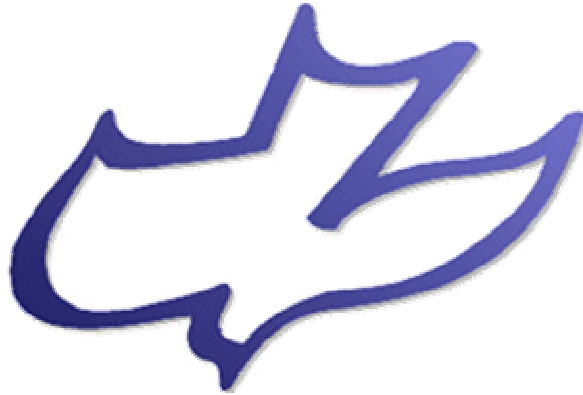


WORD OF LIFE STUDY GUIDES

By John Paul Miller



Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15

WORD OF LIFE STUDY GUIDES



Pastor John Paul Miller

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A Study of
The Second Epistle of the Apostle

PETER

By Pastor John Paul Miller

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	5
Is Your Faith Real? - 2 Peter 1:1-4	7
Is Your Faith Growing? - 2 Peter 1:5-11	12
God's Wonderful Word - 2 Peter 1:12-21	19
The Teachers of Error (Pt. 1) – <i>Their Condemnation</i> - 2 Peter 2:1-9	24
The Teachers of Error (Pt. 2) – <i>Their Character and Claims</i> - 2 Peter 2:10-22	31
The Certainty of Christ's Coming (Pt. 1) - 2 Peter 3:1-10	35
The Certainty of Christ's Coming (Pt. 2) – <i>Living In Light of His Coming</i> - 2 Peter 3:11-18	38

INTRODUCTION TO THE 2ND EPISTLE OF THE APOSTLE PETER

Unger's Bible Dictionary: Second Peter

PETER, SECOND EPISTLE OF. A second general, or catholic, epistle, written by the apostle Peter.

Subject Matter. Peter's second epistle may be viewed as a complement to his first. It deals with the second coming of Christ and the evils preceding this great event. The first epistle also speaks of the second coming but does not deal with the conditions prior to that prophetic event. Stern warning is given of coming apostasy, when monetary considerations would sway church leaders. As a result loose morality and general iniquity would abound. In chap. 1 Peter expounds certain precious promises of God's Word; in chap. 2 he inveighs against false teachers; in chap. 3 he deals with the certainty of the coming of the Lord and the prevailing skepticism of the end time.

Authorship. The writer of the epistle strongly affirms himself to be Simon Peter (2 Peter 1:1). The book thus represents itself to be the genuine production of the apostle Peter, who claims to have been present at the transfiguration of Christ (1:16-18) and to have been warned by our Lord of his impending death (1:14). Despite these clear claims, numerous modern critics consider the work written by a pseudonymous author in the postapostolic period. The writer is supposed to have assumed Peter's name a century or so after Peter's death. Supposed differences in style between First and Second Peter are alleged to indicate that the books were by different authors. Although there are confessedly some differences in vocabulary, it has been shown by Zahn (Introduction to the O. T., 2:289 ff.) that there are some striking likenesses. One may also ask whether a forger would run the risk of detection by failing to pay more attention to the style and language of First Peter. Second Peter, however, lacks any proved evidence of forgery. The autobiographical allusions are true to fact. No new material is added. There is nothing romantic or indisputably anachronistic about the second epistle. This is in striking contrast to the apocalyptic "Gospel of Peter" and the "Apocalypse of Peter." A claim is also made that the epistle was penned at a period when the Pauline letters were made use of by heretics to promulgate their teachings (Rev 3:15-16). This reference to Paul's letters, however, does not imply that they had been already collected or even that they had already all been written. The reference may merely refer to such as Peter had come to know. It cannot be shown that Peter deals with a more advanced stage of apostasy than Paul dealt with. Against the charge of spuriousness is the apostolic tone, the Christian earnestness, the genuineness of the autobiographical allusions, and the absence of the fantastic. It ought, therefore, to be accepted as a genuine work of the apostle Peter.

Attestation. Although it is true that Peter's second epistle has less historical support of its genuineness than any other NT book, it bears points of resemblance to a number of writings during the period of A.D. 90 AD - 130 AD. It is not mentioned in the Muratorian Fragment, nor does it occur in the Old Syriac and Old Latin versions. All this is doubtless explainable on the basis of the brevity of the epistle, its containing no striking new material, and its not being addressed to any specific person or church. According to Zahn, the epistle of Jude gives an early attestation of it, and therefore we need no other.

Occasion and Date. Antinomian Gnosticism had begun to manifest itself. The false teachings spread with its immoral tendencies. The apostle wrote to correct this evil and to forewarn of conditions at the end of the age. There is no decisive evidence that Second Peter was not written shortly after First Peter. It was penned probably in A.D. 66 AD - 67 AD, which date would meet all requirements.

Purpose and Plan. The epistle is the second in which the apostle proposes to stir up the "sincere" minds of his readers "by way of reminder" (2 Peter 3:1). To this end he urges upon them growth in Christian grace (1:5-15), warns against false teachers (chap. 2), and urges believers to patient expectation of the Lord's return (3:1-14).

M.F.U.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: B. B. Warfield, *Southern Presbyterian Journal* 33 (1882): 45-75; C. E. B. Cranfield, *I and II Peter and Jude* (1960); E. M. B. Green, *The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude*, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* (1968); J. B. Mayor, *The Epistle of Jude and the Second Epistle of Peter* (1978); J. Brown, *Parting Counsels: An Exposition of 2 Peter 1* (1980). See also *1 Peter*.

(from *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*. Originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright (c) 1988.)

2 Peter 1:1-4 - "Is Your Faith Real?"

2 Peter 1:1-4, *"Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."*

Haddon W. Robinson – "A Chinese boy who wanted to learn about jade went to study with a talented old teacher. This gentleman put a piece of the precious stone into his hand and told him to hold it tight. Then he began to talk of philosophy, men, women, the sun, and almost everything under it. After an hour he took back the stone and sent the boy home. The procedure was repeated for several weeks.

The boy became frustrated. When would he be told about the jade? He was too polite, however, to question the wisdom of his venerable teacher. Then one day, when the old man put a stone into his hands, the boy cried out instinctively, "That's not jade." He had become so familiar with the genuine that he could immediately detect a counterfeit."

Peter wrote his second epistle because of his deep concern that his readers know the difference between a *true* and a *false* faith.

Key Text: 2 Peter 3:17-18, *"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."*

Notice how Satan attacks the church:

1. Persecution from the outside (1 Peter)
2. Poison from the inside (2 Peter)

From the pulpit or the pew.

1 Peter dealt with submission to God as the proper response to suffering from without.

2 Peter's focus is on growing in grace and knowledge, as the proper response to error from within.

The best antidote for error is a mature understanding of the truth.

Peter, in 1:1-4, lays the foundation for his letter by making five important affirmations about true or real faith.

I. It's a 'like precious faith' (vs. 1)

What does Peter mean by a '*like precious faith*'?"

The word *precious* means, "equal value". It was used of foreigners who had been granted the privileges of citizenship which were equal to those of the native born citizens.

Peter is saying that the faith given them by God is of equal honor or value with that of the Apostles.

Illustration: Gentiles with Jews (Acts 10)

2 Peter 1:1, "*to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours*". (N.A.S.B.)

If we have real faith it gives us the same standing and spiritual privileges as the Apostles.

It doesn't matter whether you're an apostle or the most obscure of believers, a Jew, or a Gentile, a man, or a woman, a freeman, or a slave.

This "*like precious faith*" is not attained, it's *obtained*.

Literally, it's by lot – it's a gift of God's grace.

This "*like precious faith*" does three things to the believing sinner:

- justifies
- sanctifies
- glorifies

Ephesians 2:8, "*For **by grace** are ye saved **through faith**; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.*"

Have you obtained "*like precious faith*'?"

Like Coke, "It's the Real Thing!"

II. It's faith in a person (vs. 1-2)

Literally, “*our God and Saviour Jesus Christ.*”

The object of true faith is JESUS!

- He’s God – Titus 2:10; 3:4; John 1:1; 20:28; Romans 9:5; Heb. 1:8; Col. 2:9
- He’s our Saviour – 2 Peter 1:11; 2:20
- He’s The Christ
- He’s The Lord – 2 Peter 1:2

Grace and peace (vs. 2) come to us through the knowledge of God, and Jesus our Lord.

Knowledge?

How?

The Bible!

What’s the object of your faith?

III. It’s a faith that involves God’s power (vs. 3)

Just as faith in Jesus Christ saves us from the penalty of sin, so also His power energizes us to live holy lives.

He has given us His divine power (Greek: *Dunamis* – dynamite power) for all things that pertain unto life, and godliness.

All Christians have all they need!

In John 11 – Lazarus – “lose him and let him go.”

God has given us all we need to live godly lives.

Like what? – The Holy Spirit – The Holy Word!

The false teachers claimed that they had a ‘special new doctrine’ that would bring them victory in their daily lives.

It’s the Spirit of God, and the Word of God.

IV. It’s a faith based on promises (vs. 4)

True saving faith is a faith that rests on, and acts on the promises found in God’s Word the Bible.

It is estimated that there are at least 30,000 promises in the Bible. John Bunyan once said, "The pathway of life is strewn so thickly with the promises of God that it is impossible to take one step without treading upon one of them."

God's promises are – two things!

1. "*exceeding great*" – because they come from a great God.
 - He is just and holy – so He can't lie.
 - He is all knowing – so He can't forget.
 - He is un-changing – so He can't change.
 - He is all powerful – so He can do what He promised.

2. "*precious*" – because their value is beyond calculation.

J. Hudson Taylor started a bank account for the China Inland Mission in Brighton, England. On the application where he was asked to designate his assets, he wrote, "Ten pounds and the promises of God."

Do you bank on the promises of God?

V. Real faith makes us partakers of the divine nature (vs. 4)

When do we become partakers of the divine nature – at the moment of conversion.

What does it mean to be a partaker of the divine nature?

It's not that we become divine.

It's that we become born again!

At the moment we are born again, or saved, we (vs. 4) escape the corruption in the world caused by lust or evil desires.

Nature determines:

1. Appetite – pigs eat slop; sheep feed in green pastures
2. Behavior – eagles fly; fish swim
3. Environment – squirrels live in trees; gophers in the ground
4. Association – lions travel in prides; sheep in flocks; fish in schools

Godly living is the result of cultivating the new nature within.

Have you been born again?

If not, your faith is not real!

Review of Real Faith:

1. Is the same precious faith the Apostles had.
2. It's faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
3. It involves God's power for life and godliness.
4. It rests on God's great and precious promises.
5. It produces the new nature within.

1 John 5:4-5, *"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"*

A real Christian has received the divine bestowal of spiritual life – and it's true of all Christians.

2 Peter 1:5-11 – Is Your Faith Growing?

2 Peter 1:5-11, “*And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*”

Peter has shown us in the first four verses, of chapter one, the marks of a real faith:

1. a like precious faith
2. a faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ
3. a faith that involves God’s power
4. a faith based on God’s promises
5. a faith that makes us partakers of the divine nature

The Christian life starts with the new birth, but the new birth is not the end, it’s the beginning!

God has given us all that we need for *life and godliness* (vs. 3).

But we should not just sit back and relax. The grace of God demands diligence, or effort. We must seek to cultivate what God has given us. God does not make us holy against our will or without our involvement.

We must have a growing faith, and a growing faith requires cooperation with God. There must be desire, determination, and discipline, if our real faith is to be a growing faith.

Philippians 2:12-13, “*Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*”

I. How can I have a growing faith?

Answer – vs. 5-7

2 Peter 1:5-7, “*And beside this, giving all diligence, **add** to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge*

temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.”

Kenneth Wuest – “And for this very cause, having added on your part every intense effort, provide lavishly in your faith.”

Peter does not tell us to have faith, he assumes that fact.

What he says we need to do is “*add*” to our faith! The word “*add*” was used of individuals who underwrote the expenses of the choruses in Greek plays. So the word came to mean: “generous and costly cooperation”. It’s a command, and carries a note of urgency.

In cooperation with God, what do we need to add?

Peter lists seven character qualities we need to have a growing faith:

1. Virtue (vs. 5) – “. . . *add to your faith virtue . . .*”

It’s moral excellence – it’s the courage to live a holy life in a hostile world.

Peter used this quality of Christ (vs. 3)

A real Christian shares the moral excellencies of Jesus, so he ought to manifest them in his daily life.

Do you?

The fulfillment of a thing is the courage to do it!

Illustration – Daniel

“Dare to be a Daniel”

2. Knowledge

The word knowledge, in verses 5 and 6, mean “full knowledge”. It’s a growing knowledge, a knowledge that is practical, by experience or discernment.

How do you get this knowledge?

By knowing and obeying the Bible.

It's the ability to handle life successfully.

It's character and knowledge – heart and mind.

3. Temperance (vs. 6)

Literally, self control – it's the inner power to control one's own desires and cravings.

It's used for the restraint of sexual desires.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-5, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:"

Self control extends to all areas of life, where the discernment between good and evil is important.

Bob Jones – "The Christian philosophy is a philosophy of self-denial, self-control, and self-restraint.

The satanic philosophy is a philosophy of 'live as you please,' 'have what you want,' 'don't let anyone tell you what to do,' and 'it's your life, you have a right to live it.'"

It's guided by knowledge (the Bible) and it's the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 5:22, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,"

Galatians 5:24-25, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another."

Ephesians 5:16, *“Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”*

Ephesians 5:18, *“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but **be filled** with the Spirit;”*

How?

4. Patience (vs. 6) - perseverance

Self control has to do with the pleasures of life, while patience relates to the pressures and problems of life.

Its perseverance – it’s the ability to bear up under a heavy load.

To wait on God’s will and timing!

The Christian life is not easy. We need patient endurance.

How?

When facing adversity and difficulty:

James 1:2-8, “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.”

1. Cast your cares on God through prayer
2. Find strength in His Word
3. Surrender to the Holy Spirit – He’s the comforter.

5. Godliness (vs. 6)

It simply means – God-likeness, reverence, or piety

It's a person that seeks to place God in all things.

Godliness brings the sanctifying presence of God into all the experiences of life.

Illustration – Joseph – in the pit, prison, palace!

6. Brotherly Kindness (vs. 7)

Godliness does not exist in a vacuum, the believer who is right with God will demonstrate brotherly kindness through acts of righteousness.

Romans 12:10, *“Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;”*

It's a mark of true or real faith.

You can't love God and not love the family of God.

7. Love (vs. 7) – “Agape”

Christian love is not only for the brethren, it's a love for all mankind.

William MacDonald - “T.E. McCully, the father of Ed McCully, one of five young missionaries slain by the Auca Indians in Ecuador, one night, as he was praying said ‘Lord, let me live long enough to see those fellows saved who killed our boys. That I may throw my arms around them and tell them I love them because they love my Christ.’”

That's Christian love!

The Christian life has faith as it's foundation and love as the culmination.

In review, the seven graces needed for a growing faith are:

1. moral excellence
2. practical knowledge
3. self-control
4. patience

5. Godliness
6. brotherly kindness
7. unselfish love

We all have room to grow!

There is no standing still on the pathway of discipleship; there is either advance or decline.

II. What are the dangers of not growing in your faith? (vs. 8-9)

2 Peter 1:8-9, *“For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.”*

1. You become barren and unfruitful (vs. 8)

This is the sad results of not growing in your faith.

Contrast – a growing faith is a fruitful faith!

2. You lose your vision (vs. 9a)

You only see self – you’re short sighted and blind; lack spiritual insight; and live for the now, not for eternity!

3. You fall into forgetfulness (vs. 9b)

The truth of your redemption has lost it’s grip on you.

III. Peter’s exhortation to spiritual growth (vs. 10-11)

2 Peter 1:10-11, *“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”*

1. Make sure you’re saved (vs. 10a)

election – God chooses us in eternity past

calling – God called us in time

How do we make it sure?
By having a growing faith!

2. Make sure you're stable (vs. 10b)

“ . . . if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:”

3. Make sure you have a triumphant entry into heaven (vs. 11)

It's not the fact of our entry, it's the manner of it that Peter is speaking of.

Illustration – picture of the return of a victor in the Olympic Games.

Every believer will arrive in heaven but some will have a more glorious welcome than others.

1 Corinthians 3:15, *“If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”*

Notice the word *“abundantly”* in verse 11. It's the same as in verse 5 – *“add”*.

It's to make lavish provision.

A growing Christian faith brings:

1. fruitfulness
2. vision
3. stability - and an abundant entrance into heaven.

A real faith is a living faith; a living faith is a growing faith.

What kind of faith do you have?

2 Peter 1:12-21 - "God's Wonderful Word"

2 Peter 1:12-21, *"Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."*

Peter is writing the second letter to protect the believers from false teachers. He knew that the best defense for them was a real faith, a growing faith, based on the authoritative Word of God.

Christians who are grounded and growing in the Word will not be lead astray.

There is a danger to a Christian's walk when it's based on subjective experience rather than when it's based on the objective truth of God's Word.

Examples: The Mormons – "a burning in my bossom."

Even in the Church today!

In our text Peter makes it clear that scripture, God's wonderful Word, is the only authoritative ground for the Christian life.

Warren W. Wiersbe – "He does this by contrasting scripture with, men, experiences, and the world."

I. Men die, but the Word lives (vs. 12-15)

2 Peter 1:12-15, *"Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me."*

Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.”

Because Peter loved them he wanted them to remember (Key Word – see vs. 12, 13, & 15)

He knew he would die so he made provision by leaving them God’s Word.

1 Peter 1:23-25, “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”

The lesson for us is this: We can depend upon the written Word of God.

2 Timothy 3:14-17, “That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us. This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.”

1. It brings us to salvation (vs. 15)
2. It works in us – sanctification (vs. 16)
3. It equips us – service (vs. 17)

II. Experience’s fade but the Word remains (vs. 16-18)

2 Peter 1:16-18, “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.”

Peter is talking about the transfiguration of Jesus recorded by Matthew (17), Mark (9), Luke (9), yet none of them were there or actually saw it happen.

What was the significance of the Transfiguration?

1. It confirmed Peter's testimony about Jesus Christ – "*This is my beloved son . . .*"
2. It helped to strengthen Jesus and the disciples in light of the coming cross – suffering leads to glory!
3. It affirmed the reality of the coming kingdom.

2 Peter 3:1-4, "*This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.*"

The false teachers we're saying there was no new kingdom to come.

The Lesson – Our experience must be based on, confirmed by, the Word of God.

III. The world is getting darker, but God's Word shines brighter (vs. 19-21)

2 Peter 1:19-21, "*We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*"

Peter makes three affirmations about God's Word:

1. It's the sure Word (vs. 19a)

Psalms. 19:7 – "*. . . the testimony of the LORD is sure, . . .*"

" . . . ye do well that ye take heed, . . . " (vs. 19)

2. It's the shining Word (vs. 19b)

The world is a dark place but the light of God's Word shines till Jesus comes.

Psalms 119:105, "*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*"

3. It's the Spirit given Word (vs. 20-21)

This text is one of two important scriptures affirming the divine inspiration of the Bible.

The other is, 2 Timothy 3:16-17

2 Timothy 3:16-17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

Lit – *All scripture is "God breathed"*

What is meant by Inspiration?

There are four (4) false theories:

1. Natural Inspiration
2. Dictation or Mechanical Inspiration
3. Fallible Inspiration
4. Conceptual

The correct view is called Verbal Plenary Inspiration

We believe the Bible is inerrant!

Jesus said in Matthew 5:18, For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled."

Charles Ryrie – "Inspiration is God's superintendence of the human authors so that, using their own individual personalities, they composed and recorded without error His revelation to man in the words of the original autographs."

We must build our lives upon God's Wonderful Word!

It's a place to stand.

1. For me - as an individual
2. As a Pastor – I use this book to pastor the church
3. For our Church – we base what we believe and how we behave on God's Word!

John Stott said, "To give the Bible it's rightful place is to bring health to the Church, light to the world, and glory to God."

2 Peter 2:1-9 – The Teachers of Error (Pt. 1) – Their Condemnation

2 Peter 2:1-9, *“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.”*

As we move into chapter two we that find Peter’s tone changes drastically from that of chapter one. In chapter one, Peter was optimistic and positive as he set forth the steps needed in the cultivation of Christian character that honors God. But now, as we come to the heart of his second letter, he delivers a stern condemnation of false teachers.

In chapter one, he sought to equip the believers to help them stand in the face of false teachers. Now, he identifies and denounces the teachers of error!

This whole chapter is devoted to their exposure and condemnation.

Illustration: Like the Book of Jude

There are two main points we will look at as we study the first nine verses of this chapter:

1. The features of false teachers (vs. 1-3)
2. The figures of Old Testament judgment applied to false teachers (vs. 4-9)

I. The features of false teachers (vs. 1-3)

2 Peter 2:1-3, *“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And*

through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."

Notice the four words which describe these false teachers:

1. Deception (vs. 1)

"false teachers"

Notice the contrast "false prophets in the Old Testament with 2 Peter 1:20-21:

2 Peter 1:20-21, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

But note today, for the New Testament church it's "false teachers".

Why?

Notice vs. 1, ". . . among you . . . "

Illustration: Acts 20:28-30, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

They are in the church!

Posing as ministers of the gospel but, they are masters of deception.

Jesus called them "*wolves in sheep's clothing*".

Matthew 7:15, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."

Notice also in vs. 1, the words: privily, or secretly – bring in damnable heresies.

Heresies – Literally, “to make a choice” but it came to mean, “a sect, or party”.

The false teachers want believers to side with them – creating a division within the body!

vs. 3 – “feigned words” – we get the word “plastic” from it.

The New International Version translates it as “fabricated stories”.

Warren W. Wiersbe, “They use our vocabulary but not our dictionary.”

Example: Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons

2. Denial (vs. 1) – “. . . *denying the Lord that bought them* . . .”

Notice that the term “bought them”, doesn’t mean they are saved.

False teachers are known for what they deny:

- a. The Bible alone is the inspired Word of God.
- b. The Trinity – one God in three persons.
- c. The Deity of Jesus Christ (Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons)
- d. The Resurrection of Jesus.
- e. Salvation by Grace alone, through faith alone!

Give them the blood test!

3. Sensuality (vs. 2) – “. . . *pernicious* . . .” or depraved conduct

It’s sensuality!

William Barclay – “It describes the attitude of a man who is lost to shame; he is past the stage of wishing to conceal his sin and of being ashamed of it.”

The reason false teachers deny the truth is so they can follow their own lust, they redefine God’s standards of righteousness!

Jude 4, “*For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, **turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness**, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

Illustration: Ministers who promote homosexuality!

Joseph Smith, Brigham Young (The Mormons)
Moses David Berg (The Children of God)
Sun Yung Moon (The Unification Church – “The Moonies”)

Sadly, (vs. 2) “. . . *many shall follow* . . . “

But they’re sincere!

4. Greed (vs. 3)

Peter makes clear the motives – their desire is to make money!

New International Version – “*In their greed these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories . . . “*

But, God will judge them (vs. 3b)

II. Old Testament figures of God’s judgment applied to the false teachers (vs. 4-9)

2 Peter 2:4-9, “*For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:”*

Peter used three examples from the Old Testament to prove that God will finally judge false teachers:

Note: Contrast this with today’s ideas of “tolerance!”

1. The fallen Angels (vs. 4)

We don’t know a lot about their creation or their fall but, what we do know is found in Isaiah 14, and Ezekiel 28. In Revelation we are told that one third fell with Lucifer.

Revelation 12:4, “*And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and*

the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.”

Where are these fallen Angels now?

Satan is free – 1 Peter 5:8

1 Peter 5:8, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”

Some are demons – Ephesians 6:10-12

Ephesians 6:10-12, “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

Some are in Hell

The lesson – If God judges Angels, He will judge men who rebel.

2. The Old World (vs. 5)

God waited 120 years before He sent the flood.

Genesis 6:3, “And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.”

Man became so wicked that God wiped the earth clean with the judgment of a world-wide flood.

A world filled with violence!

Judgment is coming for the ungodly!

3. Sodom and Gomorrah (vs. 6-8)

The story is found in Genesis 18-19

Genesis 13:13, *“But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.”*

Jude 7, *“Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.”*

Their sin – sodomy, or homosexuality – which is clearly condemned in scripture:

Leviticus 18:22, *“Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.”*

Romans 1:24-27, *“Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: 1:25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. 1:26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: 1:27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.”*

1 Corinthians 6:9, *“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,”*

God judged them and He will again!

True believers will not face God's judgment.

Illustrations:

1. Noah (vs. 5)
2. Lot (vs. 7-8)

Notice vs. 9, *“The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:”*

How is it that we can escape the judgment of God?

The cross!

2 Peter 2:10-22 – The Teachers of Error (Pt. 2) – Their Character and Claims

A certain clergyman was called by a church to become its pastor. Having been strongly influenced by critical scholars who down-grade portions of Scripture as myths, he himself doubted the authenticity of the whole Bible.

About two years after his coming, the pastor visited one of his members who was very sick. When he learned that the man had a terminal illness, he suggested, “Perhaps you would like me to read and pray for you?” “Yes,” replied the man as he took his Bible and handed it to the minister. When he opened it, he was somewhat shocked at what he saw. Many of the pages were torn away, some of the chapters were missing, and a number of verses were actually cut! It was a terribly mangled volume.

Reluctantly the pastor asked, “Haven’t you got a better Bible than this?” The dying man replied, “When you came to our church, I believed the entire Book. But as soon as you told us that certain sections were not true, I removed them. When you said that some stories were probably fiction and referred to them as fables, I tore them out. I think if I had another year under your teaching, I would have nothing but two covers left.”

-- P.R. Van Gorder

Peter is not yet finished with the teachers of error. He was concerned by the inroads the false teachers were making into the churches. Their approach was subtle and their teachings were fatal.

The heart of Peter’s second letter is devoted to warning believer’s of the dangers of false teachers (vs. 1).

Jesus said in Matthew 7:15, *“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”*

A pastor must not only feed the flock, he must also protect the flock from wolves!

In verses 1-9, we saw their condemnation – today we have two more aspects of the false teachers exposed:

1. Their Character (vs. 10-16)
2. Their Claims (vs. 17-22)

I. Their Character (vs. 10-16)

2 Peter 2:10-16, “*But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.*”

The one chief character trait of these false teachers was that *they walk after the flesh* (vs. 10). They follow their carnal nature with all its cravings and lust.

Notice how their flesh is manifested:

1. Their Arrogance (vs. 10-11)

despise government (Lit – Lordship despising – it denotes a habitual attitude of ‘thing down on’, or ‘against’.)

NASB – *despise authority*

Jesus, Angels, Church Leaders

2. Their Brutishness (vs. 12)

3. Their Debauchery (vs. 13)

4. Their Sensuality (vs. 14)

The Episcopal chaplain of a girls school in Baltimore, Maryland said, “We all ought to relax and stop feeling guilty about our sexual activities, thoughts and desires. Whether those thoughts are heterosexual, homosexual, or autosexual.”

5. Their Covetousness (vs. 15-16)

In Matthew 6:24, Jesus said, “. . . Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

Examples: Benny Hinn
Word Faith Teachers

II. Their Claims (vs. 17-22)

2 Peter 2:17-22, “These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

What is it the false teachers promised?

Answer – verse 19 – “liberty, or freedom”

Everyone wants to be free from sin, Satan and self!

Why is freedom offered by the teachers of error false?

1. It's based upon false promises (vs. 17-19)

People go to church looking for God, and truth, only to be lead astray.

Illustrations: Cults

Jonestown in Guyana – Jim Jones

David Koresh – Waco Texas

2. It's offered by false Christians (vs. 20-21)

A moral reformation; not a true regeneration.

Charles Templeton wrote a book entitled "Farewell to God; My Reasons for Rejecting the Christian faith"

Illustration: Judas

Reformation is dangerous – why?

Verse 21, *"For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."*

Are you one of His sheep?

If not, how do you become one?

John 1:12, *"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"*

John 3:3, *". . . Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*

2 Peter 3:1-10 – The Certainty of Christ’s Coming (Pt. 1)

One of the hardest things in life is to learn to wait!

We say, “I can’t wait”

My dad use to say, “But your going to have too.”

As Christians we are looking for, and waiting for the coming of Jesus Christ!

Peter, in chapter 3, is writing to assure the believers that the Lords second coming is certain.

Peter was concerned that they were relaxing their attitude of expectancy; because of false teachers who said Jesus wasn’t coming back again.

With great pastoral care Peter gives them (and us) four solemn admonitions:

Notice he inserts the term “beloved” before each one.

1. Beloved Be Merciful (vs. 1-7)

2 Peter 3:1-7, “This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”

Notice what Peter wanted them to be mindful of:

1. The truth of God’s Word (vs. 2)
 - a. Spoken by the holy prophets (in the Old Testament)
 - b. The word spoken by the Apostles

What did they speak of?

The second coming of Jesus Christ and the coming kingdom.

2. The last day's scoffers (vs. 3-7)

Who are these scoffers?

The false teachers

Why do they scoff?

They “*walk after their own lust*” (vs. 3)

Notice their argument (vs. 4)

It's called “***uni-form-i-tarianism***” – the view that the cosmic processes of the present and the future can be understood solely on the basis of how the cosmos has operated in the past.

Notice their ignorance (vs. 5-7)

1. It's a willing ignorance (vs. 5a)
2. God's word created the world (vs. 5b)
3. God flooded the world [Gen 6-9] (vs. 5c-6)
4. God will do it again, but this time, by fire! (vs. 7)

This is the only place in the New Testament – also see (vs. 10 & 12)

The end of the world!

When? At the end of a 1000 years

Revelation 21:1, “*And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.*”

Remember God's word!

In Matthew 24:35, Jesus said, “*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*”

II. Beloved Be Not Ignorant (vs. 8-10)

2 Peter 3:8-10, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Notice that Peter answers the question, "why hasn't the Lord come back yet?"

He gives two answers:

1. God is timeless (vs. 8)

God works in time, but he is not limited by time.

2. God is longsuffering (vs. 9)

Illustration: Noah – 120 years before He sent the flood.

He's giving you time to repent!

Peter's assures them that the day will come (vs. 10)

Day of the Lord

Thief in the night! – We don't know when

After the Rapture

Great Tribulation

Second Coming

Be ready! (Matthew 25 – the 10 Virgins)

2 Peter 3:11-18 – The Certainty of Christ’s Coming (Pt. 2) – *Living In Light of His Coming*

Someone has said, “the purpose of prophetic truth is not speculation but motivation”.

It’s no surprise that Peter concluded his second epistle with four loving admonitions on how we should live in light of Christ’s coming.

In each one he uses the word “beloved”.

We’ve already looked at the first two:

I. “Beloved Be Mindful” (vs. 1-7)

Of what?

- the truth of God’s word – Jesus is coming
- Last day’s scoffers – God will judge!

II. Beloved Be Not Ignorant (vs. 8-10)

Of what?

- God is timeless (vs. 8)
- God is longsuffering (vs. 9)
- The Day of the Lord will come (vs. 10)

Now we look at two more admonitions:

1. Beloved be diligent (vs. 14)

2. Beloved beware (vs. 17)

I. Beloved Be Diligent (vs. 11-14)

2 Peter 3:11-14, “Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. “

What things will be dissolved? (vs. 11)

Answer – verses' 10 & 12

Peter asked a rhetorical question but in case someone should miss the point, he answered it (vs. 11).

Showing us two ways to be diligent.

1. By living holy and godly lives (vs. 11).

Holy – it's living a life of separation and sanctification from the world.

Godly – is piety before God.

It's different from the unbeliever (Matthew 5-7)

It's in the present tense ... it's living for eternity rather than time; the spiritual rather than the material; the permanent rather than the passing.

Are you?

How?

2. By living in eager expectation (vs. 12-14)

"Looking for" (vs. 12) – portrays an attitude of expectancy. It pictures the mind as continually turning to the future while enduring the present pressures of evil.

Peter repeats the term in verses' 13 – "look for" and 14 – "ye look for".

The habitual expectation of the coming of the "Day of the God" should be the mark of every Christian.

It also is a powerful motive for holy living.

Notice the word in verse 12 (KJV) "hasting" – can we?

Without spot and blameless is to be morally clean.

II. Beloved Beware (vs. 15-18)

2 Peter 3:15-18, *"And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking*

in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”

1. Don't lose your evangelistic zeal (vs. 15-16)

Illustrations: Scripture twisting

2. Don't be carried away by doctrinal error (vs. 17)

Jude 3, 4, “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Recommended book: *The Last Disciple*, Hank Hanegraaff

3. Don't lose your spiritual balance (vs. 18)

Grace – Fruit of the Spirit, likeness to Jesus (1 Peter)

Knowledge – Knowing the Lord through His word (2 Peter)

Philippians 3:10, “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;”

Learn and live the Word!

Glory – Now and Forever.

Jonathan Edwards once said, “What begins with grace ends in glory.”

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