

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER

Author: Simon Peter (1:1). He claims to have been on the Mount of Transfiguration with Christ (1:16-18). He refers to John 21:18-19. He claims to have written an earlier epistle (3:1).

Date: Written near the end of his life about A.D. 66-67 (1:15). He was martyred about A.D. 67.

Persons Addressed: The same ones to whom he wrote the first (3:1), but in this epistle he addresses all believers (1:1).

Purpose: To stir their minds (3:1) to Christian growth (1:5-15), warn against false teachers (2), and to urge believers to be patient until the coming of the Lord (3:1-14).

It is a complement to the First Epistle. It deals with the second coming of Christ and the evils preceding this great event. Stern warning is given of coming apostasy and loose morality.

I. INTRODUCTION (1:1-2).

1. The writer and those to whom he writes (v. 1).

(1) "Simon Peter" (Matt. 10:2).

A. Simon was a common name among the Romans and especially the Jews. It means "hearing." This name was his given name.

B. Peter was the name given him by Christ (Matt. 16:18). Cephas in the Syriac language (John 1:42).

(2) "A servant and an apostle."

A. He claims no priority over the other apostles but was like Paul (Rom. 1:1), James (Jas. 1:1), and Jude (Jude 1:1). In his first epistle he said only that he was an apostle (I Pet. 1:1).

B. "Servant" means "bondservant." He speaks of his position common to all believers before his church office! Literally it means "slave" and it implies ownership by a master. He had learned well from Christ (Matt. 23:8-12).

C. It meant he was a servant of Christ and that Christ had the right to direct him in his life. The slavery of a lover. He puts himself in a position of absolute obedience to the Lord.

D. We could serve no better Master (John 12:26). It is not slavery, but a joy and a delight.

E. "An apostle." This is the highest office he ever claimed. He never called himself lord, or head of the church, or the pope.

F. "Apostle" means "one sent away." In a sense we are all sent into the world to do Christ's work.

(3) "Jesus Christ."

- A. "Jesus" is the Greek form of Joshua which means "God saves" (Matt. 1:21). Peter always links it up with "Lord" or "Christ" and sometimes both.
 - B. "Christ" is the Greek for "Messiah," or literally "the Anointed" (Matt. 11:3; John 1:41).
 - C. Peter uses this name to affirm the Lord Jesus as the One anointed by God to be the Savior of sinners.
 - D. Here Peter puts the stamp of deity on Christ. Peter would not be a slave to a mere man now dead. Peter believed Christ to be alive and able to give him instructions as a servant.
- (4) "To them that have obtained like precious faith with us."
- A. "Have obtained" literally by lot. Greek word implies that they had not won or earned it for themselves, but that it had been allotted to them by God. It came from a source external to themselves. In no sense did it originate by personal merit (Phil. 1:29; Tit. 1:2; I Pet. 1:2).
 - B. Peter liked the word "precious." He links it with Christ (I Pet. 2:4,6-7), blood (I Pet. 1:19), faith (I Pet. 1:7) and promises (II Pet. 1:4). To Peter, Christ and all things relating to Him were precious.
 - C. "Faith" here means saving faith. There is also a faith which follows salvation which all do not have to the same degree.
 - D. "Like" common to all the elect (John 10:26; Acts 13:48; II Thess. 2:13) and equally precious to all.
- (5) "Through the righteousness of God."
- A. The righteousness of God is the source of our faith. Righteousness is before faith, and it is here said to come from it.
 - B. A man has justifying righteousness, not because he has faith, but because he has justifying righteousness provided for him and imputed to him (Isa. 45:21; Rom. 3:26; 5:18).
 - C. God would be unrighteous if He did not give faith to all for whom Christ suffered (John 6:45; I Pet. 1:19-21).
- (6) "And our Saviour Jesus Christ."
- A. Some translate "our God and Savior Jesus Christ, so making both "God" and "Savior" apply to Christ. This is probably the correct sense.
 - B. Other Scripture does this (Rom. 9:5; Heb. 1:18). Christ is the Savior, not the helper (Heb. 7:25).

2. The knowledge of God and Christ (v. 2).

(1) "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you."

- A. Grace is mercy shown when punishment is deserving. He wanted his readers to experience the rich unmerited favor of the Lord.
- B. Peace means especially spiritual peace but it may also include external peace as well. He wanted them to have a fulness of joy and peace from a sense of free justification by Christ's blood.
- C. God's favor, then the effects of that favor, you possess these, but they can be multiplied.

(2) "Through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ."

- A. This is not speculative knowledge. It is knowing God and Christ (John 17:3). The knowledge of God is the sphere in which all spiritual blessings come to us.
- B. Peter likes the word knowledge (vv. 2-3,8; 2:20; 3:18). False teachers had come boasting of superior knowledge. To offset this, Peter brings forth true knowledge of God and Christ.

II. WHAT GOD HAD DONE FOR THEM (1:3-4).

1. Divine power gives Divine knowledge (v. 3).

(1) "According as his divine power."

- A. To give grace to a graceless soul is a work of God's power, there being so much unworthiness and opposition to hinder that work in all the elect.
- B. This power of God is irresistible, and none can so oppose it as to hinder the bestowing of it.

(2) "Hath given us all things that pertain to life and godliness."

- A. God does not lend, nor lease, nor sell. He only gives. It is entirely by grace. We have nothing and deserve nothing.
- B. God gives us all things naturally and spiritually (Jas. 1:17). All spiritual things are given to Christ (Rom. 8:32; I Cor. 3:21-23). Spiritual life is from God in its commencement, continuance and completion.
- C. Spiritual life must exist first before there can be true godliness. It is not by godliness that we obtain life, but by life, godliness.
- D. By His Divine power He gives spiritual life. He also gives us everything necessary to foster and nourish it.
- E. Godliness is a righteous state of heart toward God in which manifests itself in holy activity. This is im-

parted righteousness.

(3) "Through the knowledge of him."

- A. The Divine power gives spiritual life and a knowledge of Christ (John 17:3).
- B. Literally, through full knowledge of him that called us.

(4) "That called us."

- A. The call came from God through the Holy Spirit on the ground of Christ's mediatorial work.
- B. This is an internal, special and effectual call according to the purpose of God (Rom. 1:6).

(5) "To glory and virtue."

- A. God's design in converting and calling sinners to to bring them to glory and virtue (Rom. 8:17; I Thess. 2:12; II Thess. 2:14; I Pet. 5:10). We shall share future glory with Christ.
- B. "Virtue" means "bravery, courage, power, energy, manliness, etc."
- C. Some read "by his own glory and virtue." His own glory and excellency were the means of our effectual calling.
- D. This interpretation teaches us that it is by a glorious Divine efficiency that we are called into the kingdom of God.

2. Divine power gives a Divine nature (v. 4).

(1) "Whereby are given unto us."

- A. "Whereby" is literally "through these things." It may refer to "glory and virtue" (the closest antecedent), or "all things which pertain to life and godliness."
- B. If it goes with glory and virtue, it means through God's glorious attributes and the energetic working of these attributes He has granted the promises.
- C. If with life and godliness, then it is through His Divine power and the knowledge of Him these promises are given. It is through His call, His power, and our knowledge of Him these blessings come to us.

(2) "Exceeding great and precious promises."

- A. Literally, "the greatest and precious" according to the Textus Receptus.
- B. These precious promises are the object of precious faith. These are the promises connected with salvation and which are set forth in the Covenant of Grace.
- C. These promises are exceeding great and exceeding precious. Almost every page of the N.T. contains one of these.
- D. These promises sustain us in the hour of death. What

would this world be without these promises? How dark the future would be.

(3) "That by these."

- A. Some make "by these" to be by His Divine power, and our call to Him, and our knowledge of Him we become partakers of the Divine nature.
- B. It is best to understand that through the fulfillment of these promises we become partakers.

(4) "Ye might be partakers of the divine nature."

- A. We are given a God-like nature by Divine power. God became like us, that we might be made like God.
- B. The Christian has two natures: his old fleshly nature and the new nature.
- C. There is no Pantheism here, or the belief that all things are now God, or a part of God. Partakers does not mean we shall be absorbed in the Divine nature so as to lose our own individuality. This is Buddhism.
- D. There is no sharing of the essence of God so as to defy man. In regeneration God's spiritual life, not His essence, is communicated to the soul.
- E. We become shareholders, not in the essential, but the moral attributes of God. This is said in the sense that we have a new nature.
- F. A true believer is already a partaker of the promises (1:4; Eph. 3:6), of Christ (Heb. 3:14), of the living Bread (I Cor. 10:17), and of the Holy Spirit (Heb. 6:4).
- G. This participation, while in some sense is already an accomplished fact, it is in another sense a growing thing---"might be" (I Cor. 9:7; II Cor. 3:18; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10; Heb. 12:10), fully realized at the resurrection of the body (Rom. 8:29; I Cor. 15:49; I John 3:1-2).

(5) "Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

- A. Not the corruption and the depravity of human nature which is never escaped by any in this world. The corrupt manners of the world is meant. This is the negative side of the Christian life. The former clause described the positive.
- B. As we submit to the new nature we escape the pollutions of the world. With the Divine power to aid us and a Divine nature to resist evil, there is no excuse for a child of God to be again entangled in the pollutions of the world (II Pet. 2:20).

- C. "The corruption" describes the moral filth of the world without Christianity (2:12,19). Paul called it "the bondage of corruption" (Rom. 8:21).
- D. The corruptions of the world have their seat in the lust of the human heart. The old nature craves these; the new nature opposes these.

III. AN EXHORTATION TO GROW IN GRACE (1:5-7).

1. The need of virtue and knowledge (v. 5).

(1) "And beside this."

- A. Rather, "And for this very reason," seeing that His Divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness (v. 3). We are sharers in the very life of God; therefore, we must press on to possess more.
- B. Or, "But for this very cause," referring back to the last verse. Because you have the Divine power and Divine nature manifest these Christian virtues which I am about to enumerate.
- C. Because of these blessings we should use every effort to develop a strong Christian character.
- D. "For this very reason do your best to add to your faith manliness, and to manliness knowledge" (Montgomery tran).

(2) "Giving all diligence."

- A. Peter like the word "diligence" (II Pet. 1:10; 3:14). This word means haste or speed. It has the sense of earnestness and applying ourselves to a matter with all effort and zeal.
- B. This is what a believer is to do.

(3) "Add to your faith virtue."

- A. They had faith (v. 1). Faith is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8-9). We are not told to add faith.
- B. Faith does not stop at salvation. It grows unto other Christian virtues. It is the foundation on which all other virtues are built.
- C. Faith is the foundation stone of Christianity. Without faith there is no beginning of the Christian life and growth.
- D. "Add" means in the Greek "furnish beside." We must cultivate all Christian virtues---go from one to the other until we possess all.
- E. The Greek word for "add" is an allusion to a chorus-leader among the Greeks. "Be careful to accompany faith with all the lovely train of attendant graces," or "Let faith lead as at the head of the choir of graces, and let all the other follow in their order."

- F. The word "virtue" originally meant "manliness, courage, valor, vigor and energy (Prov. 28:1). We might call it energetic faith, or active courage in the good fight of faith.
 - G. Knowledge is not first. Without courage to speak and live for Christ knowledge is of little worth. Some Christians are too cowardly to witness for Christ and live for Him. It take a manly man to follow Christ (Phil. 4:13).
- (4) "And to virtue knowledge."
- A. Not the knowledge of Christ which is included in faith. There can be no true faith where there is no knowledge of Christ (John 17:3).
 - B. It is a knowledge of His Word so we can know His will for our lives. The main purpose of knowing the Word is that we might know how to live to please Him.
 - C. For knowledge some depend upon the preacher. They seldom study for themselves. When the preacher goes wrong they go wrong with him.
2. The need of self-control, endurance and godliness (v. 6).
- (1) "And to knowledge temperance."
- A. "Temperance" is in our day linked to refraining from drinking intoxicating liquors. The original word meant self-control and forbad excesses of any kind.
 - B. True knowledge leads to self-control. Intemperance comes from ignorance.
 - C. Patience is a great virtue in the eyes of the Lord, but it is not highly appreciated by man.
- (2) "And to temperance patience."
- A. Out of self-control will naturally flow endurance or patience (Rom. 5:3; Jas. 1:4). Many things try our patience.
 - B. We must not be discouraged by reproaches and persecutions from men (Ps. 37:7; Heb. 12:1). We must persevere in the Christian life without murmuring and complaining.
 - C. Patience is a great virtue in the eyes of the Lord, but it is not highly appreciated by man.
- (3) "And to patience godliness."
- A. This is true piety or right disposition toward God. It is reverence toward the Lord and communion with Him. In the O.T. it was "the fear of the Lord" (Mal. 3:16-17).
 - B. Godliness is an inward virtue, but it manifest itself outwardly by a life of service to Christ.

- C. A godly person loves Christ and His Word and desires to live a life well-pleasing to the Lord.
 - D. Godliness is more than a mere form (II Tim. 3:5). Many today are religious but not godly.
 - E. Christ is a picture of godliness (John 8:28-29). If we would be godly we must be Christ-like. Godliness is Christ made manifest in the lives of His people.
3. The need of brotherly kindness and love (v. 7).
- (1) "And to godliness brotherly kindness."
 - A. Let your godliness be such as to lead to and so include brotherly kindness. Right disposition toward God goes hand in hand with true love of the brethren (I John 3:11,14,17; 4:20).
 - B. A tender affection to all fellow Christians (I Thess. 4:9; I Pet. 1:22; 2:17; 3:8), who are children of the same Father, servants of the same Master, members of the same family, travellers to the same country, and heirs of the same promise.
 - C. We must not let differences of education, or position, or character, or ability, or race, hinder kindness to all Christians (Matt. 23:8).
 - D. We should show brotherly kindness even though there is not complete agreement in all doctrinal matters.
 - (2) "And to brotherly kindness charity."
 - A. Let your love for the brethren lead you to universal love of all mankind. "Brotherly kindness" is philadelphia in the Greek (Heb. 13:1). "Charity" is agape. It is loving for no good reason---loving like God does.
 - B. Love is the most important grace (I Cor. 13:13), the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22), and proof of salvation (I John 3:14; 4:16; John 13:35).
 - C. All the graces of verses 5-7 are our responsibility to develop. They do not come without effort on our part.

IV. THREE GREAT PROMISES TO THOSE WHO HAVE THESE VIRTUES (1:8-11).

- 1. You will not be barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ (v. 8).
 - (1) "For if these things be in you and abound."
 - A. This is literally, "If these things are yours," and indicates something possessed permanently. The blessings are not for those who occasionally manifest some of these virtues, but for those who have them as an abiding possession.
 - B. "Abound" means in rich abundance. The thought in the

Greek is to be more than enough. Not dwarfs, but amply developed and ever developing must all of these virtues be.

- (2) "They make you that ye shall neither be barren or unfruitful."
 - A. These virtues keep us from barrenness and idleness (I Cor. 15:58; Gal. 5:22-23). Doing God's will should be first and foremost in our lives.
 - B. "Barren" is in other versions translated "idle." We are to be workers for the Lord (Matt. 20:6).
 - C. Christian graces make us neither inactive nor unfruitful (John 15:8). They make us zealous and lively in all practical Christianity.
 - (3) "In the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."
 - A. Full additional knowledge from 1:2. We come to know Him by following Him (Phil. 3:9-10; Col. 1:10).
 - B. As we grow in grace we become more Christ-like and our knowledge of Him become more intimate.
2. Those who do not grow in grace as they should doubt their salvation (v. 9). Two sad effects are listed.
- (1) "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off."
 - A. Many of the Lord's people lack some of these things. They are not strong, healthy Christians; they are sick, puny children of God---spiritual cripples.
 - B. "Is blind" does not always mean total blindness but may mean dim-sighted. This is suggested by "cannot see afar off."
 - C. They are blind to the importance of developing Christian character. The world, the flesh, and the Devil all are united to dim the sight of a Christian. Consider Samson!
 - D. Some render "cannot see afar off" as "dim-sighted" or "near-sighted" (I John 2:11). He does not see the invisible glories of the other world as he should (Isa. 33:17) and the reward promised the faithful (Heb. 11:26).
 - (2) "And hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."
 - A. When the heart has lost interest in the invisible, memory is brittle relative to spiritual things.
 - B. "He was purged" meaning his sins have been once for all forgiven (I John 1:7). Literally, "having forgotten the cleansing. "Purged" is the same Greek word as found in Hebrews 1:3.
 - C. It may mean he doubts his salvation. Christian growth

proves salvation. The dead do not grow. When there is no growth there is no spiritual life.

D. He cannot look back far enough and cannot look forward as he ought.

3. You can make your calling and election sure (v. 10).

(1) "Wherefore the rather, brethren."

A. In view of the assurance (v. 8) and the warning (v. 9) make sure of your calling and election. Seeing the blessed consequence of having, and the evil effect of not have these graces (vv. 5-7).

B. If we cultivate the virtues of verses 5-7 we need not question our calling and election. We would not do these things if we were not God's elect.

C. "Brethren." Unlike James, Peter uses the expression "brethren" but rarely. One time in this epistle and three times in his first.

(2) "Give diligence."

A. This is the second time Peter has exhorted his readers to diligence (1:5). He is anxious that his readers strive, strain every nerve, to develop these wonderful Christian virtues.

B. The Greek aorist implies one lifelong effort.

(3) C. Spiritual uncertainty is the fruit of spiritual immaturity. God's call and choices should be put beyond all doubt.

(3) "To make your calling and election sure."

A. Here calling stands before election. From God's side election comes ahead of calling, but from man's side calling comes ahead of election.

B. Man knows nothing of election until he is effectually called. None can look into the book of God's eternal decrees and counsels. Since the predestinated are called (Rom. 8:29), if we are called we can know we were predestinated (II Thess. 2:13-14).

C. We are not first called, and then having accepted the call, were elected. Election is from eternity (II Thess. 2:13; Eph. 1:4). Calling is the effect and proof of election from eternity past.

D. The election here is of particular persons (I Pet. 1:2) to eternal life and salvation. It is an eternal act of God arising from free grace and sovereign pleasure.

E. It is a wonderful thing to be one of God's elect. Better than to be elected by the people to be president. It is wonderful to know God has chosen us for eternity.

- F. Calling and election can be made sure. From the Lord's side these are always sure (II Tim. 2:19), but to the intelligence of the individual it may or may not be sure. What is certain by God from eternity can be made certain by man in time.
 - G. You will not convince others of your calling and election unless they see a changed life. It is presumption to say you are saved, if you are not living a life which proves you are saved. You are one the chosen if you daily chose to do the will of God!
 - H. Election is no reason for slothness and idleness. We can only be sure of salvation if we are diligent to serve the Lord and seek to develop Christian character. Election spurs to diligence, not to slothfulness!
- (4) "For if ye do these things."
- A. Believing brings salvation, but the natural effect of believing is doing (Ps. 15:5; Matt. 7:24; John 13:17; John 1:22).
 - B. Only a holy life can make calling and election sure. Assurance of salvation depends on the Christian doing some things.
 - C. Peter strikes a hard blow at Antinomianism here!
- (5) "Ye shall never fall."
- A. The picture is of a man stumbling in a race. It does not refer to losing one's salvation (John 10:28).
 - B. The reference is to one falling into sin or becoming a backslider in heart toward God. Peter fell into sin and denied the Lord. At that time he had not added courage to his faith.
 - C. The Christian is to persevere in cultivating the Christian graces, not to backslide and doubt his salvation.
4. You will have an abundant entrance into the kingdom (v. 11).
- (1) "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly."
- A. When are we admitted into the kingdom? At the new birth (John 3:3,5), at death (II Tim. 4:18), and at the coming of Christ (Matt. 25:31-34).
 - B. The word "ministered" is the same as translated "added" in verse 5. As we add virtue upon virtue to our Christian character, so there will be added unto us an abundance entrance into the kingdom of Christ. Our rewards and positions in the kingdom are dependent on how we live for Christ down here. The crown must be won before it is worn (II Tim. 4:8).
 - C. Some will get in "yet so as by fire" (I Cor. 3:15), with

all their works burned up.

- D. We must not be satisfied with the prospect of barely being able to pass through the gate into glory. Don't go crawling through the gate! We should desire to go sweeping through the gates as victors in our battles for Christ---triumphant entrance into glory without stumbling and falling on the way!
 - E. Do you want to be like a boat so badly beaten by the storm that it must be dragged into the harbor? Or, do you want to be like one with sails all sets, colors flying, the band playing, and then have a grand welcome party waiting at the dock?
- (2) "Into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."
- A. Earthly kingdoms soon fade and fall, but the kingdom of Christ is everlasting. The millennial kingdom merges into an eternal kingdom (Isa. 9:7).
 - B. Rewards are as eternal as the King and the kingdom.
 - C. I Corinthians 15:24-28 does not mean Christ ceases to reign. He does only as the Son of man, but the Son of God continues to reign for ever (Dan. 7:14; Luke 1:33; Rev. 11:15; 22:3).
 - D. Our rewards and position in the kingdom will be according to the way we have advanced in the virtues of verses 5-7.

V. THINGS WHICH NEED TO BE REMEMBERED (1:12-15).

1. The present truth (v. 12).

- (1) "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them."
- A. Peter desires to be diligent in his service for Christ. We must not neglect to add to our faith. Negligence is an awful thing. Peter would feed the sheep.
 - B. "Always in remembrance." We need to be constantly reminded of fundamental things of Christianity.
 - C. A pastor does not have to be coming up with new things ---aiming at originality. What is new is not true. He must remind them of old things---things they already know (I Tim. 4:6).
 - D. Amidst the cares of the world even true Christians are prone to forget fundamental things. Ministers must remind them of truths which they already know.
 - E. We need to put into practice what we know to prevent us forgetting it (Heb. 2:1).

- F. The purpose of the Lord's Supper is to constantly remind us of Christ's person and work (Luke 22:19).
- (2) "And be established in the present truth."
- A. It is wonderful to be established in the truth; to know what you believe and why you believe it.
- B. False teachers cannot lead well grounded Christians astray (Col. 2:7).
- C. The mere fact that at present we are firm in the belief of the truth is no certain evidence that we shall always continue to be.
2. The body is the tabernacle of the spirit (v. 13).
- (1) "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle."
- A. Some render "I think it meet" as "I think it right," or "I think it fitting" or "important."
- B. "As long as I am in this tabernacle" means as long as I live (II Cor. 5:1-4). The body is the tent of the soul---frail, fragile structure---a moveable structure---the home of a tenant.
- C. We are not to continue long in this earthly house. As we put off clothes and lay them aside, so we must put off the body that it may be laid up in the grave till the morning of the resurrection.
- D. The nearness of death makes us diligent in the business of life. Peter's death was near.
- E. The body is not the most important part, although many seem to think so. Folks will swarm after people who can heal the body! No concern for the healing of the soul.
- (2) "To stir you up."
- A. Peter felt the need of stirring up Christians. Do we?
- B. To excite or arouse you to a diligent performance of your duty.
- (3) "By putting you in remembrance."
- A. This word was used in verse 12. It is used again in 1:15 and 3:1. Peter felt the way to stir them to a renewed life for the Lord was by reminding them of the vital things of the Christian life.
- B. We need to make the most of our short time in this world. As long as Peter lived he would continue to put them in mind, so his exhortations would be remembered.
3. Death is the putting off of the body (v. 14).
- (1) "Knowing that shortly I must put off this tabernacle."
- A. Peter was growing old and was reaching the end of his

life. Death would not be his destruction. At death his spirit would remove to another world of conscious existence.

- B. Peter would meet his death with courage and dignity. There is no soul sleep here. Peter expected to move out of his tent and live on some other place.
 - C. We like Peter must put off this tabernacle. The spirit does not sleep with the body (I Thess. 4:17; Phil. 1:23; II Cor. 5:8).
 - D. Unlike, Peter, we cannot know the time and manner of our death. Some day our relatives will call the undertaker and the preacher and our body will be buried in the grave.
- (2) "Even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me."
- A. Peter expected to die by martyrdom (John 21:18-19).
 - B. This does not mean that he had recently had some new revelation about his death. Many years have elapsed since the Lord's prophecy.
4. Peter was thinking of the Christians he would leave behind (v. 15).
- (1) "Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease."
- A. "Endeavor" is exactly the same as the one translated "diligent" in verse 10. I will leave a permanent record on these things so you won't forget them.
 - B. "Decease" is "exodus" in the Greek, the same word used to name the second book of the Old Testament. It is found again in Hebrews 11:22, "the departing of the children of Israel" out of Egypt.
 - C. If literally translated it would read "a road out." It has the sense of "going out." Peter was moving out of his temporary house, and going home to with the Lord.
 - D. In verses 13-14 he speaks of the tent of his soul and in verse 15 he speaks of moving out of the tent. Note Luke 9:30-33 here.
 - E. He had no fear of the pains of death (Ps. 71:18). Are you prepared to die?
- (2) "To have these things always in remembrance."
- A. While living, he influenced many Christians for good, but through his epistles he has helped many more (Heb. 11:4).
 - B. The books of some live to many generations. This is a way to serve God when you are gone.
 - C. As we near death our value of Divine truth increases. A dying saint wants to see truth preserved and propagated.

D. "Always." A periodical remembrance will not suffice. Forgetting is condemned by Peter.

E. Catholics see here the doctrine of the saints intercession in Heaven on behalf of the saints on earth. This cannot possibly be the true meaning of these words.

VI. PETER AN EYE WITNESS OF THE TRANSFIGURATION (1:16-18).

1. The power and coming of Christ (v. 16).

(1) "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables."

A. Some accused the apostles of following wild dreams and myths when they preached Christ coming again in glory. There were Greek fables and Jewish fables in that day (Tit. 1:14).

B. Peter is saying that on the Mount of Transfiguration the apostles saw a preview of His coming and power. We are not teaching on fables but on solid evidence. We do not teach the nonsense of men as some do!

(2) "When we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of his majesty."

A. The writers of the Bible were eye witnesses of what they wrote about. Christianity is based on a eye witness account (I John 1:1-3).

B. The men who wrote the Bible were not well educated (Acts 4:13). Such were not likely to be clever imposters. What could they have gained by devising fables? They even suffered persecution for what they believed.

C. The transfiguration (Luke 9:28-36) was to assure Christ's disciples that though He was to be crucified (Luke 9:22,31), He would rise from the dead and come again in glory.

D. The power and coming does not refer to the first advent, but to the second (Matt. 16:28; 24:30).

E. Christ had great power at His first coming over sin, sickness, wind, waves, and death. When He comes again His power will be demonstrated in even a greater way.

2. Peter heard the voice of God the Father (v. 17).

(1) "For he received from God the Father honor and glory."

A. On the Mount Christ received special honor and glory. Moses and Elijah were great servants; Christ was a Son.

B. Not the brilliant light which fled from the Lord's person (Matt. 17:2; Mark 9:3). This was in addition to that.

C. The cloud which the Father spoke from probably was like the Shekinah glory which hung over the tabernacle and temple in the O.T. times. The cloud resting on Christ

symbolized that all the glory of God was centered in Christ.

(2) "When there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory."

- A. Not Heaven, but God the Father Himself, the exalted Majesty (Deut. 33:26; Ps. 21:5).
- B. The bright cloud was a symbol of God's presence (Ex. 40:35-36; Matt. 17:5).

(3) "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

- A. This proved he was the Messiah. From all eternity the good pleasure of God was directed toward the Divine Son and still abides on Him (Isa. 42:1).
- B. He was an obedient Son (Phil. 2:8; John 8:29; 10:17).
- C. Are we well pleasing to Christ and the Father (II Cor. 5:9)?
- D. He who is displeased with one on whom God's good pleasure is fixed, needs something more than God's goodness; he needs mercy.

3. Peter heard the voice from Heaven while on the Mount (v. 18).

(1) "And this voice which came from heaven we heard."

- A. The message was addressed to the disciples (Matt. 17:5-6). Peter, James and John heard this voice.
- B. The mount is called "holy" because the Holy One was transfigured on it.
- C. The presence of God is what makes a place holy (Matt. 4:5; Ps. 26:6; 68:17). The temple, because it was the place of the Lord's presence, was called holy (Zech. 8:3; Ps. 87:1-2).
- D. Some say this was Mt. Tabor; others Hermon, but we cannot be sure, for the Bible does not say for certain.

VII.

VII. THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPHECY (1:19-21).

1. The purpose of prophecy (v. 19).

(1) "We have also a more sure word of prophecy."

- A. A prophet is one who speaks for another---God's spokesman (Ex. 7:1; 4:16; Deut. 18:15).
- B. The prophecy about the Lord's second coming is very sure and can be relied on. More sure than the fables of verse 16.
- C. We not only have the O.T. prophecy of the second coming (Ps. 96:13; Dan. 7:9-10,13), but we also have the sure words of Christ Himself (Matt. 16:27-28; 24:3,30,44).

- D. Note "word" is singular. Peter groups all the prophecies together, even all the words of the O. T. He viewed them as a unity. To him the ancient Scriptures were but one harmonious utterance of the Holy Spirit.
- (2) "Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed."
- A. Peter did not feel O.T. prophecy was unfit for New Testament Christians---no Campbellite. He taught the people to have an interest in Jewish Scriptures.
- B. Prophecy about the second coming of Christ is worthy of close study and careful investigation.
- C. There is nothing more worthy of study than prophecy!
- (3) "As unto a light which shineth in a dark palce."
- A. Peter compares prophecy to a light which shines in a dark place. All human reasoning is mere error and darkness. In this darkness God has kindled a light whereby we can see and walk.
- B. "That shineth," not that shone. The O.T. still gives light. Without prophecy about second coming of Christ in the O.T. we would be in great darkness.
- C. Until the day of Christ's second coming---the dawn of the day when we shall see objects by the clear light---prophecy is our light in this dark world.
- (4) "Until the day dawn, the dystar arise in your hearts."
- A. The Greek word mans "light-bringer." Not the sun, but the morning star (Rev. 22:16). Shortly before the break of day a bright star appears in the heaven.
- B. This is the Rapture coming of Christ (I Thess. 4:13-18) before His coming to earth to bring a new day to Israel and the world (Matt. 24:30).
- C. Many make the word "in your hearts" to say there is no reference to the second coming of Christ. This is an error.
- D. The lamp of prophecy throw light on our path. The second coming of Christ is the deep interest of our hearts. Oh, to see Him!
- E. At the second coming the light of Christ will shine so much more brightly that one is justified in using language which seems to imply that their present state is one of darkness.
2. The origin of prophecy (v. 20).
- (1) "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture."
- A. No prophecy contained in the inspired records. The word "scripture" shows that the apostle refers particularly to the prophecy in the O. T.

- B. Or, he may mean to bear on a particular class of the prophecy in the O.T. about the second coming of Christ.
- (2) "Is of any private interpretation."
- A. The word "private" is better translated "one's own" or "personal." The word "interpretation" literally means "unloose" or "unfold." No prophecy of the scripture is of one's own loosing.
- B. No prophecy is the prophet's own mind or opinion, but it is a message he received from God (Num. 16:28; 23:16; II Tim. 3:16).
- C. Prophecy is not a private matter originating with the prophets themselves. It is not the product of the prophet (I Pet. 1:10-12).
- D. Some say this verse means that no prophetic teaching is to be interpreted by man's unaided reason. They require the light of the Holy Spirit. I doubt this is the meaning.
- E. Rome uses these words to argue against the right of private judgment of Scripture, or to say a private believer has no right to read or search the Scriptures.
- F. This verse does not say that it is the duty of the Church of Rome to prevent any private explanation or opinion. This is a perversion of the verse.
3. The prophecies are Divinely inspired (v. 21).
- (1) "For the prophecy came not in old time."
- A. The word "prophecy" has no article in the original, meaning prophecy in general or all that is prophetic in the O.T.
- B. By the will of man prophecy was not borne at any time. It refers not to the utterance of prophecy, but to its origin. It came from Heaven.
- C. It was not of human origin, nor discovered by any human mind. Man did not speak by their own suggestions.
- (2) "But holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."
- A. "Holy men"---pious men commissioned by God. Moses (Deut. 33:1; Josh. 14:6), Elijah (I Kings 17:18), Elisha (II Kings 4:7), and David (II Chron. 8:14) were men of God. Are we men of God?
- B. "Moved" is "being borne on by the Holy Spirit." They were moved from time to time. They spoke from God.
- C. Here is the method of inspiration. They were not self-moved, but moved by the Spirit even as a sail boat is moved by the wind.

- D. They were under the direct power and influence of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was the author, man the instrument.
- E. "Moved" can be translated "driven." They were driven to speak and write by an irresistible force, the Spirit of God (II Sam. 23:2; Luke 1:70).

THE BOOK OF II PETER

Chapter Two

In chapter 1:19-21 Peter brought in the truth of true prophets in the Old Testament. In verse 1 of chapter 2 he uses them as a starting point to speak about false prophets in the Old Testament and false teachers who were to appear in the churches. From verse 1-22 there is no let up in his hot condemnation of these deceived deceivers. It sounds like Christ in Matthew 23 or words from the Book of Jude.

I. THE PREDICTION OF THE APPEARANCE OF FALSE TEACHERS (2:1-3).

1. The character of false teachers (v. 1).

(1) "But there were false prophets also among the people."

A. "But. . .also" is an allusion to the true prophets of Old Testament times. In addition to them there is to arise some very different prophets.

B. These false prophets are often mentioned in the Old Testament (Deut. 13:1-3; Isa. 9:15; 56:10-11; Jer. 5:31; 23:21).

C. A false prophet is a person who falsely professes to be a prophet and prophesies false things. Prophet in pretense like the "false brethren" (II Cor. 11:26), "false apostles" (II Cor. 11:13) and "false christs" (Matt. 24:24).

D. "The people" means the Israelites of old.

(2) "Even as there shall be false teachers among you."

A. The false prophets were from among the people of Israel, and so the false teachers were to come from among the Christians (Acts 20:28-31; II Cor. 11:13-15; I John 4:1; I Tim. 4:1-3).

B. Some hear the truth but are not genuinely saved. They become religious leaders and begin to propagate errors. Followers rise up to carry on the falsehood.

C. Persons who falsely claim to be true teachers but teach falsehood. Israel had false prophets; the churches have false teachers.

(3) "Who privily shall bring in damnable heresies."

A. They will not come in an open and way---"privily" or secretly. They first bring lots of truth and a little error. They slowly bring more error, and less and less truth. Cults start this way (Matt. 7:15; Gal. 2:4; Zech. 13:4).

B. The original means "to lead in by the side of others; to lead in along with others." Error is put side by side with truth.

- C. It is better translated "destructive heresies." They are so called because they lead to destruction (Phil. 3:19).
 - D. "Heresies" is an untranslated Greek work coming from a word signifying "choice." It is wilful choice to go one's own way---will worship (Col. 2:23). It indicates wrong actions as well as wrong belief---unsound doctrine coupled with evil practice.
 - E. Not all heresy is destructive. To belittle the person and work of Christ is damnable heresy. To deny that God will punish sin is also.
- (4) "Even denying the Lord that bought them."
- A. Peter denied the Lord. It must have hurt him to use the same words of false prophets.
 - B. How fearful to deny, not an angel or man, but the Lord Jesus Christ Himself (Matt. 10:33; II Tim. 2:12). In a sense, all sin is a denial of Christ and His authority.
 - C. "Lord" is a strong word in the Greek which means "one who is absolute ruler." We get our English word "despot" from it. It means one who is absolute ruler.
 - D. The picture is of a man buying slaves at a slave market who mutiny against their master and refuse to obey him.
 - E. Do the words "the Lord that bought them" prove a general atonement? Did Christ die in some sense for the non-elect who perish? Even false teachers? Note Jude 4.
 - a. Two important words are in I Peter 2:1: "Lord" (despotes) and "bought" (agorazo). Some say "Lord" refers to God the Father. Most say it refers to Christ. Despotes means "absolute sovereign," yet it does not express mediatorship. Agorazo is best understood in a non-redemptively way, for it is never used in a salvation context without a ransom price being mentioned.
 - b. The Christian charity view says these are spoken of according to their profession, and not their actual possession. Peter is taking these false teachers at their word. This makes despotes to mean Christ as mediator and agorazo to mean spiritual redemption.
 - c. The temporal deliverance view is that they their knowledge of the Lord (2:20) they were temporally delivered from the pollutions of the world (v. 20). There is such a thing as temporal deliverance (Deut. 7:8; Ex. 15:16). They were bought in the sense of the nation of Israel (Deut. 32:5-6).
 - d. If Christ died for a people they cannot perish (John

10:11,28). These were ordained to condemnation (Jude 4). Did Christ die to save a people He had from eternity ordained to condemnation?

(5) "And bring upon themselves swift destruction."

A. Those who brought destructive heresies bring destruction upon themselves. Sing bring its own reward (Prov. 5:22). The fate they deserve.

B. Man brings upon himself the vengeance which God brings upon him. God may delay judgment, but when it comes it comes suddenly and quickly (Matt. 15:14).

C. Religious errors are a dangerous thing. It is truth, not error, that saves the soul.

2. The success of false teachers (v. 2).

(1) "And many shall follow their pernicious ways."

A. It is hard to get people to follow the truth, but many will follow false teachers. A display of knowledge (Matt. 23:15; Rom. 16:18) which does not demand regeneration and a clean life can quickly gain a huge following.

B. Heresy is like deaven (Gal. 5:9). How quickly evil doctrine can corrupt a whole church.

C. The weak and uninstructed are quick to follow heretics. The growth of false cults proves this.

D. The "many" who follow false teachers are professed Christians (I Tim. 4:1; II Tim. 2:17-18; 3:1,6; Tit. 1:10-14).

E. Many drink iniquity like water and are pleased to live in error and corrupt lusts (II Tim. 4:3).

F. "Pernicious ways" is "ruinous ways" or "lascivious ways." Some translate "their impurities." The stress is on their evil practices rather than their evil teachings.

G. Their errors are damnable and their ways lascivious. False teaching leads to corrupt living (2:18-19).

(2) "By reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."

A. "Whom" may refer both to the false teachers and to those who follow them.

B. Here Peter calls Christianity (2:15,21) "the way of truth" (Acts 9:2; 13:10; 16:17; 18:25-26; 19:9; 22:4; 24:14).

C. It is the way of truth because Christ, the center of

our religion, is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6; Matt. 7:13-14). Christianity is the way of life which is founded on truth! Christ's church is the pillar and ground of the truth (I Tim. 3:15).

- D. The word here translated "evil spoken of" is blasphemo and should be translated "blasphemed." False teachers and loose-living professors cause the way of truth to be blasphemed (II Sam. 12:14; Rom. 2:24).
- E. The spread of error brings up an evil report of truth.
- F. Don't be surprised if members of true churches follow after error and fall into licentiousness. "Many" is no proof of rightness.
- G. Be firm in the ways of the Lord and resist error and immorality of others. Don't fear being called "intolerant" and "radical."

3. The doom of false teachers (v. 3).

(1) "And through covetousness."

- A. Heretics adopt the kind of doctrines that will be likely to give them the greatest power over the purse of others (I Tim. 6:10). A true preacher does not love money (I Tim. 3:3; Acts 20:33).
- B. This is an old sin (Isa. 56:11; Jer. 6:13; Ezek. 13:19; Micah 3:11).
- C. Back of every system of error is the sin of covetousness (I Tim. 6:5; Jude 16). Take away the money and false cults will die. Rich religious organizations did not get that way by preaching the truth!

(2) "Shall they with feigned words."

- A. The word "feigned" in the Greek is literally "molded" and by implication means "artificial" or "false."
- B. They talk nice to fleece the sheep and the goats. Words put together for the purpose of deceiving (Rom. 16:18).

(3) "Make merchandise of you."

- A. The sense is to make gain of you---like cheating merchants. Some sell the souls of men into Hell for money (Zech. 11:5; Rev. 18:13). To destroy a soul through wrong teaching is worse than murder!
- B. Let us never sink to preaching error because of base gain (John 2:16). Nothing is as bad as Simony, the sale of souls!
- C. They design to get more wealth by increasing the number of their followers.

(4) "Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not."

- A. From all eternity God purposed to punish such people. Their judgment is as certain as if it had already taken place.
 - B. A sentence comes before the execution.
 - C. The expression "lingereth not" is literally in the Greek "is not idle" and could be translated "is not delayed."
- (5) "And their damnation slumbereth not."
- A. Religious racketeers hope justice will always linger and destruction will always slumber.
 - B. "Damnation" is "destruction." The word already used twice in verse 1.
 - C. The actual infliction of punishment is often delayed, but the punishment, in so far as it is purposed of God, is not long delayed.
 - D. "Slumbereth not" is literally "does not nod." God's judgment does not sleep. Sleeping justice is a lie (Ps. 121:3-4). God makes no idle threats!

II. BIBLE EXAMPLES OF DIVINE JUDGMENT (2:4-10).

1. The angels that sinned (v. 4).

- (1) "For if God spared not the angel that sinned."
- A. These illustrations from the O.T. are given to show that false teachers cannot escape the righteous judgment of a sin-hating God.
 - B. Some believe they can live any way they please in this world and yet somehow God will spare them. Here Peter shows that God will not spare the unrepentant, unbelieving sinner.
 - C. Contrast with Romans 8:32. The Son was delivered to suffering for our sins; sinning angels were delivered to punishment on account of their own sins.
 - D. "Angels that sinned." I marvel that angels should sin, but they were the original transgressors. They had no evil environment, nor tempter as Adam and Eve. One would think the happiness of Heaven would have satisfied them.
 - E. What was their sin? Was it going after human wives (Gen. 6:4; Jude 6-7)? Pride (Ezek. 28:14-17; Isa. 14:12-14; I Tim. 3:6)? Or, was it not abiding in the truth (John 8:44)? It is a bit hard to say for sure.
 - F. Since all angels are not bound at present and some are, these must refer to a special class of sinning angels. It is best to refer this to the angels in Genesis 6 who assumed human bodies and went after human wives.

- G. Despite their excellency of their nature and the dignity of their office, God had no mercy on them, did not forgive them of their sin, nor did He provide a Savior for them.
- H. Sin did not originate with man and man had a tempter. Hence mercy is shown to some men, but to no sinning angels!
- (2) "But cast them down to Hell."
- A. They were immediately punished. The words in the original can bear "imprisoned them while they were sinning."
- B. Only the mercy of God keeps Him from casting sinners down to Hell the minute they provoke Him to wrath.
- C. This expression is one word in the Greek, and it is a participle ("having tartarized them"---sent them to Tartarus). It is found nowhere else in the N.T.
- D. If creatures sin in Heaven, they must suffer in Hell. Sin debases and degrades all who commit it.
- E. This word is of pagan origin. In the earlier writings it was a dark abyss, as deep below hades as earth below Heaven, the prison of Saturn, the Titans, etc. Later it was the region of the damned, as opposed to the Elysian fields.
- F. Peter uses it of the prison house of the sinning angels, a gloomy dark place of punishment. Probably the same as the bottomless pit (Rev. 9:11; 20:1-3; Luke 8:31).
- G. There is no mercy, no forgiveness, no restoration for fallen angels. Aren't you glad you are a sinning man instead of a sinning angel?
- (3) "Delivered them into chains of darkness."
- A. Some translate "where darkness likes like chains upon them, or from some Greek texts "caverns" or "pits." KJV is best.
- B. These angels are bond with such chains as can hold angels. Or, some think the words mean confined in that dark prisonhouse as if by chains.
- C. Others say leaving them under the power of guilt of sin, which is the power of darkness and in black despair---driven from the realms of light, without the least glimmering of light---awaiting everlasting wrath and despair!
- (4) "To be reserved unto judgment."
- A. Compare with Jude 6 and Matthew 8:29. No sign of annihilation or hope of pardon. Their condition is utterly hopeless.

- B. Sin binds angels and men over to punishment. The last degree of torment is not till the day of judgment.
 - C. These angels seem to know that they are hereafter to be publicly judged and delivered over to a more fearful punishment.
 - D. If God so punished sinning angels, then false teachers cannot expect to escape punishment.
2. Noah and the flood (v. 5).
- (1) "And spared not the old world."
 - A. The old world or first world---the people who lived before the flood---the world of the ungodly.
 - B. God cut off this wicked race to show men cannot sin with impunity.
 - C. Probably more people died in the flood than in any other judgment which ever struck the world---millions of humans were born in the 1,500 before the flood and they lived a long time.
 - (2) "But saved Noah the eighth person."
 - A. Peter believed in both the flood and the existence of Noah. Unlike liberals, he did not regard these things as fiction.
 - B. God warned Noah of the flood and told him to build a ship (Heb. 11:7). Salvation here has the sense of physical preservation from drowning.
 - C. "The eighth person" mean Noah was one of the eight saved from the flood by entering the ark. There is no word for "person" in the Greek. It is literally, "Noah the eight," implying he was one of the eight.
 - D. Contrast with Jude 14. Noah was not the eighth person from Adam. He was the tenth.
 - (3) "A preacher of rightness."
 - A. The O.T. does not directly assert this (Gen. 6:9). This is an added word of inspiration by Peter. Jewish tradition says he was a preacher.
 - B. He could hardly have refrained from preaching while building the ark. Many probably asked him, "What are you building the ark for?" He would be compelled to explain.
 - C. Every word which Noah preached and every plank he put into the ark was a warning that judgment was coming.
 - D. He had imputed righteousness (Heb. 11:7) and moral righteousness (Gen. 6:9) and preached righteousness to the unrighteous men of his generation.

- E. He did not get discouraged even though he had few converts. At least his whole family was saved, and that is more than some preachers can say.
- (4) "Bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly."
- A. Upon all the world beside Noah and those in the ark.
 - B. When the Lord shut Noah in the ark, He shut all others out (Gen. 7:23).
 - C. The ungodly were not destroyed until they had heard faithful preaching.
 - D. The flood was universal (Matt. 24:37-39).
3. Lot and the city of Sodom (v. 6).
- (1) "And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrhah into ashes."
- A. These were two thriving cities in the Jordan Valley not far from the Dead Sea (Jude 7).
 - B. These were very wicked cities (Gen. 13:13; 18:20-21; 19:4-11).
 - C. God sent fire and brimstone from heaven upon them (Gen. 19:24). God turned the well-watered plains into dust and ashes.
 - D. He destroyed the old world by water and Sodom by fire. He will use fire again, but not water. God keeps His people from fire and water (Isa. 43:2).
- (2) "Condemned them with an overthrow."
- A. The word "overthrow" is generally used when this destruction is spoken of (Deut. 29:23; Isa. 13:19; Jer. 40:4; Amos 4:11).
 - B. God still hates sin and it is folly to think that He will not condemn the sinner. Some say, "God is love and He will not condemn the sinner!"
- (3) "Making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly."
- A. They were a demonstration that God disapproves of such crimes and will punish them in every age and land.
 - B. This is an example to other offenders who come after. Note Jude 7.
4. The deliverance of just Lot (v. 7).
- (1) "Delivered just Lot."
- A. Read Genesis 19:16. Lot was a righteous man in the wrong place.
 - B. Only a few are saved (Matt. 7:13-14).
 - C. This verse suggests Lot was delivered because he was a just man. Genesis 18 because Abraham's prayer.

- D. Lot's choice of Sodom cost him and his family greatly. Lot lost most of his family and all his possessions.
 - E. He entered Sodom as a prince and left as a pauper. It is an evil thing for a Christian to go in for worldly advantage.
 - F. He was a just man in the midst of corruption and injustice. It must have been a hard struggle to maintain a moral life in the midst of such evil.
 - G. Lot is not listed among the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11. Peter commends his faithfulness and says nothing of his sin.
- (2) "Vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked."
- A. "Filthy conversation" means "licentious conduct" (Ezek. 16:49-50). "Wicked" is "the lawless," meaning their defiance of the law of God and nature.
 - B. The Sodomites were troublesome sinners. Lot lived among them with little injury.
 - C. Bad company grieves a child of God. The word translated "vex" is elsewhere translated "tormented," or literally, "tortured."
 - D. The Sodomites had no regard for the laws of God or man.
5. The righteous among the wicked (v. 8).
- (1) "For that righteous man dwelling among them."
- A. It was through his own choice that he dwelt among the people of Sodom.
 - B. The recollection of his mistake must have added bitterness to the daily distress caused by the sins of his neighbors (Gen. 13:11).
 - C. Lot's righteousness is both imputed and practical. Practical righteousness should follow imputed righteousness.
 - D. God does not account men just or unjust from one single act, but from their general course of life.
- (2) "In seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul."
- A. A believer in bad company cannot escape guilt or grief (Ps. 119:158). The sight of the unlawful deeds and the sound of wicked words were a grief to Lot.
 - B. "Vexed" (literally "tortured") indicates a continuous state. These sinners did not try to hide their shame from the eyes of others.
- (3) "From day to day."
- A. He was not spasmodically grieved by the sins of the Sodomites, but it was a daily affair.

- B. Time did not make him callous to the wickedness around him.
 - C. We should be daily grieved by the sins of others (Ps. 119:136; Luke 19:41; Acts 17:16).
6. Future judgment and the righteous and the wicked (v. 9).
- (1) "The Lord knoweth."
 - A. He knows our every action (Ps. 139:3), word (Ps. 139:4), and thoughts (Ps. 139:2).
 - B. If there is but one righteous man in five cities God knows him.
 - (2) "To deliver the godly out of temptation."
 - A. Our situation may seem utterly hopeless with no ray of light, but the Lord can find a way out. His way is the best way.
 - B. The wisdom of God is never at a loss about ways and means to deliver his people. The deliverance of the godly is the work of God.
 - C. Look at the many He has delivered and will deliver---
 - a. Joseph from prison in Egypt.
 - b. Mordecai and the Jews from being killed by Haman.
 - c. The children of Israel from Pharaoh at the Red Sea.
 - d. The three Hebrews in the furnace and Daniel from the lions' den.
 - e. Don't forget Noah and Lot.
 - f. Peter from prison and Paul from the storm.
 - g. He will deliver the church from the Great Tribulation.
 - D. "The godly" means "well-reverent." It could be translated "pious" or "devout." It suggests a consistent life for the Lord.
 - (3) "And to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."
 - A. The word rendered "to be punished" is a present participle in Greek, not future, and is better rendered "under punishment." The present tense emphasises continuity of the punishment.
 - B. The Arabic version renders it: "The souls of those in Hell, and their bodies in the grave unto the day of judgment."
 - C. The wicked while they live suffer for their sins. In Hell they will suffer more. After the judgment they will suffer still much more.

- D. There is a future day of judgment. The preservation of impenitent sinners is only a reserving of them to the day of God's judgment.
 - E. "Reserved" tells of the certainty of the judgment. There is no such thing as annihilation.
 - F. "Unjust" is all the unsaved world. They are not "just" practically because they sin every day. They are not "just" legally because they break the law. They are not "just" by imputation, for they have not trusted Christ.
7. The type of false teachers God will judge (v. 10).
- (1) "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh."
 - A. To walk after the flesh is to follow the evil passions of human nature. Christians do not do this (Rom. 8:1,4; II Cor. 10:3).
 - B. The false teachers in Peter's day were making the pleasing of the flesh their main object.
 - C. Literally, "behind the flesh"---the same word is in Matthew 10:38. It implies that what is followed after is a leader. The errorists are led by their flesh instead of leading it.
 - C. "Flesh" is their nature viewed as depraved, and acting through the body.
 - (2) "In the lust of uncleanness."
 - A. The Bible everywhere condemns uncleanness (Eph. 5:5; I Thess. 4:7). We are saved from uncleanness to live a pure life for the Lord.
 - B. Hankering after polluting and unlawful use of the flesh.
 - (3) "And despise government."
 - A. "Government" is best translated "lordship," and it stands for all forms of authority. Woe to those who denounce lordship salvation.
 - B. They regard all government in the state, the church, and the family as evil. They advocate unbridled freedom of all sorts.
 - C. They set aside all authority, claiming that this abuses their Christian liberty! They despise all government except that of their own lusts.
 - D. Christ has given us liberty from the ceremonial law (Gal. 5:1). He has not freed us to sin as we please. He has freed us from sin, our slave-master (John 8:34-36).
 - (4) "Presumptuous are they, self-willed."
 - A. "Presumptuous" means bold and daring, not fearing God or man. Some translate "daring" or "audacious." It is a

daring thing to despise the authority of God.

B. "Self-willed"---wanted their own way above everything. They did not care what the Lord said or anyone else.

C. A selfish man injury himself and others (Rom. 15:1-3).

(4) "They are not afraid to speak evil of dignities."

A. "Dignities" is in many places rendered "glories." It may refer to the glories of the Father and the Son, the glorious angels of Heaven, persons high in earthly glory, or maybe to all glorious things.

B. "To speak evil" is literally "blaspheme." They spoke in an evil way of church leaders and government officials.

C. We must respect church leaders (I Thess. 5:12-13) and governmental officials (Eccl. 10:20; Acts 23:5; Rom. 13:1-4).

D. One of the effects of true religion is that it produces respect for those in authority (Rom. 13:6-7).

E. It is a very certian indication that men hold wrong opinions when they show disrespect to those in authority and despise the restraints of law.

III. THE DESCRIPTION OF FALSE TEACHERS (2:11-22).

1. The unfallen angels (v. 11).

(1) "Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might."

A. In verse 4 Peter spoke of fallen angels; here he speaks of the elect angels (Ps. 103:20; 104:4; II Thess. 1:7).

B. "Greater in power and might" could be translated "greater in forcefulness and miraculous power."

C. Angels exceed humans in wisdom (II Sam. 14:20). They also exceed them in morality.

(2) "Bring not railing accusation against them."

A. The false teachers dared to blaspheme dignities of a much higher order than themselves. Unfallen angels would not dare to do the same of creatures inferior to themselves.

B. These heretics railed at glories---those in uthority. They use vile and abusive language.

C. "Bring not railing accusation" in the Greek is "bring no blasphemous or reproachful judgment or condemnation." Unfallen angels state matters as they are. They speak in a calm and serious manner when accusing the worst of sinners (Jude 8-9).

D. Let us not be railers or accusers (Rev. 12:10). Let us

not go beyond what angels do.

(3) "Before the Lord."

- A. Angels stand before the Lord and report to Him (Zech. 3:1-2). This has a sobering effect on their behavior.
- B. They state simple facts and leave the judgment of matters to the Lord. We also are ever in the presence of the Lord. Let us speak with caution.
- C. Judgment belongs to God, not angels. How great is the dignity of the saints, who, as Christ's assessors, shall hereafter judge angels (I Cor. 6:2).
- D. If we complain of wicked men, let it be to God, not with rage and reviling, but with compassion and composedness of mind.

2. Brute beasts who perish in their own depravity (v. 12).

(1) "But these, as natural brute beasts."

- A. Peter, having shown how unlike angels these wicked men are, now shows how much like animals they are.
- B. "Brute beasts"---awful sinners in the circle of the Christian fellowship. There are still brutes who pose as leaders and beasts who pass for teachers.
- C. As beasts are guided by an instinct in their nature, so these men are led by the corrupt nature in them to commit all manner of wickedness.
- D. As animals are unashamed of their evil ways, so are these men. They are on a common level with animals (Ps. 46:10; 92:6; Jer. 4:22; 10:8).
- E. The Scriptures liken sinful man to a dog, a swine, a horse, a wolf, a mule, an ox, a bear, and a lion. We say, "He is as stubborn as a mule," or "as wise as a fox."
- F. They exercise no more restraint over their passions than beasts. They act like irrational animals.
- G. Reason and conscience exerted no constraints. The brute has no rational nature. If men live like a brute, God will treat them as a brute.

(2) "Made to be taken and destroyed."

- A. Made to be taken in the snare of Satan---vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.
- B. Some animals are born just to be taken to the slaughterhouse to die that they may be food for man.
- C. Like wild animals, because of their own destructiveness, should be taken and destroyed. No good to God or man, but harmful to both.

- (3) "Speak evil of things that they understand not."
- A. They are ignorant of the glories or those in authority. The evil speaker believes that in dragging others down he pushes himself up.
 - B. These men had no understanding of the right ways of the Lord, but professed to be of great understanding and railed those who tried to teach the right way.
 - C. Ignorance is behind evil speaking. If men really knew, they would not speak evil of God and Christ.
- (4) "And shall utterly perish in their own corruption."
- A. Their views will be the means of their ruin.
 - B. It can read: "Shall in their destructiveness be destroyed." These false teachers, acting like irrational animals, shall be destroyed with the destruction of irrational animals (Gal. 6:7).
 - C. The word "shall" tells of the certainty of the judgment which was to befall these wicked men (Ps. 7:16).
 - D. This misery often comes in life, and it is certain after death.
3. The reward of unrighteousness (v. 13).
- (1) "And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness."
- A. The results of the punishment expressed in verse 12. All unrighteousness has its reward (Acts 1:18), but how different from the reward obtained for righteousness.
 - B. Due punishment in body and soul for all the injustice to God and man---appropriate recompense for their wickedness.
 - C. Verse best translated: "Shall carry off as their due the reward of unrighteousness."
 - D. Some say, "It not the sin question, but the Son question." Here it is the sin question, for judgment is according to sin.
- (2) "As they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time."
- A. They were so wicked and shameless in sins that they delighted to do it in daylight (I Thess. 5:7; Phil. 3:19).
 - B. Sin was their pleasure (Heb. 11:25). Sin brings temporary pleasure, but no lasting joy. Not all pleasure is sinful.
- (3) "Spot they are and blemishes."
- A. Defile themselves with sin and defile others by their communications. They are such to the church (Eph. 5:27).
 - B. A scandal and disgrace to Christ and society. In the company of pure Christians their sins looked filthy.
- (4) "Sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they

feast with you."

- A. A. They boasted of their evil ways (Prov. 10:23). Revelled in the fact they were able to deceive unstable souls.
 - B. The feast may have been the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 5:8; 11:20-22), the love-feasts (Jude 12), or social meals.
4. Cursed children who cannot stop sinning (v. 14).
- (1) "Having eyes full of adultery."
 - A. The seventh commandment is violated not only by unclean actions, but also by unchaste looks (Job 31:1; Ezek. 6:9; Matt. 5:28).
 - B. Some read: "Having eyes full of the adulteress," meaning having a whore always in mind and sight.
 - C. The word "full" denotes that the corrupt passion referred to had wholly seized and occupied their mind.
 - D. Their eyes saw nothing else but some occasion for committing adultery.
 - E. The eye is usually the first offender (Gen. 3:6; Josh. 7:21). We need to take heed as to what we see.
 - F. Today some seldom look at one of the opposite sex without having eyes full of adultery. Beautiful women are special targets of these lustful brutes.
 - (2) "And that cannot cease from sin."
 - A. They are so corrupt and unprincipled that they cannot look at females without sinning.
 - B. They have become so debased and ingrained in their sin that they have become powerless to stop it. Bad habits fix themselves on a person (Jer. 13:23).
 - (3) "Beguiling unstable souls."
 - A. There are always unstable souls who can be led astray. This is why the cults spring up and gain followers (Rom. 16:18).
 - B. "Beguiling" is literally "having bait for." It is like a hunter setting a trap with some choice bait to catch certain wild animals.
 - C. Those men ensnared some weak females into their traps. They taught freedom from the law and Christian liberty ---it was legitimate to indulge in sexual immorality.
 - (3) "A heart they have exercised with covetous practices."
 - A. Instead of desiring to please the Lord, they had hearts that desired only sinful pleasure and wealth.
 - B. Montgomery translates: "Their heart is trained in greed." Look at the wealth of so-called Christian organizations! Purgatory is money-making scheme of the Catholics.

- C. This is not the attitude of a real servant of Christ (II Cor. 12:14; Acts 20:33). Beware of religious leaders who beg for money all the time.
- (5) "Cursed children."
- A. Literally "children of the curse." They are liable to the curse of God denounced against such ungodly persons (Gen. 4:11; Matt. 25:41).
- B. Like "the son of perdition," "children of wrath," "children of disobedience," "sons of Belial," etc.
5. The way of Balaam (v. 15).
- (1) "Which have forsaken the right way."
- A. True religion is represented as a straight way (Matt. 7:13-14) and false religion as a crooked path.
- B. These had forsaken the way of truth and eternal life--- the Christian faith. They had perverted the right ways of the Lord (Acts 13:10).
- (2) "And are gone astray."
- A. These false professors had gone astray for pleasure and profit. The right way is the way of self-denial, not self-seeking.
- B. They had gone away from the way of truth and holiness.
- (3) "Following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor."
- A. Note Bosor and Beor (Num. 22:5). Balaam was numbered among the prophets as Judas was the apostles. The love of money was the downfall of both men.
- B. The Lord spoke to Balaam (Num. 22:9-12; 23:4-5). He talked like a true prophet (Num. 22:38) and God spoke through him (Num. 23:18-24; 24:3-9,16-24). He had a vision of God (Num. 24:3-4) and the Spirit was upon him (Nu. 24:2).
- C. Professionally, he was a diviner or magician after a heathen pattern. His manner and life was crooked. He claimed to be a servant of God as these false prophets of whom Peter writes.
- D. Balaam was asked to curse Israel. Peter calls these false prophets "cursed children." Balaam counselled Balak in a thing that was a curse to Israel (Num. 31:16; 25:1-9).
- E. Balaam and these false teachers induced others to sin, and it was the same kind of sin in both cases.
- F. How terrible when those who are supposed to be lighthouses on the road to Heaven lead men down the way to Hell!
- (4) "Who loved the wages of unrighteousness."
- A. Balaam prostituted his office to secure base gain (Num. 22:7,17,19-20,34).

- B. These false teachers stooped to anything to get gain (I Tim. 6:10).
6. Balaam was rebuked by his donkey (v. 16).
- (1) "But was rebuked for his iniquity."
- A. His sin was not going along, but goine along with them with a desire to curse Israel.
- B. He was rebuked by an angel and his donkey.
- (2) "The dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet."
- A. This was a miracle, for a voiceless animal spoke (Num. 22:28-30). The ass wasted no words.
- B. Balaam's beast was better than Balaam. She saw things he did not see. His actions were more asinine than his donkey.
- C. God uses His creatures as He see fit. Peter heard a rooster, Jonah had a submarine ride in a whale, and ravens fed Elijah.
- D. "Madness"---his avarice caused him to act in a senseless manner---like a madman.
- E. Note Balaam is called a prophet (Matt. 7:21-23). Even Caiaphas uttered a prophecy (John 11:49-52).
7. These immoral errorists were dry wells (v. 17).
- (1) These are wells without water."
- A. A well in Palestine was demmed one of the best earthly things (Prov. 10:11; Isa. 58:11; John 4:6). A dry well only aggravated a hote traveller.
- B. These false teachers had no truth or grace and no power to refresh the soul.
- C. Spiritually the world is a desert place. There is nothing in it to satisfy the human soul. Wealth, fame, pleasure, all turn out to be dry wells.
- D. False religion is a dry well. It is not what a thirsty soul needs. Some preachers claim to be big and deep, promise much, and have nothing in them---only the filth and slime of error and iniquity.
- E. Compare with Jude 12.
- (2) "Clouds that are carried with a tempest."
- A. Clouds on the horizon fill us with hope when the ground is parched and dry. But strong wind blow these clouds away and damage crops and blow down buildings.
- B. Here is seen the emptiness and uselessness of false teachers. Instead of dispensing salvation and blessing

they bring nothing but dearth and damage.

C. This suggests want of stability (Jas. 1:8). One error leads to another (Eph. 4:14). These false teachers have no anchorage.

(3) "To whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever."

A. "Mist of darkness" is literally, "thick gloom of darkness." See Jude 13. The same pit of darkness for fallen angels (II Pet. 2:4).

B. The word "reserved" tells us that this place of outer darkness is held in readiness to receive these wicked men.

C. "Forever" suggests an eternal Hell.

8. The wonderful oratory of false teachers (v. 18).

(1) "For when they speak great swelling words of vanity."

A. Like a balloon filled with hot air. These men had wonderful diction and made a pretense of great learning and wisdom.

B. Truth does not need beautiful oratory to substantiate it (I Cor. 1:17; 2:1,4).

C. In order to deceive men many noisy words must be used (Acts 19:34). These false teachers made plenty of noise, but their words lacked sense and were empty.

(2) "They allure through the lusts of the flesh."

A. These words are designed to allure the weak and unlearned into ways of error and sin.

B. They promise unlimited indulgence to the carnal appetites. This license to sin suits exactly the natural man---no check on morals.

(3) "Through much watonness."

A. They not only taught wrong, but they practiced it themselves. Beware of any teacher who makes light of sin.

B. They probably betrayed and seduced some fine young women.

C. True Christianity brings the animal nature into subjection (I Cor. 9:27; Titus 2:11-12; Rom. 13:13-14). A true preacher preaches self-denial and the restraining of lusts.

(4) "Those that were clean escaped from them who live in error."

A. "Clean escape" might be better translated "really escape." What had these ensnared ones previously escaped? heathen sins and Jewish ritualism.

B. These persons had recently professed conversion. These converts, when just beginning to escape from evil things, were enticed by these false teachers to return to sin.

- C. Some profess Christianity, and then discover that Christian leaders do not live clean lives, and they then return to a life of sin and wickedness.
9. They promise liberty, but give bondage (v. 19).
- (1) "While they promise them liberty."
- A. Satan and his preachers make great promises (Gen. 3:5). You will be free to do as you please they were saying.
- B. The liberty promised was liberty to yield to unbridled indulgence of passions. The Catholic Church is guilty of this.
- C. True religion promises and produces liberty (John 8:32, 36). Christian liberty is freedom from the guilty and dominion of sin, and it means to serve God without fear.
- (2) "They themselves are servants of corruption."
- A. Utter strangers to freedom and bound by the chains of servitude. Their passions and appetites had obtained the mastery over them---"slaves of rotteness" (Prov. 5: 22).
- B. Paul and Christian liberty (Gal. 5:1,13). These false teachers sought to lead their followers into the very things which Christ sought to liberate them from!
- C. A Christian lives a restrained life, but he is not in bondage. He realizes sin brings bondage, and the more he lives for Christ the greater freedom he has. We are freed from sin, not free to sin!
- (3) "For whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage."
- A. When a man in war is conquered by another he is no longer a free man. He is the prisoner and slave of another.
- B. When sin has overcome a man and become his master he is a slave to sin. He lost the war! He is a captive!
10. They escaped from their old lives of sin, but they did not escape to Christ (v. 20).
- (1) "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world."
- A. Is Peter speaking of the false teachers or those whom they have deceived (v. 18)? It is the people enticed by false teachers. The false teachers never escaped from a sinful life (v. 14).
- B. These false professors had escaped the sins the men of the world are addicted to. Sin has a defiling nature.
- C. A religious education has restrained many whom the grace of God never renewed. It is an advantage to escape the gross and scandalous sins of the world, though you may never be converted.

- D. It is possible to be reformed, yet not transformed, to learn the way of salvation, live better lives for a time, only to sink back into a life of sin (Matt. 12: 43-45; 13:21-22).
 - E. These people had abandoned their heathen lives and idolatry, but they did not have their nature changed.
- (2) "Through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."
- A. Christianity has a purifying effect even on false professors, much more on true believers (I John 3:3).
 - B. This is a profession and not a personal knowledge. They had a knowledge of the doctrines and duties of true religion which caused them to abandon their vices.
 - C. One can know much about Christ and yet really not know Christ as Lord. The word "knowledge" can be rendered "acknowledging" as seen in Young's Literal Translation.
- (3) "They are again entangled therein and overcome."
- A. The word "entangled" is literally in the Greek "braid in," and it means "to inweave." Some translate it "caught," or "fettered," or "noosed."
 - B. The thought is an animal entangled in a net, or a fish caught in a net. The world's pollutions have entangled many unstable souls.
 - C. If one is not born again, he always has the craving to satisfy the lusts of the flesh.
- (4) "The latter end is worse with them than the beginning."
- A. They lived badly before they professed Christianity, but then they became worse than ever. I have seen such.
 - B. Such people do much harm to true religion. Those who led these people away are in worse trouble (Matt. 23: 14).
 - C. Great scoffers are born of re-entanglement in evil.
11. Ignorance is bad, disobedience is always worse (v. 21).
- (1) "For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness."
- A. To profess to embrace Christianity and then return to licentious lives is a terrible thing.
 - B. It is better to never hear the truth than to hear it and then turn from it!
 - C. Had they not professed and then abandoned the way of righteousness, they would not have harmed the cause of Christ as they now have done. Their condemnation would not have been so great!

- D. If men are resolved to be wicked, they had better never pretend to be good (John 15:22; Luke 12:47-48; Matt. 11:20-24).
 - E. How terrible the judgment for those who know the way, profess to be on the way, and who yet live in unrestrained wickedness.
 - F. The way of Christ is the way of righteousness (2:2,15; Prov. 12:28).
- (2) "Than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."
- A. The knowledge of the way has not been lost, for they have not relapsed into a state of ignorance in which they once were.
 - B. "The holy commandment" is the whole moral law as set forth by Christ in the sermon on the mount and by the apostles of Christ (II Pet. 3:2).
12. The dog and sow illustration (v. 22).
- (1) "But it is happened according to the true proverb."
- A. A proverb is a short statement packed full of truth.
 - B. Peter is here thinking of Proverb 26:11. He is showing greed for filth.
- (2) "The dog is turned to his own vomit again."
- A. Throughout the East the dog is a term of reproach for impure and profane persons. The Jews called the Gentiles such (Deut. 23:18).
 - B. To be called a dog by another was considered highly insulting (I Sam. 17:43; II Sam. 9:8; Matt. 15:27; Phil. 3:2).
 - C. These false professors had returned to their old sinful lusts. This is as disgusting as a dog returning to his own vomit.
 - D. Those who soon return to a life of sin prove they never had been changed into new creatures by the power of Christ.
 - E. There had been no new nature given, for the dog is still a dog. There is no falling from grace here. These persons had never been anything else than sinners.
- (3) "And the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire."
- A. This proverb is not found in the O.T., but is common in rabbinical writings and is found in the Greek classics.
 - B. Giving a sow a bath does not keep it from rolling in a mudhole again. Washing does not change its nature.

- C. The swine was unclean to a Jew. Note Luke 15:15-16.
- D. It is a sinner's nature to sin and he may for a time reform, but unless he receives a new nature, he will again quickly return to his sin.
- E. Sows or sheep? See I Peter 2:25. The sow returns to the mire, but the sheep to the shepherd (John 10:27-28).
- F. The point that Peter is making is that whatever external reformation might have occurred, their nature remained the same.
- G. This verse proves that those who rely on mere external reformation are deceived. God looks on the heart (II Cor. 5:12).

THE BOOK OF II PETER

Chapter Two

I. THE DENIAL OF CHRIST'S RETURN (3:1-7).

1. Peter's second epistle (v. 1).

(1) "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you."

- A. Peter wrote his two epistles to the same people. The first was to encourage Christians in a time of great suffering and persecution. The second to warn them of false teachers.
- B. "Beloved"---a touch of affection all the more tender after the severe blows laid upon heretics in chapter 2. Peter liked the word "beloved" (I Pet. 2:11; 4:12; II Pet. 3:8,14,17). He knew they were the beloved of God (II Thess. 2:13; I Pet. 1:2).
- C. Peter knew how to be severe and sharp and when to be kind and tender. The servant of the Lord must be serious and straightforward in his dealings with sin, but kind and tender in his dealings with the saints.
- D. "Now I write," as to indicate after writing the first epistle he hurried to write the second. Did the one who carried the first epistle tell him of the false teachers?

(2) "In which both to stir up your pure minds."

- A. Peter's purpose in both letters was to stir up Christians (I Pet. 1:13; II Pet. 1:13). He would arouse the Christians to vigilance and diligence.
- B. "Pure" literally means "pure when examined by sunlight." The RV has "sincere minds." The Lord esteems very highly godly sincerity in mind and heart (PHil. 1:10; I Cor. 5:8; Rev. 3:16).
- C. Their minds were opened to receive the truth, yet liable to be led astray by the plausible errors of others.

(3) "By way of remembrance."

- A. Peter is not trying to bring new truths, but he is trying to impress upon his readers truths which they already knew. Some today are always looking for new things to bring before their people.
- B. He desired to remind his readers of the things which were coming in the last days.
- C. "Memory" is like a golden thread upon which are hung varied facts and experiences like pearls, which link youth to old age."

2. Don't forget what Christ and the apostles said (v. 2).

(1) "That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before

by the holy prophets."

- A. New Testament Christians are to study the Old Testament prophets. They wrote about Christ's second coming (Ps. 72; Isa. 11; Zech. 14), not entirely about the glory of the gospel church as some suppose.
 - B. Peter is not referring to New Testament prophets, but to Old Testament prophets (I Pet. 1:10-12; II Pet. 1:19-21). They were "holy prophets" because the Lord set them apart to reveal His will to the people (II Pet. 1:21).
 - C. Peter had not, like some today, lost interest in the O.T.
- (2) "And of the commandment of us the apostles of our Lord and Saviour."
- A. Some translate: "And the commandment of the Lord and Saviour through you apostles."
 - B. Neither the apostles nor the prophets spoke in their own name. The prophets continually said, "Thus saith the Lord." The apostles come "in the name of the Lord."
 - C. Note here that Peter links the prophets and apostles together. He is advocating the same inspired authority for each. Both spoke out the commandments of the Lord (I Cor. 14:37; II Pet. 2:21).
 - D. Both the prophets and apostles preached the second coming of Christ.
 - E. "Lord and Saviour" seems to be Peter's favorite title for our Lord in this second epistle (1:11; 2:20; 3:18).

3. Optimists and the last days (v. 3).

- (1) "Knowing this first."
- A. This language indicates that Peter thought it very important that they be warned of these things. "To be forewarned is to be forearmed."
 - B. Compare with 1:20. They would know from the words of the apostles (Jude 17-18).
- (2) "That there shall come in the last days scoffers."
- A. "The last days" refers to the time between the two comings of Christ (Acts 2:17; Heb. 1:2; I John 2:18).
 - B. Sometimes it means the last days of their present age (Isa. 2:2; II Tim. 3:1-5). It probably has that meaning here.
 - C. There have always been scoffers in every age from the time of Christ until now. There were scoffers in the Old Testament times (Ps. 1:1; 12:4; Prov. 1:22; Isa. 28:14).
 - D. To deride a Christian for his faith is rude and cruel. To deride Christ and His second coming is a most serious offense.
 - E. In Jude 18 the same Greek word for "scoffers" is "mockers."

(3) "Walking after their own lusts."

- A. Living in free indulgence of their sensual appetities (2:10; Jude 16,18). Their own pleasure is their sole law, unrestrained by reverence for God.
- B. Scoffing and evil living go together. People say, "We will live as we please, and will tolerate no interference" (Ps. 12:4).
- C. Mocking had become a habit to these people. They especially made sport of the great hope of the church.
- D. Today some good living men scoff at the truth of Christ's return and the things that pertain unto it.

4. These mockers say the promise of His coming has failed (v. 4).

(1) "And saying, Where is the promise of his coming?"

- A. "Where?"---a more contemptuous form of denying than a direct affirmation (Mal. 2:17; Ps. 42:3).
- B. Peter wrote some 30 years after the ascension of Christ. The early Christians believed Christ was coming again soon.
- C. Some may have said, "The second coming of Christ is all you talk about. If He is coming back, why doesn't He come? We do not believe He is coming at all!"
- D. Even in O.T. times many ridiculed the prophets (Isa. 5:9; Jer. 17:15; Ezek. 12:27).
- E. His first coming was a great event (Luke 1:78). His coming again is certain (John 14:2-3; Acts 1:11; Rev. 22:20). He will keep His word.
- F. Many did not believe Christ's promise in Peter's day. Many still do not today!

(2) "For since the father fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

- A. "Fathers" means Adam, Abel, Seth, and all the patriarchs and prophets of the O.T.
- B. "Fell asleep" was a common way of picturing death in the N.T. times (John 11:11; I Cor. 11:30; I Thess. 4:13-14).
- C. These scoffers reasoned that since the creation of the world the laws of nature are fixed and settled. The tides ebb and flow; the seasons follow each other; one generation succeeds another. Nothing unusual has happened across the years, so nothing unusual will happen.
- D. Some say, "If there is a God at all, He works along the lines of natural law. Christ will not come and interrupt the order of things.

- E. These false teachers especially did not believe Christ would come back and punish the unsaved. They believed in creation but not in the second coming.
5. The past judgment by water (vv. 5-6).
- (1) "For this they are willingly ignorant of."
 - A. Willing ignorance is conscious ignorance. It is difficult to convince men of truth they do not want to believe.
 - B. The story of creation proves the reasoning of these false teachers unsound. There were radical changes at creation and the flood.
 - (2) "That by the word of God the heavens were of old."
 - A. God commanded and the world was brought into existence (Ps. 33:6). Nine verses in Genesis 1 start with the words, "And God said."
 - B. Every thing depends on His Word or will. Creation was a great, a stupenduous change, a mighty effort of the power of God (Gen. 1:2-10).
 - (3) "And the earth standing out of the water and in the water."
 - A. This speaks of the appearance of dry land on the earth (Gen. 1:9-10).
 - B. Three-fourths of the earth's surface is covered by water. The dry land is standing in the midst of the water (Ps. 136:6).
 - C. Some say that the earth was formed through the action of water, which partly retired to the low places and partly formed the clouds in the sky.
 - D. Other say the water yielded its solid particles for the formation of the earth. The earth was formed out of water (Ps. 24:2).
 - (4) "Whereby the world that then was."
 - A. The scoffers were forgetting the great changes which came in connection with creation itself and the great geological upsets in connection with the flood (Gen. 7:11).
 - B. The sins of the people before the flood brought the flood (Gen. 6:5).
 - C. No doubt many scoffed and sneered about the ark and promised flood since it had never rained upon the earth (Matt. 24:38-39).
 - (5) "Being overflowed with water, perished."
 - A. Scoffers would do well to remember that God swept away a whole world of sinful men during the flood.

- B. The pronoun is plural. Some refer it to the heavens and the earth in the verse before (Gen. 7:11-12). It may be best to see a double reference to water, as the material out of which the world was formed, and as to the material out of which the world was destroyed.
 - C. "Perished"---not annihilated, but changed. This was not according to mere development of natural laws. It was done by God breaking up the natural order of things.
 - D. Peter likens the time before the flood to the time before the coming of the Lord, just as Christ did.
6. The future judgment of fire (v. 7).
- (1) "But the heavens and the earth which now are."
 - A. This means the first and second heavens, not the third where God rules. It is what we might call the solar system.
 - B. "Now are" either refers to the changes wrought in the heavens and the earth by the flood (v. 6), or distinguishes the present heavens and earth from the new heavens and earth (v. 13).
 - (2) "By the same word are kept in store."
 - A. This refers back to verse 5. Creation came by the word and command of God. The same command or word will destroy it by fire.
 - B. Men think our world exists because of the laws of nature. They are only the methods by which the Lord works. As He desires He can change these or suspend them.
 - C. "Kept in store" literally reads: "are treasured up with fire." There is great heat in the bowels of the earth---volcanoes and hot springs---coal, gas, and oil.
 - D. There is fire stored up in the inner depth of the earth which is destined to destroy it.
 - E. Others say this means they are stored up in the counsels of God (Ps. 50:3; 97:3; 102:26; Isa. 34:4; 51:6; 66:15; Dan. 7:10; Mal. 4:1; II Thess. 1:8; Heb. 1:10-12; Matt. 24:35).
 - (3) "Reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."
 - A. The judgment of fire is because of the ungodliness of men. Fire is God's mode of punishment (Matt. 25:41; 13:40; Rev. 20:14; 21:8; Heb. 12:29).
 - B. There is a coming day of judgment (Matt. 10:15; 11:22;

12:36). "Perdition" means "ruin" or "loss." It does not mean annihilation. It means to suffer the fate of Antichrist (II Thess. 2:3; REv. 17:11).

- C. When will this judgment occur? Peter does not link it with the coming of the Lord. It occurs in connection with the great white throne judgment (Rev. 20:4-21:1).

II. THE CORRECT VIEWS CONCERNING CHRIST'S RETURN (3:8-14).

1. The timelessness of God (v. 8).

(1) "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing."

- A. Literally, "let not this one thing escape you." Peter now addresses the saints to which he writes.
- B. The scoffers are willingly ignorant; the saints must not be ignorant of Christ's coming.

(2) "That one day is with the Lord as a thousand years."

- A. This language is borrowed from Psalm 90:4. In the latter part of our verse he gives the thought of Psalm 90:4, but in the last part he reverses it.
- B. The Lord sees no more duration in a 1,000 years than in one day. With Him Who knows no time, it is as easy to accomplish His purpose at a far distant period as now.
- C. Man has but a short time to live, and if he does not accomplish his purpose in a very brief period, he never will.
- D. To the eternal God a 1,000 years are but as yesterday. A God of eternity need be in no hurry, for time means nothing to Him.

(3) "And a thousand years as one day."

- A. Scoffers said Christ would not come back. He had now been gone some 30 years. The primitive Christians thought His coming would be soon. They, too, wondered why He had not come.
- B. God knows no delays. At the appointed time He will come. He has not abandoned His purpose.
- C. Time does not change the Lord. He knows no weariness or weakness. He never slumbers or sleeps. He never grows old, His hand does not shake, His voice never falters, nor His hair turn grey.
- D. His purposes do not change with the years. No outside influence causes Him to change His plans. If He said He would come again, He will come.
- E. His apparent delays are not due to changelessness or lack of ability. His eternity demands no haste. Man's

impatience does not hurry God. He has all eternity to work.

2. The Lord will keep His promise (v. 9).

- (1) "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness."
 - A. Best translated: "The Lord does not dely his promise." He is never behind or ahead. All things are done on time (Ex. 12:41; Gal. 4:4).
 - B. Some thought delay was slackness, but God cannot be judged by such a standard.
 - C. Many things may keep a man from keeping his promise. Nothing hinders God (Num. 23:19; Heb. 10:37; Luke 18:7-8).
- (2) "But is longsuffering to usward."
 - A. Nothing hinders His coming, except that He does not yet wish to come!
 - B. Not all men without exception, for the persons intended by "us" (the elect) are manifestly distinguished from "some men" and from the scoffers. They are the "belov-ed" (vv. 1,8,14,17).
 - C. This longsuffering results in the actual salvation of the "usward" (v. 15).
- (3) "Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
 - A. Christ has not come because He has not yet accomplished the full number of His elect.
 - B. He waits until they repent and come to salvation. He wills not that any of them perish (John 10:28). Not any of the "usward."
 - C. Without repentance all must perish. All the elect will be brought to repentance..
 - D. Unrepentant sinners will not escape. "Perish" means eternal spiritual death. Sodom and Gomorrah perished. The people before the flood perished. Others will too (Acts 13:41; Luke 13:5).

3. The coming of the day of the Lord (v. 10).

- (1) "But the day of the Lord will come."
 - A. "The day of the Lord" is an expression looking back to the O.T. (Isa. 2:12; Ezek. 13:5; Joel 1:15; Amos 5:18; Mal. 3:2). It is usually associated with judgment.
 - B. In the New Testament it signifies the second advent of Christ and the events to follow (I Thess. 5:2). It is also called "the day of Christ" (II Thess. 2:2) and "the

day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6) and "the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 1:8). Sometimes it is called "the day of God" (II Pet. 3:12; Rev. 16:14). It is also generally associated with judgment.

- C. Peter here links the day of the Lord with the final judgment by fire. The day of the Lord is a long period of time (II Pet. 3:8), covering from the Rapture to the renovation of the earth by fire.
- D. It refers to the time when the Lord Jesus will be victor over all His enemies.
- E. The scoffers say: "Where?" But Peter say that the day of the Lord will come in the day He has fixed. Nothing is more certain.
- F. "The day of the Lord" is a striking expression since all days are days of the Lord. This day to the elect will be joy; to the non-elect dismay and despair.

(2) "As a thief in the night."

- A. The coming of the Lord is as sure as the Word of God. When He does come, it will be suddenly and unexpectedly, like a thief in the night.
- B. All important events will overtake humanity as a thief in the night. Even the Rapture will be a surprise to many (Matt. 24:42-44; Luke 12:39,41; Rev. 3:3; 16:15).
- C. It will come while many are sleeping and secure and do not expect it to happen (Matt. 25:6). All the virgins slept!

(3) "In which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise."

- A. The scoffers says the heavens are to continue (v. 4), but they are wrong (Matt. 5:18; 24:29,35; Heb. 1:10-11; Rev. 21:1).
- B. This seems to indicate our whole solar system will be completely disrupted by fire. This does not include the Third Heaven which is the abode of our Lord.
- C. Some would limit "heavens" to the atmosphere of the earth, but it surely means the visible heavens which surround the earth.
- D. "Pass away" is parerchomai in the Greek which means "to go by" or "ass away." It does not mean annihilation (Matt. 24:24; 26:32,42; Luke 18:37; II Cor. 5:17; Jas. 1:10).
- E. "A great noise" is also rendered "a crackling noise" (Moffett), "with a crash" (Montgomery), or "with a whiz" (Nieboer). This is a rushing roar like an atomic blast.
- F. The noun form is used of the whizzing of arrows, of the

rush of wings, of the sound of mighty winds or roaring water.

- (4) "The elements shall melt with fervent heat."
- A. The meaning of the word "elements" (Gr. stoicheion) is translated "elements" (Gal. 4:3,9; II Pet. 3:10), "rudiments" (Col. 2:8,20), and "principles" (Heb. 5:12).
 - B. The word denotes the rudiments of anything, the parts or portions of which anything is composed.
 - C. Here it means the component materials of the heavens, including the heavenly bodies.
 - D. The elements means the host of heaven, being distinguished from the heavens, as the works of the earth are distinguished from the earth in the next clause.
 - E. "Shall melt" is literally "the elements being scorched, shall dissolved."
 - F. This is only the change which heat produces. Heat ^{change} changes the form of things, but it annihilates nothing. The heavens will undergo important changes.
- (5) "The earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up."
- A. We may think of the world as a vast pile of wood which God will one day burn.
 - B. All the taverns, towers, and towns, all the parks, palaces, and paints, all the books that men have written, etc., will be burned up. All the works of man---all that sin brought into the world.
 - C. Everything in which man has boasted, and gloried, and upon which he has set his hopes, will be gone forever. Beautiful estates, gorgeous cathedrals, the most wonderful government buildings, all turned to ashes.
 - D. The word "melt" in this verse is translated "dissolved" in verse 11.

3. Peter's practical application (v. 11).

- (1) "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved."
- A. These things which have such an awful hold on the heart of men. Hold loosely to those things which pass away and cling to eternal things.
 - B. If sin has cursed the universe so as to cause God to dissolve it, what an evil is sin, and how much we should hate it.
 - C. There is nothing permanent on earth. Our great interest must be another world.
- (2) "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness."

- A. "Manner" refers to quality of Christian character. "Conversation and godliness" are in the plural in the Greek and means all forms of holy deport and piety.
- B. Scoffers says all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation (v. 4). The Christian says, "We are living in a changing scene and momentous events lie ahead. We must live holy lives for the Lord."
- C. "Conversation" (holy living) speaks of our outward life, and "godliness" speaks of our attitude toward the Lord. The moral and the spiritual go together.

4. Hastening the day of God (v. 12).

(1) "Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God."

- A. "Looking for" means to firmly believe He shall come and to long and look for Him to come. Kept looking until He does come.
- B. The preposition "unto" is not in the Greek text. The readers are exhorted to hasten the coming of the day of God. This involves human responsibility.
- C. How can we do this? By prayer (Rev. 22:20), by holy living (II Pet. 3:11,14), by witnessing, and by looking for Him (Heb. 9:28; Tit. 2:13).
- D. When the last elect soul is saved for this present age (Rom. 11:25; II Pet. 3:9,15), the longsuffering of God will no longer be necessary.
- E. The date of Christ's second coming is fixed in the purpose of God, but this event is also in harmony with the work of man. There is always God's purpose and man's activity.

(2) "Wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved."

- A. This is a repetition of verse 10.
- B. Because of the coming of the day of God the old order must give place to the new. The coming of that day will be the occasion of the destruction of the heavens and earth.
- C. When this day is fully come God will be manifested in all His glory (I Cor. 15:24-28).

(3) "And the elements shall melt with fervent heat." Already discussed in the verse before.

5. The new heavens and the new earth (13).

(1) "Nevertheless we, according to his promise."

- A. The reference is to two verses in Isaiah (65:17; 66:

- 22). Revelation 21:1 also speaks of this.
- B. The baptism in water at the time of the flood brought about a new condition in the heavens and the earth. The baptism in fire will bring in new heavens and a new earth, making all things new (Rev. 21:5). The fashion of this world will pass away (I Cor. 7:31).
- (2) "Look for new heavens and a new earth." New according to the promise we look for. See Revelation 21-22.
- (3) "Wherein dwelleth righteousness."
- A. Sin now dwells in the present heavens and earth. No city or town is perfectly holy. The righteous are the target of ridicule and abuse. The only absolutely righteous One was crucified.
- B. No drunks will stagger down the alleys, no prostitutes will stand on the streets, no rapist will be lurking in dark corners, etc. (Rev. 21:27).
- C. All who are there will be holy as the Lord is holy. No unrighteous person will come on the scene or be there.
- D. Health without any danger of pain, joy without any thought of grief, love without any peril of parting, life without any threat of death, etc. (Rev. 21:4).
6. Peter again makes a practical application to his readers (v. 14).
- (1) "Wherefore, beloved, seeing you look for such things."
- A. Four times he uses "beloved" (vv. 1,8,14,17). Note even verse 18.
- B. In view of the coming of the Lord, the burning of the heavens and the earth, and the new heavens and new earth, etc.
- C. Will you be prepared to dwell in that holy world? Does righteousness dwell in you now? Do you know Jesus Christ the righteous?
- (2) "Be diligent."
- A. This is the third time he has said "be diligent." The first concerned developing the Christian character (1:5). The second our calling and election (1:10)
- B. "Diligent" speaks of hard, honest, persevering effort.
- (3) "That ye may be found of him in peace."
- A. Does Peter mean at peace with God by reconciliation (Col. 1:20)? Is any of the elect in doubt about this? I think not. Note Philippians 3:9.
- B. The diligence needed on the part of the believer is that when Christ comes we will be found to be

peace with our brethren and all men (I Pet. 3:11; Rom. 12:18; 12:14).

C. Let us be found at peace in our own hearts at His appearing (I John 2:28).

(4) "Without spot, and blameless."

A. No man is so in himself. We must strive to be like the Lamb (I Pet. 1:19). Blameless before men (I Tim. 3:2,10; 5:7; Phil. 2:15).

B. Because we stand blameless in Christ (Eph. 1:4), we should seek to live a blameless life for Christ (I Cor. 1:8; Phil. 1:10; I Thess. 3:13; 5:23; Jude 24).

C. It will be otherwise with the wicked in this life (Isa. 57:20-21) and then in the next life (Rev. 14:11).

III. EXHORTATIONS IN VIEW OF THE FUTURE HOPE (15-18).

1. The exhortation to reverent attitude toward Scripture (vv. 15-16).

(1) The longsuffering of God is salvation (v. 15).

A. "And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation."

a. The longsuffering of God gives men time to repent and make their calling and election sure (1:10). Men in time must prepare for eternity.

b. It is for the salvation of the elect that judgment tarries (v. 9). His longsuffering toward the non-elect does not issue in their salvation (Rom. 2:4; 9:22).

c. Longsuffering is not design to give time for men to make provision for the flesh and to gratify it.

d. God waits and stops until all the elect for this age repent and are saved (I Tim. 1:16).

B. "Even as our beloved brother Paul."

a. There seem to be no enmity and jealousy among the early Christian workers. Paul once rebuked Peter (Gal. 2:11-12; Prov. 27:6).

b. "Brother Paul" speaks of nearness and affection. He does not call him "the very right Reverend Paul D.D."

c. Peter knew of Paul's writings, and he praised the very epistles which condemned him!

C. "According to the wisdom given him hath written unto you."

a. In the writing of his epistles, Paul had wisdom given him of the Lord.

- b. This was not fleshly wisdom, but wisdom given under the influence of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. Paul had written to the same Christians in Asia Minor that Peter is now writing (I Pet. 1:1). Note Galatia.
 - d. Peter believed Paul's letters were of inspired authority. He put Paul on a level with himself.
- (2) Paul commends Paul's epistles (v. 16).
- A. "As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things."
 - a. The expression "all his epistles" may hint that all of Paul's epistles were already written. At least it means what were written were the common property of the churches.
 - b. Paul and Peter wrote about the same things: inspiration of the the Scriptures (II Pet. 1:19-21; II Tim. 3:15-16), false teachers (II Pet. 2; II Cor. 11:13-15), the second coming (II Pet. 3:4; I Thess. 4:13-18), the day of the Lord (II Pet. 3:10; I Thess. 5:2).
 - B. "In which are some things hard to be understood."
 - a. This does not mean Paul was an obscure writer. It is rather that his subjects are so profound to the natural mind that they are hard to grasp (I Cor. 2:14).
 - b. Only "some things" are hard to be understood. Other things are easy to comprehend.
 - c. He says nothing about withholding the Bible from the mass of Christians because of some difficulties.
 - d. The writing of Paul were in the hands of the common people, otherwise they could not have perverted them. Is the pope better qualified to interpret the Bible than an inspired apostle?
 - C. "Which they that are unlearned and unstable."
 - a. "Unlearned"---not wanting in human learning is meant, but those lacking the learning imparted by the Spirit. The humanly learned have often originated many heresies.
 - b. "Unstable" (2;14; Eph. 4:14; Gen. 49:4). This is people who have no settled views. They have no landmarks set to guide their inquiries. They go from one opinion to another---saken by difficulties.
 - D. "Wrest."
 - a. "Wrest" means to strain and twist what is straight in itself (II Tim. 2:18). It means to distort its true sense and make it say things the Lord never

- b. The original word is often used in connection with winding on a windlass---torture by twisting.
 - c. Perverting the Scripture was done then as now by people who do not want to live a clean life for the Lord (2:19).
 - d. Sometimes it is done to bring some new sensational thing in order to obtain followers.
 - e. Those not well instructed and well established in the truth are in danger of perverting the Word of God.
- E. "As they do also the other scriptures."
- a. Peter regarded the writings of Paul as a part of the holy Scriptures.
 - b. The word "Scripture," as used by a Jew, had a technical signification---meaning the inspired writings. It was the common word applied to the writings of the Old Testament.
 - c. Paul's writings belong in the sacred canon. This was a fact already known to the early churches.
- FF. "Unto their own destruction."
- a. Eternal punishment is the results to which a perversion of the scriptures lead (Matt. 25:46). In attempting to destroy the Bible men destroy themselves.
 - b. Woe to those which pass as truth things not based on the Scriptures at all.
 - c. We must be careful to read every part of the Bible in the light of its context. We must know to whom it is written and why. We must not put our pre-conceived ideas into it.
 - d. Let the Lord speak to our hearts. Come in humility and with a desire to know what God has been pleased to reveal. Plainer portions will throw light on the more obscure parts.
 - e. Woe to the cults. They rob their hearers of the seriousness of sin and the need of salvation by belittling the person and work of Christ.
2. The exhortation to beware of falling (v. 17).
- (1) "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before."
- A. Peter is warning them of false teachers so that they might not fall into their trap (v. 3).
 - B. Men should realize that it is possible to fall into error. The pronoun "ye" is emphatic. Others have gone astray. Be careful.

- (2) "Beward lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked."
- A. "Beware" means "to be very much on guard and to watch very carefully (Matt. 7:15; Phil. 3:2; Col. 2:8).
 - B. "Led away" means "carried away" (Eph. 4:14; Jas. 1:6).
 - C. "Wicked" is better translated "lawless." Freethinkers who set no bounds for themselves (2:7). False teachers hold views not conformable to the law of God.
- (3) "Fall from your own steadfastness."
- A. Many in running the Christian race stumble and fall (Rom. 14:4; I Cor. 10:12; I Tim. 3:6-7; Heb. 4:11; II Pet. 1:10; Rev. 2:5). Many never lose the scars from the fall.
 - B. What causes one to fall? afflictions, personal injury by other Christians, worry, lust of the flesh, dectieful workers, unbelief, etc.
 - C. Peter tells us how to keep from falling (1:5-10). God can keep us from falling (Jude 20-21,24).
 - D. "Steadfastness" here is in contrast with "unstable in verse 16. Like a soldier facing danger in battle, we should hold our ground (I Cor. 15:58; Rev. 3:11).
 - E. A believer may fall but he will not stay down (Ps. 37:23-24; Prov. 24:16).
3. An exhortation to continue in spiritual growth (v. 18).
- (1) "But grow in grace."
- A. "Grow" presupposes life (I Pet. 2:2) since a dead thing does not grow. Regeneration is the beginning of the Christian life.
 - B. It can be translated "keep on growing" or "grow continually." All living things grow. Don't fall. Grow.
 - C. You don't grow unto grace, but neither is there any growth without grace.
 - D. The work of grace is gradual: babes, children, young men, and fathers.
 - E. Growth is necessary to steadfastness. Grow in the grace which Christ gives (Luke 2:52).
- (2) "And in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."
- A. Peter like the word "knowledge" (1:2,3,5,6,8; 2:20; 3:18).
 - B. We need to know more of Christ's person, character and work. Growth in the knowledge of Christ is indispensable to growth in the grace of Christ (Hos. 6:3; Matt. 11:29; Phil. 3:10; I Pet. 2:2; I John 2:6).

- C. This is the third time Peter has used "our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (1:11; 2:20). How dear to his heart Christ had become.
- (3) "To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."
- A. It might be translated: "To whom the glory both now and unto the day of eternity." Some copies so read.
 - B. The glory of deity is ascribed to Christ (Rev. 5:12).