
- IXXX. Whoever achieves Gnosis becomes “no longer a Christian, but a Christ.”
- XXX. Only one’s personal experience offered the ultimate criterion of truth. AND this took precedence over all secondhand testimony and all tradition - EVEN Gnostic tradition.

XXXI. All of this is comparable to the modern Pentecostals, Jehovah Witnesses or Mormons etc. who claim guidance from the Holy Spirit apart from the Scriptures or those who would rather be guided by their feelings rather than God's word.

XXXII. Jesus was also in need of salvation in order that He might not be held back by the "deficiency in which he had been placed."

XXXIII. Doctrines common to most Gnostics (from the "Gospel of Truth"):

- A. Not-knowing, forgetfulness, oblivion of the Father was the "original sin,"
- B. Jesus is a savior, a savior by Gnosis NOT by vicarious suffering and
- C. Man is saved by knowledge - "Whosoever has knowledge understands from whence he come and whither he goes."

XXXIV. Their god was an ineffable, transcendent god - "Above the universe dwells the prime Father who is also called Bytthos and Chaos. He is invisible, incomprehensible, above time, and dwells unbegotten in eternal peace."

XXXV. If an ineffable god is to have contact with a material world, it must come through a chain of intermediate beings. Each one of these intermediate being is less divine and more earthly than the one before it.

- A. The lowest god in this chain of 15 pairs is the Jehovah of the Old Testament.
- B. Therefore, the material universe and man were created by this inferior god named Jehovah.
- C. Unbeknown to Jehovah, the ineffable God placed a spark of the divine in man (know as the "a spark of light").
- D. This spark of light is described as being in "ignorance," or "oblivion," or "forgetfulness," or "drunkenness."
- E. This meant that man's soul was unconscious of its true nature and destiny.
- F. From this state man can be redeemed only by having the ignorance removed the oblivion or forgetfulness changed to wakefulness and awareness, the drunkenness replace by sobriety.
- G. In other words, the Gnostic must come to himself, know himself and thus be redeemed.

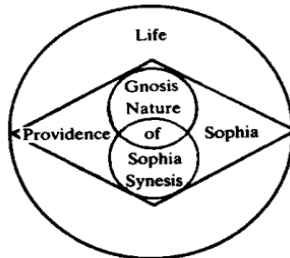
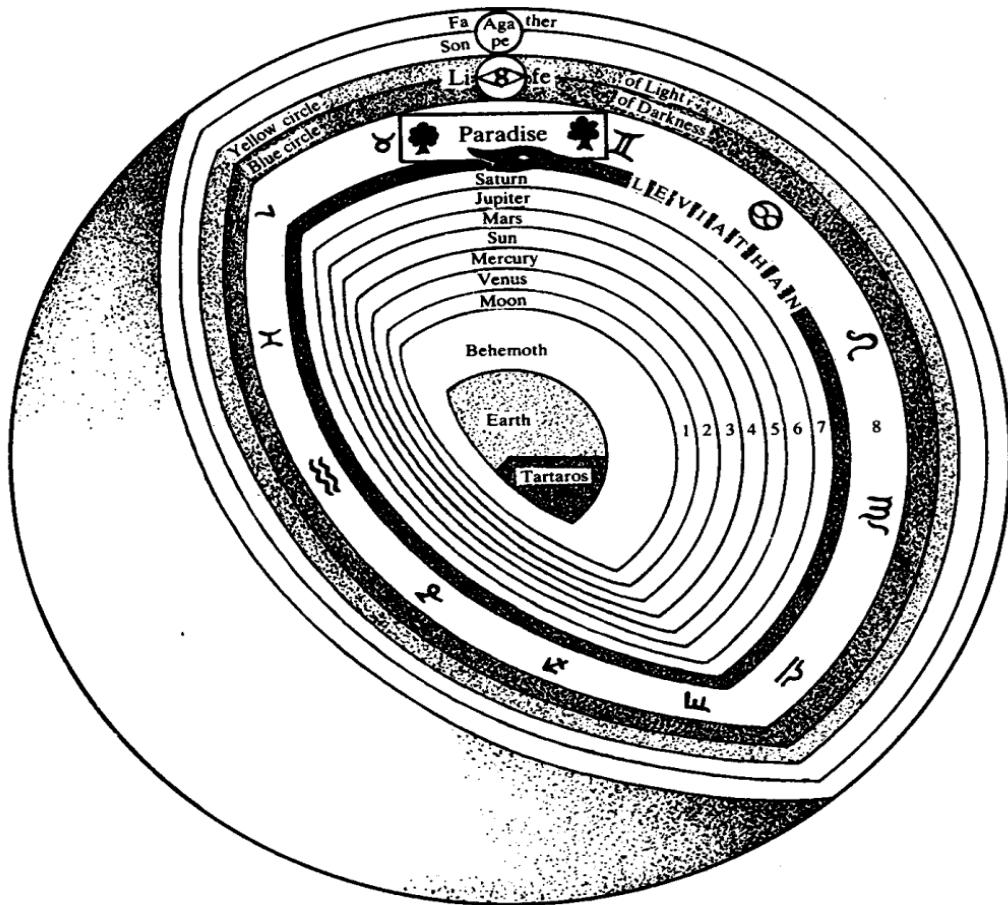
XXXVI. The redemption guaranteed by gnosis is realized for the first time at physical death.

- A. This is when they are actually released from their physical bodies and are able to set out on their way to their true home.
- B. This is called the “ascent of the soul” or the “heavenly journey of the soul.”

XXXVII. The planets were often viewed as seven heavenly wardens who attempted to keep the soul from completing its journey to “bliss.”

XXXVIII. The soul must overcome these wardens or give the magic password which enabled it to pass on to the next sphere.

IXL. The Ophite Diagram:



- A. The “kingdom of God” consists of pure spirit and two circles.
1. One is the Father and the other is the Son.
 2. A smaller circle represents “love” as the element which draws the Son (the Urmensch) downward and so establishes the link with the intermediate kingdom.

- B. The middle or intermediate kingdom is ruled by spirit and soul, and is marked by two colors [yellow for light and blue for darkness (evidently the limit of the visible cosmos)].
1. The small “circle of life” symbolizes the realm of Sophia, from which the germ of life (i.e.: the divine soul) comes to man.
 2. In the rhomboid figure, “providence of Sophia (Wisdom)” is said to have stood. And within it in two intersecting circles, “knowledge (gnosis)” and “insight (synsis)”, with at the intersection between them “Nature of Sophia.”
- C. The earthly cosmos consists of body, soul and spirit.
1. In the middle is the earth with the underworld (tartarus).
 2. Around it in concentric circles are:
 - a. The sphere of Behemoth (named after the primeval monster of extrabiblical Jewish tradition compare Genesis 1:1,4; Esdras 6:49; Baruch 29:4) or the atmosphere.
 - b. Then the spheres of the seven planets and the circle of the serpent biting its own tail (Leviathan), the lord of the world who gives expression to malevolent character of the cosmos.
 3. Beyond these is the circle of the fixed stars in which are the signs of the zodiac and in which paradise is located. The latter is marked as the rectangle in which stand the tree of life and that of the knowledge of good and evil.
 4. The “flaming, turning sword” (Compare Genesis 3:24) separates paradise from the sphere of fixed stars and perhaps also symbolizes the turning of the spheres (following a passage in Philo).

XL. The Gnostic religions failed to establish a safe basis for practical morals:

- A. On the one extreme, a spiritual pride obscured the sense of sin. This brought about antinomianism which often ended in sensuality and debaucheries.
- B. On the other extreme, an over strained sense of sin often led the Gnostics to ascribe nature to Satan, to abhor the body as the seat of evil and to practice extreme asceticism.

XLI. Gnosticism, not being from God:

Could not,

Did not and

Still cannot provide salvation for mankind!