

# Grow In The Grace And Knowledge Of Jesus Christ

*But grow in grace, and in the  
knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.  
To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.  
(2 Peter 3:18)*

# Dedication

This material is dedicated to my favorite baseball and basketball player - - ***Daniel (O. P.) Sanders***. It is my fondest wish and most fervent prayer that he grows in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ and fulfills his ambition (started at the age of three!) to be a gospel preacher. His willingness to be of service for the Lord is an encouragement to us all and he is dearly loved by Martha and I.

## **Lessons from 2 Peter are on:**

- 1.** Introduction (1:1)
- 2.** Greeting (1:2-4)
- 3.** Exceeding great and precious promises
- 4.** Partakers of the divine nature
- 5.** Growing in the faith (1:5-11)
- 6.** Virtue
- 7.** Knowledge
- 8.** Temperance
- 9.** Patience
- 10.** Godliness
- 11.** Brotherly Kindness
- 12.** Charity
- 13.** Make your calling and election sure (1:8-11)
- 14.** A reminder (1:12-15)
- 15.** Trustworthiness of the word and its messengers (1:16-21)
- 16.** Destructive doctrines (2:1-3)
- 17.** Doom of false teachers (2:4-11)
- 18.** Depravity of false teachers (2:12-17)
- 19.** Deception of false teachers (2:18-22)
- 20.** The sure promise of God (3:1-9)
- 21.** The day of the Lord (3:10-13)
- 22.** Final exhortations (3:14-18)

# Introduction

## *Luke 5:1-11*

**Introduction:** The second epistle written by Peter is a good study as it has much material in it concerning growth for service and preparation for the Lord's return. This is an introduction to this timely letter.

### I. The Author.

- A. Self-identified in **2 Peter 1:1** as Simon Peter.
  - 1. Links himself with Jesus on the mount of transfiguration (**2 Peter 1:16-18; Matt. 17:1-5**).
  - 2. Mentions the first letter (**3:1**) which was written by Peter (**1 Peter 1:1**).
  - 3. What of the difference in the name?
    - a. Simon {Simeon} (**Mk. 1:16; Acts 15:14**) Both are of Hebrew origin and mean "hearing."
    - b. Peter (**Matt. 16:18**) Greek, means "rock."
    - c. Simon Peter (**Jn. 6:68**) A combination used most often by John.
    - d. Cephas (**Jn. 1:42**) Aramaic, means "stone."
- B. Peter used an amanuensis (Silvanus, **1 Peter 5:12**). It does not appear that he did in this letter. Some who allege that Peter did not write this letter make capital of the difference in style of writing. Silvanus may be the answer. Yet, if this is the reason for doubt, it a shallow reason.
- C. It is my personal view that Peter is the author.

### II. Date Of Writing.

- A. Half of the city of Rome burned in 64 A. D. At first the people laid the blame for its burning on the Emperor, Nero.
- B. Nero was not willing for this to be and cast about for scapegoats and found them in Christians. Thus, Christians were accused and readily branded with blame and the persecutions began. These lasted until Nero's death in 68 A. D.
- C. It is believed that Peter died close to the end of Nero's reign. Peter knew his death was near (**2 Peter 1:14**). Hence a date of 67 A. D. is commonly given for the date of writing.
- D. It is unknown where the writing was done, though it too might be from Babylon {mindful that this might be figurative for Rome} (**1 Peter 5:13**).

### III. Recipients Of The Letter.

- A. "...to them that have obtained like precious faith with us (**2 Peter 1:1**).
- B. Although not mentioned specifically, reference is made to those written to in **1 Peter (2 Peter 3:1)**.

- C. Therefore, it very well may be another general letter written to the saints in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bythynia (**1 Peter 1:1**).

#### IV. Purpose Of The Letter.

- A. I believe the theme for the letter to be **2 Peter 3:18**.
- B. Some key words are:
1. **“Grace” (2 Peter 1:2; 3:18).**
    - a. Enjoined upon recipients.
    - b. Desired by Peter for them to grow therein.
  2. **“Knowledge” (2 Peter 1:2, 3, 5, 6, 8; 2:20; 3:18).**
    - a. Writing so they can know certain necessary things.
    - b. Must know these things to be fruitful.
  3. **“Precious” (2 Peter 1:1, 4).**
    - a. Faith.
    - b. Promises.
  4. **“Diligence” (2 Peter 1:5, 10, 15 {“endeavor”}; 3:14). See 2 Tim. 2:15**
    - a. This word has the idea of haste or speed in doing something, of exerting oneself (Vine, Thayer).
    - b. It is never used with the idea of *“when I get time.”*
    - c. It is a call to zealously pursue, not to passively accept God’s favor.
- C. Chapters concern:
1. All has been given that is necessary for successful spiritual growth.
  2. Beware of false teaching and false teachers.
  3. Preparation for the sure return of the Lord.

**Conclusion:** This letter of Peter is a calm exhortation that the recipients can be successful and have the confidence that **“...if ye do these things, ye shall never fall” (2 Peter 1:10).**

# Greeting

## 2 Peter 1:2-4

**Introduction:** There are a lot of things common to the New Testament Epistles. Grace and peace seem to be a common wish on the part of the authors for the recipients. You also find that the authors immediately begin each letter by laying down an unshakable foundation principle and then move on to other things connected to it. **2 Peter** is no exception. In the greeting, which we will study today, are those very things.

### I. Like Precious Faith (v. 1).

- A. **“Like”** in the sense of common (**Jude 3**).
- B. **“Precious.”**
  - 1. *“Of equal value, held in high honor”* (Vine).
  - 2. Precious due to Christ.
    - a. He is a **“precious stone”** (**1 Peter 2:4-7**).
    - b. Salvation has been purchased with **“precious blood”** (**1 Peter 1:19**).
- C. **“Faith.”**
  - 1. Words to believe (**Jn. 20:30-31**).
  - 2. No other avenue for faith (**Rom. 10:17**).

### II. Grace And Peace (v. 2).

- A. **“Grace and Peace”** appear in greetings in many letters.
- B. Definitions:
  - 1. **“Grace”** is *“favor”* (Vine). God giving man something he does not deserve (R. Dunaway).
  - 2. **“Peace”** is *“harmonious relationship”* (Vine).
- C. While we could spend time discussing the concepts behind these words, we should rather notice that both are to be:
  - 1. **“Multiplied.”** Increase in these is expected and arrangements have been made for it to come to pass.
  - 2. **“...through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.”**
    - a. As stated earlier on points of faith.
    - b. **See 1 Jn. 2:3-5.** Know it and live it. *“It is only through the ‘knowledge’ which one has in connection with God and Christ, on the one hand, and living according to it, on the other hand, that one can have ‘grace and peace’ to be ‘multiplied’ in one’s life”* (Hamilton, p. 14).

### III. Supplying Every Need (v. 3).

- A. God has the ability (power) to provide everything
- B. What life? May I suggest two main things:
  - 1. A Savior (**1 John 4:14**).
  - 2. A saving message (**Rom. 1:16**).
- C. All of these are for our good use (**2 Tim. 3:16-17**).
- D. Again one sees a connection between this and knowledge.

### IV. The Advantages Of True Conversion (v. 4).

- A. “Conversion” is a “turning about” (Vine).
  - 1. Turning from sin (**Acts 26:18**).
  - 2. Turning to God (**Acts 26:18**).
- B. Escaped from sin (**cf. 2 Peter 2:20**).
- C. Become in fellowship with God.
  - 1. “**Partakers**” literally means “fellowshippers” (Vine). A-G has it as meaning “companion” here.
  - 2. [more in future lesson].
- D. Great promises are the advantage of being in Christ.
  - 1. Spiritual blessings are in Christ (**Eph. 1:3**).
  - 2. All promises are a result of being in Christ (**Col. 1:27**).
  - 3. [more in future lesson].

**Conclusion:** the outcome is that we have all the information that we need to tell us:

- 1. How to be saved.
- 2. How to conduct ourselves.
- 3. What to look forward to.

Are you a partaker of the divine nature? Become such by obeying the gospel right now.

# Exceeding Great And Precious Promises

*Ephesians 3:1-6*  
*(2 Peter 1:4)*

**Introduction:** There are surely many promises in the New Testament that may be described as **“exceeding great and precious.”** Yet, for the sake of time restraints, we will limit our study to those mentioned in this letter. Keep in mind that everything in this world is built upon promises. Spiritual life is no different. There would be nothing in it if there were no promises.

## I. What Is A Promise?

- A. *“A declaration assuring that one will or will not do something; a vow”* (American Heritage Dictionary, CD Rom version).
- B. *“...primarily a law denoting a summons...also meant an undertaking to do or give something...”* (Vine, p. 901).
- C. Albert Barnes wrote, *“A promise is an assurance on the part of another of some good for which we are dependent on him.”* Barnes went on to make these observations on a promise:
  - 1. What is promised is in the power of the promiser.
  - 2. The promiser can bestow a promise as he pleases.
  - 3. We cannot infer from any process of reasoning that it is his purpose to bestow it on us.
  - 4. The promise is obtained only from him, not by any effort on our part.
- D. These promises are:
  - 1. **“Great”** because of they have been given as a result of **“divine power”** (*2 Peter 1:3*).
  - 2. **“Precious”** because they are *“...especially dear, esteemed, valuable, and held in honor because of their worth and benefit to the ultimate welfare of one’s soul both here and hereafter”* (Hamilton, p. 27).

## II. Some Of The Promises.

- A. All things that pertain to life and godliness (**1:3**).
  - 1. Jesus promised all things to be revealed (**Jn. 14:26; 15:15**).
  - 2. Jesus is in control and head over all things (**Eph. 1:22**).
  - 3. The apostles were to see that all things were observed (**Matt. 28:20**).
  - 4. Cornelius and his household desired to hear all things (**Acts 10:33**).
  - 5. All things are for the spiritual benefit of mankind.
- B. Saints will be fruitful (**1:8**).
  - 1. Jesus spoke of fruit bearing (**Matt. 7:17-20; Jn. 15:5, 8**).
  - 2. Paul wrote of the expectation of fruit bearing (**Col. 1:3-6**).
  - 3. It is promised (and thus expected) that a disciple bear fruit.

- C. Forgiveness of sins **(1:9)**.
  - 1. Jesus came to save from sins **(Matt. 1:21; Lk. 19:10)**.
  - 2. He promised forgiveness of sins **(Lk. 24:47)**.
  - 3. Blood required for the forgiveness of sins **(Heb. 9:22; Matt. 26:28)**.
  - 4. Promised to those who repent and are baptized **(Acts 2:38)**.
- D. Entrance into the kingdom **(1:11)**.
  - 1. First preaching of Jesus was about the kingdom **(Matt. 4:17)**.
  - 2. Jesus promised that those born again will have entrance **(Jn. 3:5)**.
  - 3. Preaching Christ (gospel) includes kingdom **(Acts 8:5, 12)**.
  - 4. Kingdom - church - body are all the same **(Heb. 12:23, 28; Col. 1:18)**.
  - 5. Entrance by baptism **(1 Cor. 12:13; cf. "water," Jn. 3:5)**.
- E. Delivery for the godly **(2:9)**.
  - 1. He has promised to always be with us **(Matt. 28:20)**.
  - 2. There will always be a way of escape **(1 Cor. 10:13)**.
  - 3. Delivered Noah **(2 Peter 2:5)**.
  - 4. Delivered Lot **(2 Peter 2:6-8)**.
- F. The second coming **(3:4)**.
  - 1. Jesus promised He would return **(Jn. 14:1-4)**.
  - 2. At His ascension, the apostles were reminded of this **(Acts 1:11)**.
  - 3. Apostles taught this to others **(1 Thess. 4:13-18)**.
  - 4. He has not forgotten His promise **(2 Peter 3:9)** and the faithful wait for it **(2 Peter 3:13)**.
- G. Salvation **(3:15)**.
  - 1. There are general salvation promises **(Mk. 16:16)**.
  - 2. There is salvation from past sins (see passages on forgiveness)..
  - 3. There is salvation from wrath to come {eternally} eternally **(Rom. 13:11; Heb. 5:9; 1 Thess. 1:10)**.

**Conclusion:** Having these exceeding great and precious promises instill hope and confidence and bolsters the faith for those who are in Christ Jesus.

# Partakers Of The Divine Nature

*Romans 6:1-8*

*(2 Peter 1:4)*

**Introduction:** The wording of this expression is a curiosity to many. It is a cause of some unfortunate speculation. Some experience great difficulty in placing it in a time frame. Let me very positively say that this expression is not as difficult as some make it to be.

I believe that the context shows that one becomes a partaker of the divine nature when one becomes a Christian (hence, “...**having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust**”). It is in connection with the “**exceeding great and precious promises**” that are enjoyed by a disciple of Christ. This expression offers a unique look at a distinctive feature and advantage of a child of God.

## I. Understanding The Expression.

- A. “**Partakers**” - - same word as “**fellowship**,” here as a noun “*denoting a companion, partner, partaker*” (Vine). One who shares in something common.
- B. “**Divine Nature**” - - nature is “*the sum of innate properties and powers by which one person differs from others*” (Thayer). Here those distinctive characteristics and qualities are those that belong to the divine.
- C. Several things need to be understood here:
  - 1. This **does not** mean one becomes divine.
  - 2. This does mean that one **shares in** divine characteristics and qualities.
    - a. Some act horrified at such a thought, that man is capable of sharing in the divine nature.
    - b. Yet, man was created in God’s image (**Gen. 1:26-27; 1 Cor. 11:7**).
      - 1) “**Image**” - - Heb. - - “*a representative figure*” (Strong).
      - 2) “**Image**” - - Grk. - - “*representation, resemblance*” (Strong).
    - c. Surely we can understand that while Adam and Eve were in the garden they were partaking (having fellowship) with the divine nature without being divine themselves.

## II. The Concept.

- A. It was sin that caused the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden and from fellowship with God.
  - 1. Sin causes separation (*Isa. 59:1-2*).
  - 2. No darkness (sin) where God is (*1 Jn. 1:5-6*).
- B. A remedy for sin would allow fellowship once again (*1 Peter 2:25*).
- C. Several things are necessary for this to happen:
  - 1. God creating an opportunity for this to take place (*Jn. 1:12*).
  - 2. Man must be born again (*Jn. 3:3, 5*).
    - a. A rebirth as a new creature {creation, NKJV} (*Rom. 6:1-8*).
    - b. A completely changed anew creature (*2 Cor. 5:17*).
    - c. Born again of incorruptible see, the word of God (*1 Peter 1:23*).
  - 3. Old man and his deeds are put off (*Col. 3:5-9; Eph. 4:22*).
  - 4. New man is put on (*Col. 3:10-16a; Eph. 4:24*).
    - a. Several characteristics and qualities of God here:
    - b. “*Longsuffering,*” “*forgiveness,*” “*righteousness,*” “*holiness,*” etc.
- D. Additional instances of partaking of the divine nature.
  - 1. Crucified with Christ and living by the faith of the Son of God (*Gal. 2:20*).
  - 2. Mutual abiding (*Jn. 14:23; 15:4*).
  - 3. Continuing to partake (*1 Jn. 2:24*).
  - 4. Citizenship in heaven (*Phil. 3:20, NKJV*).

**Conclusion:** Are you “*conformed to the image of His Son*” (*Rom. 8:29*)? That comes when one is called and justified (*Rom. 8:30; cf. with 2 Thess. 2:14*). Are you a partaker of the divine nature? Opportunity to become such is now, do not let it pass.

# Growing In The Faith

2 Peter 1:5-11

**Introduction:** Earlier in this series we learned that Christians have “...*exceeding great and precious promises.*” This is due to having been “...*given all things that pertain to life and godliness...*” Yet, this does not mean that development of the Christian ends at that point. These “*all things*” contain explanations and instructions on how to grow in the faith in order to become useful servants.

Unfortunately some become wrapped up in what is to be added and involve themselves with such matters as “is this one at a time,” “is it to be kept in order?” By focusing on this the process of growth may become stifled. My view is to be adding them, be growing, and do not become so involved as to become sidetracked from the bigger picture.

## I. Requirements For Growth (vv. 5-7).

### A. Diligence.

1. “...*giving all diligence...*” is imperative and active. It is a command. The Christian is not passive, but actively involved in his own growth. Things are provided for it and those things are expected to be used.
  - a. Vine says of diligence, “...*earnestness, zeal, or sometimes the haste accompanying this...*” (p. 313).
  - b. Hence, a sense of urgency to develop must first be realized (**Matt. 5:6**).
2. Again, it is true that God has made this great opportunity possible. It is also true that the Christian will show his gratitude by taking full advantage of the opportunity and strive to grow into a useful, vibrant servant (**Phil. 2:12**).

### B. Addition (development).

1. “...*add to your faith...*”
  - a. Faith is the beginning point, the foundation (**Heb. 11:6**).
    - 1) A faith that works through love (**Gal. 5:6**).
    - 2) Faith is to be accompanied by works (**James 2:19-26**).
    - 3) Without works, faith is dead (**James 2:20, 26**).
  - b. “**Add**” means “...*to contribute to the expenses of a chorus*” (Pulpit, p. 4). One did this at his own expense and usually participated in the chorus as well, “...*furnish or provide (at one’s own expense)*” (A&G, p. 305).
  - c. “...*the Christian must be cooperative and hard working with God to produce in one’s own life those qualities which will be consistent with the character of God*” (Hamilton, p. 36).
2. The additions:
  - a. “**Virtue, knowledge, temperance {self-control}, patience {perseverance}, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity {love}.**”
  - b. Of course all of these are excellent characteristics that are very desirable for anyone. Let us notice that they will not only improve the character and moral fiber of the individual, but also will ultimately

improve his ability in dealing with others and, in effect, benefit them also. I suppose one can safely say that by adding these things to oneself, everyone will be benefited.

- c. These are not options like on an automobile. All are to be developed by and in a Christian.

## II. Consequences Of No Growth (v. 9).

- A. The one who fails to add these qualities is likened to one who is “...**blind, and cannot see afar off...**”
  1. “**Blind**” originally meant “...**darkened by smoke...blind...mentally blind**” (Thayer, p. 633). It conveys the idea of sight impaired by smoke, in which one cannot see clearly.
  2. The one who is blind in such a manner only sees what is close, will be shortsighted (our Eng. Word “myopic”), “...**cannot see afar off...**” Spiritual blindness is the result of a failure to grow. One only sees the things of the world (these are close by) and does not see the spiritual things (that are afar off).
  3. Jesus said, “**Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God**” (**Matt. 5:8**).
    - a. One is purified in obeying the truth (**1 Peter 1:22**).
    - b. The continued knowledge of God sharpens the vision (**Eph. 1:17-23**).

## III. Benefits Of Growth (vv. 8, 10-11).

- A. “...**neither be barren nor unfruitful...**” (v. 8).
  1. Not idle (“**barren**”), but industrious (**1 Cor. 15:58**).
  2. Fruitful for benefit to oneself and to the Lord (**Col. 1:9-12**).
- B. “...**make your calling and election sure...**” (v. 10).
  1. Christians are:
    - a. Called by the gospel (**2 Thess. 2:14**).
    - b. The elect of God (**Col. 3:12**).
  2. Such standing is proven (made sure) by diligent, industrious growth and service (**2 Tim. 2:15**).
- C. “...**ye shall never fall...**” (v. 10).
  1. One cannot fall if one is doing what the will of God requires (**Matt. 7:24-25**).
  2. Confidence, not arrogance (**1 Jn. 3:19-21**).
- D. “...**an entrance...into the everlasting kingdom...**” (v. 11).
  1. Eternal life is the end of faith (**1 Peter 1:9**).
  2. “**Well done, good and faithful servant...enter thou into the joy of thy lord**” (**Matt. 25:21, 23**).

**Conclusion:** The whole intent of this section is to remind Christians to be busy doing each one’s part in the growth process (**Eph. 4:16**).

# Add To Your Faith—Virtue

2 Peter 1:5

**Introduction:** Though first in the list, virtue is not necessarily more important or more imperative than the others listed. Virtue is something that is usually highly prized, though seldom understood. By its inclusion in this list, it becomes something a Christian must add to his faith in order to grow and be productive.

## I. What Is Virtue?

- A. Webster's Complete Reference Dictionary and Encyclopedia defines virtue as "*rectitude; strength; merit; efficacy; valor; chastity; legal face.*" Truly a varied definition.
- B. Vincent's Word Studies of the New Testament says the word virtue (ARETE) denotes "*excellence of any kind.*"
- C. W. E. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words defines the word virtue (ARETE) as, "*properly denotes whatever procures pre-eminent estimation for a person or thing; hence, intrinsic eminence, moral goodness, virtue...*" (b) "*of any particular moral excellence...where virtue is enjoined as an essential quality in the exercise of faith.*"
- D. Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament says of virtue (ARETE) "*any excellence of a person (in body or mind) or of a thing, an eminent endowment, property or quality*". In reference to 2 Peter 1:5, Mr. Thayer speaks of "*moral vigor.*"
- E. It appears as though virtue is a combination of moral uprightness with courage. It is true that in many cases these are inseparable. They are also a very strong example of a vigorous strength of character based upon steadfastness of faith.

## II. Usage.

- A. Our word virtue (ARETE) is only used two other times in the New Testament (**Phil. 4:8; 2 Peter 1:3**).
  - 1. **Philippians 4:8** is a passage which seeks to motivate Christians to better things. We are to "**think on these things.**" One thing is sure, we will grow like our thoughts (**Prov. 23:7**). Concerning **Philippians 4:8** David Lipscomb wrote in the Gospel Advocate Commentaries that "*This points to manliness, courage valor; but it is to be taken as inclusive of every form of moral excellence. Christians are to have the excellence that comes from the true, from the honourable, from the just, from the pure, from the lovely; but lest that should not cover the whole ground of excellence, he (Paul, tfs) adds, "If there be any virtue"*.

2. **2 Peter 1:3** is describing the effect that the gospel can have. We have all that is necessary to provide (spiritual) life and godliness. This same gospel will allow for uprightness of character and courage of conviction.
- B. A good illustration of what this word suggests can be found in those individuals who are moved to a position of moral vigor beyond what the world requires. The New Testament standard of morality is clearly beyond that of the world. Yet, it must be the standard for the child of God. It is the person who knows enough to try to be an example to the rest and yet realizes the gravity of doing so. We need brethren who will recognize the responsibility of being an example of moral courage to others (**1 Tim. 4:16; Phil. 2:15**).

### III. Application.

- A. Saints in New Testament times faced persecution that required courage in conviction (**1 Peter 1:6-7; Rev. 2:10**). Faith is often made pure in the crucible of tribulation (**James 1:12**).
- B. Paul apparently stood alone before King Agrippa (**Acts 26:6**). His conviction was firm.
- C. Moral uprightness is desperately needed in a world that has seemingly gone mad with decadence. Take courage, Noah was a shining light of virtue (**Gen. 6:8; 7:1**) in a world filled with abomination (**Gen. 6:5**).
- D. The Expositor's Greek New Testament has this good comment on adding virtue to faith: *"It is a warning against sluggishness and self-indulgence in the spiritual life."*

**Conclusion:** God requires that we give Him our best (**Rom. 12:1**). He does not ask an impossibility of us (**1 Jn. 5:3**). He does require that we be a virtuous people. We should begin at once to add to our faith virtue.

# Add To Your Faith—Knowledge

*2 Peter 1:5*

**Introduction:** In this series of lessons we are investigating the seven things found in **2 Peter 1:5-7** that are commanded to be added to our faith. Knowledge is the one we will study in this lesson.

I am sure that everyone recognizes the importance of adding knowledge to faith. Knowledge acquired makes faith alive and vigorous. Recall with me of how good it is to see zealous students of God's word in class or worship. Think of the aged saint who has devoted many years in the pursuit of knowledge and hasn't slacked one bit. These are those who are a vital part of any church. They will grow and be productive citizens in the Lord's kingdom.

## I. What Is Knowledge?

- A. Webster's Complete Reference Dictionary and Encyclopedia defines knowledge as *"clear perception of a truth or fact, erudition; skill from practice; acquaintance; information..."*
- B. W. E. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words renders knowledge (GNOSIS) as *"primarily a seeking to know, an enquiry, investigation, denotes in the New Testament, knowledge, especially of spiritual truth."* It is extremely important that we notice the last remark "especially of spiritual truth."
- C. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia says of knowledge (GNOSIS) *"Knowledge strictly is the apprehension by the mind of some fact or truth in accordance with its real nature; in a personal relation the intellectual act is necessarily conjoined with the element of affection and will (choice, love, favor, or, conversely, repugnance, dislike, etc.). Knowledge is distinguished from 'opinion' by its greater certainty. The mind is constituted with the capacity for knowledge, and the desire to possess and increase it...The highest knowledge possible to man is knowledge of God..."*
- D. Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament says that knowledge (GNOSIS) *"...signifies in general intelligence, understanding...the general knowledge of the Christian religion..."*

## II. Usage.

- A. Our word knowledge (GNOSIS) has a multiplied usage in the Bible (26 times) that largely centers around the practice of man trying to better himself, only in this case in the spiritual sense.
  - 1. The glory of God is revealed in the knowledge of Jesus Christ (**2 Cor. 4:6**).
  - 2. This knowledge is likened to a hidden treasure (**Col. 2:3**) of great value (**Rom. 11:33**).
  - 3. Yet it is a knowledge that is readily available (**Rom. 15:14; 2 Peter 3:18**).

- B.** We can grow in knowledge.
1. Christians are to grow from babes (**Heb. 5:13; 1 Cor. 3:1-3**) into mature Christians capable of much service to God (**Heb. 5:14**).
  2. But, how is this possible?
    - a. The babe in Christ desires knowledge in order to grow (**1 Peter 2:2**).
    - b. That word is able to make one perfect (**2 Tim. 3:16-17**, the word “**perfect**” indicates maturity, complete, full-grown as in **Heb. 5:14**).
    - c. Jesus said that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are blessed and shall be filled (**Matt. 5:6**). This appetite needs satisfaction. “**Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God**” (**Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4**). Man needs the word of righteousness (**Heb. 5:13**) to satisfy his spiritual hunger. Just as we need a daily regimen of physical food to sustain our physical bodies, we need a steady diet of spiritual food to keep us spiritually alive. Without food both will waste away and die!
  3. Jesus grew in four ways (spiritually).
    - a. Spirit (**Lk. 2:40**).
    - b. Wisdom (**Lk. 2:40, 52**).
    - c. Grace or favor with God (**Lk. 2:40, 52**).
    - d. Favor with men (**Lk. 2:52**).
    - e. He IS our example (**1 Peter 2:21**).
  4. A person who decides that the Bible cannot be understood is denying what the Bible is all about. It is written so it CAN be understood.
    - a. Paul says we can understand what he understood (**Eph. 3:3-4**).
    - b. Peter acknowledges that some things might be hard to understand (**2 Peter 3:16**). Yet this does not mean impossible to understand!
    - c. John clearly says that the record has been written with the purpose of being understood (**Jn. 20:31**).
  5. Sometimes the person who decides that the Bible cannot be understood just doesn't want to put out the time and effort required to understand.
    - a. We all have:
      - 1) 24 hours in a day.
      - 2) Opportunities to study.
      - 3) Same gospel.
    - b. It is just a matter of DOING IT!

### **III. Application.**

- A.** But why do we need to have knowledge? Because ignorance of God's will won't excuse!
1. Ignorance alienates from God (**Eph. 4:18**).
  2. All are commanded to repent (**Acts 17:30**).
  3. Paul prayed that ignorant folks might be saved (**Rom. 10:1-3**).
- B.** Therefore, we need to COME to a saving knowledge of the truth (**Jn. 8:32**).

1. In doing so, we profess our love for Christ (**Eph. 3:19**).
- C. One's initial faith comes by hearing (**Rom. 10:17**). And yet, there is more to be added to that faith. This comes after one has become a Christian and relates to growth and development. This knowledge is also added by hearing (**Matt. 28:20**). We have inspired writers to direct Christians in the way they should go. We read, hear, read, study, and apply the scriptures.
- D. There are surely a great number of people who constantly seek knowledge in order to better themselves in some material way. The person with a BA degree seeks an MA, the MA seeks a PhD, etc. Even star athletes are constantly seeking bits of information in order to hone their already formidable skills. Any achievement may look easy on the surface, but it is usually the result of much hard work. To better oneself spiritually takes the same hard work. God has given us all that is necessary (**2 Peter 1:3**) and has left it up to us to make this application (**2 Tim. 2:15**).
- E. Knowledge is not something to acquire and then selfishly keep. Knowledge is to be shared with others (**2 Tim. 2:2**). One must be faithful, with a knowledge of inspired scripture, and with the desire to teach.

**Conclusion:** The Bible is the only source book for knowledge. Commentaries, papers, workbooks, study guides, etc. are not to be substitutes for the Bible, but should only serve as aids in understanding its teachings. The Bible alone is to be our authoritative guide in spiritual matters. Knowledge comes by reading, discussion, meditation, and application. Include fervent prayer, and one might even obtain wisdom along with his knowledge.

# Add To Your Faith—Temperance

## 2 Peter 1:6

**Introduction:** This is a continuation of a study of **2 Peter 1:5-7**. We need to recognize that we are commanded to add temperance to our faith.

Temperance is sometimes a word associated with a group of zealots who formed themselves into a “League” bearing that name. They spent much of their time raiding saloons and destroying storehouses of liquors. Surely their intent was noble, but their actions were perhaps misguided!

As we study this topic, let us pay close attention and meditate upon just how temperance can permit us to grow spiritually.

### I. What Is Temperance?

- A. In newer translations this word (ENKRATEIA) is translated as “*self-control*”. This is probably a more accurate usage.
- B. Webster’s Illustrated Dictionary says that temperance is “*Moderation, self-control, and restraint from overindulgence of any kind.*”
- C. W. E. Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words defines temperance (ENKRATEIA) as “*...from... strength...self-control is the preferable rendering, as temperance is now limited to one form of self-control; the various powers bestowed by God upon man are capable of abuse; the right use demands the controlling power of the will under the operation of the Spirit of God...in 2 Peter 1:6 it follows knowledge, suggesting that what is learnt requires to be put into practice.*”
- D. Young’s Analytical Concordance renders temperance (ENKRATEIA) as “*self-restraint, continence.*”
- E. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia renders temperance (ENKRATEIA) as, “*self-mastery.*”
- F. Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament says temperance (ENKRATEIA) is “*self-control...the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, especially his sensual appetites.*”

### II. Usage.

- A. Our word is used in the New Testament as follows:
  - 1. As a fruit of the Spirit (**Gal. 5:23**). It is interesting that it is found in both places. Temperance is not only to be added, but should be displayed in our lives as fruit.
  - 2. When Paul was brought before Felix he reasoned of temperance (**Acts 24:25**). This was something very necessary in those times. In particular, marital infidelity was high. Josephus relates that Drusilla (Felix’s wife, **Acts**

- 24:24**) left her husband for Felix. A clear case for a need of self-control. Likewise today, many a sin comes the same kind of a lack of self-control.
3. In **Titus 1:8** temperance is listed as a qualification for an elder. That makes good sense, doesn't it? Who wants an elder who is out of control? Elders are to be examples to the flock (**1 Peter 5:3**). An example of self-control is worth much more than the words anyone could write.
  4. Paul refers to the athletes who train with much temperance in **1 Cor. 9:25**. Such athletes exhibits self-control by focusing attention into one channel. Exercise, practice, thoughts, diet, rest, etc. are all brought under control that the mastery of the games might become a reality. Those athletes who have long successful careers are those who have devoted much time to self-control.
  5. Paul points out that it was good not to marry (**1 Cor. 7:8**). But if some cannot exhibit temperance ("**cannot contain**"), let them marry (**1 Cor. 7:9**).
- B.** Other sources of comments.
1. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia makes these remarks on temperance. *"The principle involved is that of the concentration of all man's powers and capabilities upon the one of doing God's will, in and through whatever calling God appoints, and the renunciation of everything either wholly or to whatever degree necessary, however innocent or useful it may be in its proper place, that interferes with one's highest efficiency in this calling (1 Cor. 10:31)"*.
  2. Guy Woods, in the Gospel Advocate Commentaries, says *"The word (self-control, tfs) is derived from EN and KRATES, "one who holds himself in." It denotes self-government, discipline, the ability of one to control his own life. It is acquired through the exercise of discernment, the knowledge by which one differentiates between right and wrong, and thus develops from it. One possessed of such knowledge and being thus equipped to identify evil is able to avoid it"*.
  3. O. C. Birdwell noted in Guardian of Truth, Vol. XXVI, No. 7, page 102 that *"Peter is not speaking of moderation in a questionable habit, but rather he is speaking of all thoughts and actions in every facet of one's life, and these thoughts and actions being kept within the teaching of Christ"*.

### **III. Application.**

- A.** We are in a time where self-control is still needed. Timothy (**1 Tim. 4:16**), Paul (**1 Cor. 9:27**), elders (**Acts 20:28**), wives (**1 Peter 3:2**), etc. all needed to practice self-control. So it is today.
- B.** David sinned with Bathsheba because he lacked temperance (**2 Sam. 11:1-4**).
- C.** On the other hand, Joseph used self-control when he fled fornication (**1 Cor. 6:18; Gen. 39:7-12**).
- D.** Sometimes we are going to have to just walk away from questionable things (**1 Thess. 5:22**).

- E. We have a great many areas in which self-control must be displayed in order to fulfill the expectations of God. (These are taken from a source that I have forgotten, tfs)
1. Family. In the family relationship self-control must be shared by all parties (***Ephesians 6:1-4***).
  2. Attending assemblies. We may have to give up the visitors, ball games, fishing pole to attend (***Heb. 10:25***).
  3. Giving. We may have to control our material desires in order to give as we prosper and do so effectively (***1 Cor. 16:2***).
  4. Associations. There may be some folks we will not be able to hang around with anymore (***1 Cor. 15:33***).
  5. Opinions. We will have to place value on the word of God and control our opinions (***1 Peter 4:11***).
  6. Life style. An area wherein we may have to make several adjustments.
    - a. Appearance. Modesty by both men AND women.
    - b. Employment. What we do for a living may need changing.
    - c. Hobbies. Our entertainment may need purifying.
    - d. Bad habits. Many of these will disappear with self-control.
    - e. Speech. Perhaps the area where self-control can do the most possible good.
    - f. Demeanor. Work on temper, personality, friendliness, etc.

**Conclusion:** Let us not dismiss the value of adding temperance to our faith. Even the very idea of the adding itself requires a measure of self-control. Each person has control of his or her own situation. The utilization of self-control will depend upon that person.

Remember: when self-control is ignored, temptation has a better chance to get started and blossom into full-grown sin (***James 1:12-16***).

# Add To Your Faith—Patience

## 2 Peter 1:6

**Introduction:** We now enter the fifth installment in our studies on the things we are commanded to add to our faith (**2 Peter 1:5-7**).

It is sometimes admitted by many folks that they have a lack of patience. In some it is easily apparent that such is indeed the case. When we think of patience in this way we are usually referring to the knack of sitting back and waiting for someone or something to come about. The New Testament usage includes that idea and much more.

### I. What Is Patience?

- A. Webster's Complete Reference Dictionary and Encyclopedia defines patience as *"the quality of being patient or calmly enduring"* and patient is defined as *"suffering pain, hardship, affliction, insult, etc., with calmness and equanimity; continuance of labor; persevering; waiting with calmness"*. Truly these would be admirable qualities in any person.
- B. W. E. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words says that patience (HUPOMONE) is a compound word (HUPO--under, MENO--to abide) meaning *"to abide under...(a) in trials, generally (Lk. 21:19)...(b) in trials incident to service in the gospel (2 Tim. 3:10)...(c) under chastisement (Heb. 12:7)...(d) under undeserved affliction (1 Peter 2:20)...(e) in well doing (Rom. 12:7)...(f) in fruit bearing (Lk. 8:15)...(f) in running the appointed race (Heb. 12:1)..."*
- C. Young's Analytical Concordance says that patience (HUPOMONE) is to be understood as *"endurance, continuance"*.
- D. Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament says that patience (HUPOMONE) is *"steadfastness, constancy, endurance; in the New Testament the characteristic of a man who is unswerved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to faith and piety by even the greatest trials and suffering..."*
- E. A. T. Robertson writing in Word Pictures says that patience (HUPOMONE) is an *"old and common word for remaining under 'staying power,' as in Colossians 1:11"*.

### II. Usage.

- A. Patience is used in various different ways in the New Testament (see Vine's definition in I, A).
- B. Patience always carries with it the idea of something which is to come. Obviously a thing continued in must have some motivation behind it. This motivation can be found in an awaiting upon the blessings of **Philippians 3:14** even though the word **"patience"** is absent in this verse. We are to look to God for promises and endure faithfully until such time as reward shall come

**(Rom. 8:25; James 5:7; Rev. 2:10).** We are to patiently stand ready for this reward to come at any time **(Matt. 24:42-44).**

- C. O. C. Birdwell wrote in Guardian of Truth, Vol. XXVI, No. 8, page 117 that *“Patience is not a matter of sitting down to accept and endure. It has a forward look. Jesus, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross **(Heb. 12:2)**”*.
1. Abraham continued because he looked for a city **“whose builder and maker is God” (Heb. 11:10).**
  2. Paul states that his reasons for persevering in service to God was due to the promises of God **(2 Tim. 4:6-8).**
  3. Our patience today will bring our souls to salvation **(Lk. 21:19).**

### **III. Application.**

- A. The Hebrew writer points out the need for patience in order to receive the promise **(Heb. 10:36)**. Conversely, those who fail to have patience are described in **Hebrews 10:38**. A person is either one or the other. There is no middle ground.
- B. Servants of God are to be patient **(1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:24).**
- C. The adding of patience will help bring one to spiritual maturity **(James 1:3-4).**
- D. Some turn back, exhibiting a lack of patience **(Lk. 9:62)**. Sometimes those who are converted quit when they realize that a life-long service is required. Teaching on faithfulness and moral uprightness has caused many a person to despair of sound doctrine and turn back to the world. These fail to add patience to their faith.
- E. We have many examples others who were patient **(Heb. 6:12)**. In **Hebrews 6:15** Abraham is singled out as one had patience to see things beyond his sight! Some of the promises given to Abraham did not materialize in his lifetime. Truly faithful Abraham walked by faith and not by sight **(2 Cor. 5:7)** in his patience.

**Conclusion:** Persecution, despair, contentions, etc. are not to stop us from continuing in our faith. Many of these things will come anyway whether we are Christians or not. Even then these things are common to all and a great many people overcome them to do service in the kingdom.

**“Remember Lot’s wife” (Lk. 17:32).** Here was a person who hesitated while following the path to safety. She was unwillingly leaving behind the city. This coupled with her lack of interest in what was ahead proved to be disastrous. May the same fate be far removed from any of us. We close this lesson with an exhortation to add patience to faith and with the words of the apostle Paul:

**“Therefore, my beloved brethren,  
be ye steadfast, unmovable,  
always abounding in the work of the Lord,  
forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord”  
1 Corinthians 15:58**

# Add To Your Faith—Godliness

## 2 Peter 1:6

**Introduction:** We now investigate the adding of godliness to our faith in a continuance of our study of **2 Peter 1:5-7**.

Godliness is required by God on the part of the followers of Jesus Christ. Many associate this as to being divine like God. This seems to agitate some who think that man is inherently sinful, has to sin, and cannot keep from sinning. The point of controversy is that such an one could not be God-like (implying becoming divine). This objection presumes that godliness means to be divine and it doesn't. So we can dismiss this imagined problem and fully investigate this subject.

### I. What Is Godliness?

- A. Webster's Complete Reference Dictionary and Encyclopedia defines godliness as "*piety, devotion.*"
- B. Young's Analytical Concordance renders godliness (EUSEBEIA) as "*piety, reverence.*"
- C. W. E. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words says that godliness (EUSEBEIA) is "*...from EU, well, and SEBOMAI, to be devout, denotes that piety which, characterized by a Godward attitude, does that which is well-pleasing to Him.*"
- D. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia says "Godliness, as denoting character and conduct determined by the principle of love or fear of God in the heart, is the summing up of genuine religion."
- E. Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament has godliness (EUSEBEIA) as "*...reverence, respect; in the Bible everywhere piety toward God, godliness.*"
- F. So, we see that godliness (EUSEBEIA) does not mean to be divine. It means to be devoted to God and His will.

### II. Usage.

- A. As seen above, everywhere in the Bible godliness refers to the practice of bringing into focus our compliance to God's will.
  - 1. This might be thought of as "**reasonable service**" (**Rom. 12:1**) rendered unto God.
  - 2. God desires His children to be devout (**Mal. 2:15**).
  - 3. Of the 14 times this word occurs in the New Testament, 10 times it is found in Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus. The other 4 times it is found in 2 Peter.
  - 4. It is easy to get in the habit of being "religiously right," but spiritually wrong. This was one of the problems of the Pharisees (**Matt. 5:20**) and is the

problem in so many churches today, a clear lack of reverent devotion toward God.

5. There is a need to seek godliness (**1 Tim. 4:7-8**).
  6. Paul says there is a doctrine promoting godliness (**1 Tim. 6:3; Titus 1:1**).
  7. Those who are corrupted by the things of the world see godliness as a means of gain (**1 Tim. 6:4-5**). Yet, we are to be content and godly. This is great gain (**1 Tim. 6:6**). Let us never use our service to God as a means of material gain. The things of a material nature will all perish (**2 Peter 3:10**). In light of this, godliness should be highly prized and diligently sought (**2 Peter 3:11**).
  8. God has promised to reward the godly and punish the ungodly (**2 Pet. 2:9**).
  9. **1 Timothy 3:16**. As something now revealed it can be added to the individual.
  10. Godliness in **2 Peter 3:11** is plural, indicating acts of godliness.
  11. Therefore, those who are serving in godliness are going to be sometimes ridiculed by the world (**2 Tim. 3:12**). But let us not allow that ridicule to stand in our way of service to God in a godly way.
- B. Some comments on godliness.
1. Guy Woods in the Gospel Advocate Commentaries adds that godliness is “...*humble reverence and deep piety toward God.*” Key on the word “*humble.*” Truly a lack of humility is a great deterrent to godliness. Pride must be eliminated for godliness to be added (**Acts 20:19**).
  2. J. W. Shepherd, in the same Commentaries, writes “*Godliness is not merely an inward holiness, but an operative, active piety, which, springing from an intense love for God, manifests itself in love for His creatures. This godliness transfigures and illumines with its divine radiance all busy, active life, every condition, every rank in all ages. This surely is that to which every faithful child of God should seek to attain.*”
  3. O. C. Birdwell wrote in Guardian of Truth, Vol. XXVI, No, 9, p. 134 that “**Peter says, ...His divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue...**” (**2 Peter 1:3**). According to this passage, the following seems to be correct reasoning: (1) All that pertains to godliness has been revealed. (2) All that God has revealed is found in the scriptures (**2 Timothy 3:16-17; Jude 3**). Conclusion: If it is not found in scripture it does not pertain to godliness. With this fact before us, let us consider the following:  
*Human religious names, human creeds, and human religious practices are not in scripture; consequently, they do not pertain to godliness. Worship offered to God that is not authorized in scripture does not pertain to godliness. Human benevolent institutions and missionary societies, built and supported by the church, to do the work of the church, do not pertain to godliness because they are not found in scripture.*

*Let us always remember that godliness involves serving and worshipping God according to His dictates.”*

- C. We all know and appreciate those employees who sometimes pass unnoticed. These are the ones who are the backbone of many companies. They are always unassuming, humble, devoted, loyal, and faithful. Many times these characteristics are brought out at retirement dinners and the person who exhibits these qualities receives a reward. So it is with the Christian. At the judgment the reward will be given to the Christian who has displayed godly attributes in a life of humble service.

### **III. Application.**

- A. I think that we can see the connection between godliness and worship clearly. We should also be able to see a like connection between godliness and obedience. Without worship and obedience directed toward God, it is all a hollow mockery! (Think on **John 4:24** in this regard) If our worship and obedience is only to appear orthodox in the sight of certain men, we have missed it all!

**Conclusion:** Yes, we are to be godly in a perverse generation. Despite all that comes our way we should be shining lights (**Matt. 5:14-16**). Others should see the godliness in our every action and seek the faith that motivates one to add godliness to it.

# Add To Your Faith—Brotherly Kindness

## 2 Peter 1:7

**Introduction:** We are now in the sixth lesson in a series of studies on 2 Peter 1:5-7 with the topic of brotherly kindness. This needs to be added to a Christian's faith. It is not optional. This action is different from the others. While other attributes are perhaps indirectly related toward others, this one is DIRECTLY so. One cannot exhibit brotherly kindness without offering such toward someone else, it cannot be shown toward oneself. Brotherly kindness is something to be shared with another. When the work of the Lord is successful, brotherly kindness is abundantly evident. When the work is not being accomplished, it is also evident by its absence. Think about it!

### I. What Is Brotherly Kindness?

- A. W. E. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words says that brotherly kindness (PHILADELPHIA) is "...a brotherly relation, and so, the community possessed of this relation, a brotherhood..."
- B. Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament has brotherly kindness (PHILADELPHIA) as "*the love of brothers (or sisters), brotherly love,...the love which Christians cherish for each other as "brethren"...love of the brethren..."*
- C. Let us also understand that the word PHILEO (affection) is used instead of AGAPE (love). So kindness or affection is probably the better rendering.

### II. Usage.

- A. Brotherly kindness can best be understood by the meaning of the word "brotherly." In what sense is this word used? This will necessitate a conclusion that can be reached by looking at the other passages in which this word is found. Since it is a compound word, we will have to restrict our investigation to that form:
  - 1. **Romans 12:10**--writing to the Romans it is used in the sense of interaction.
  - 2. **1 Thessalonians 4:9**--same as above.
  - 3. **Hebrews 13:1**--this passage is a generic exhortation.
  - 4. **1 Peter 1:22**--here we see that it definitely refers to the brethren. I suggest that these brethren are those who have "**purified their souls in obeying the truth**" and are "**born again**" (v. 23).
  - 5. I favor the idea that Peter is referring to Christians when he speaks of "**brotherly kindness**" in **2 Peter 1:7**.
- B. Guy N. Woods, commenting on **2 Peter 1:7** in the Gospel Advocate Commentaries, says that "*Brotherly kindness is from the Greek word, PHILADELPHIA, literally, love of the brethren. As God is our Father, his children are our brethren, and the obligation to love them is clear and explicit:*

*“And whosoever loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him” (1 John 5:1).”*

- C. J. W. Shepherd, commenting on **Romans 12:10** in Gospel Advocate Commentaries, remarks that *“The duty is one which the Savior intended should be regarded as the badge of discipleship. He said: “By this shall all men know ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35). Such is the love that the disciples are commanded the universal brotherhood of the redeemed.”*
- D. David Lipscomb, also in the Gospel Advocate Commentaries, makes these salient comments on **1 Thessalonians 4:9** *“These words distinguished a remarkable characteristic of the early church. They describe how the first Christians regarded themselves as the members of one family. They felt like the members of one household, like the nearest kindred in one home, and in the spirit of home life they shared their possessions. This was only possible so long as the family spirit pervaded the church. Circumstances altered the habits of the church as it grew in numbers and spread over a wide area. But all through Paul’s Epistles the same family affection of Christians is apparent. Love of the brethren one for the other is a leading feature of Christianity. They showed their love by deeds of kindness and helpfulness to each other. The whole gospel taught them to love one another. As Christ loved the brethren, so in following him they did the same.”*
- E. Please consider this. It is true that we are to honor all men. But, we are to love the brotherhood (**1 Peter 2:17; 1 Jn. 4:20-21**). This is what the early church did (**Acts 2:44-47**). A most excellent example to follow.

### III. Application. (Borrowed from PORTER SERMON OUTLINES)

- A. We can show brotherly kindness through our conversation.
  - 1. Kindness is in the tongue (**Prov. 18:21**).
  - 2. Not just what to say, but also how to say it (**Prov. 15:1; Col. 4:6**).
- B. We can show brotherly kindness through sympathy.
  - 1. Interaction (**1 Cor. 12:25-26**).
  - 2. The Great Example (**Matt. 14:14**).
- C. We can show brotherly kindness by preferring one another.
  - 1. Do good especially to brethren (**Gal. 6:10**).
- D. We can show brotherly kindness respecting the conscience of another.
  - 1. Not to cause a stumble (**Rom. 14:13, 21**).
- E. We can show brotherly kindness by being good.
  - 1. Overcome evil with good (**Rom. 12:17-21**).
- F. We can show brotherly kindness by restoring those who sin.
  - 1. Our friends are those who tell us of our faults (**Matt. 18:15**).
  - 2. To show an interest in restoring one is to show kindness (**James 5:19-20**).
  - 3. Restoring one in the spirit of meekness (**Gal. 6:1**).

- G. We can show brotherly kindness by practicing the Golden Rule.  
1. In like manner (**Lk. 6:31**).

**Conclusion:** Yes, we are to add brotherly kindness to our faith. It will be exhibited in action. The fruit will be evident. The world is always watching the church. Usually the first thing mentioned by the worldly is the treatment of each other by members of the church, both pro and con. Jesus knew this for He taught:

***“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another;  
as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.  
By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples,  
if ye have love one to another.”  
(John 13:34-35)***

# Add To Your Faith—Charity

*2 Peter 1:7*

**Introduction:** We now come to a study of the last of the things that we are to add to our faith. It is charity (or love). Because this is last does not mean that this is the least in importance. Each item in our study has been significant and necessary for growth. This one is similar to brotherly kindness in that it is to be shared with others. But it differs from brotherly kindness in that it is toward all men. Let us briefly examine charity in order that we might better serve in the kingdom and to help our fellow man in learning the truth.

## I. What Is Charity?

- A. One generally notice that in newer versions this word is rendered as “*love*.”
- B. By love we are not talking about the usual understanding of a demonstration of emotion or sexual activity. We are not discussing love as being the sappy, mushy sentiment of fawning all over each other. We are discussing love in the Bible's sense of the word.
- C. One time a complaint was directed toward the King James using the word “*charity*” instead of “*love*.” It was opined that charity was something given away. Yet, is that not what love is to be--given away? Sorry, charity is the RIGHT word, we need to see more of it being given away!
- D. There are two words of KOINE Greek that are usually translated as charity or love in the KJV. They are:
  - 1. PHILEO--affection, kindness. This is the word used in our previous lesson.
  - 2. AGAPAO--a stronger term, showing devotion, singleness of interest and attention. This is the word used in **2 Peter 1:7** and the one we are interested in.
- E. W. E. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words says that love (AGAPAO) is used in the New Testament “(a) to describe the attitude of God toward His Son (Jn. 17:26); the human race, generally (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8); and to such as believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, particularly (Jn. 14:21); (b) to convey His will to His children concerning their attitude one toward another (Jn. 13:34), and toward all men (1 Thess. 3:12; 1 Cor. 16:14; 2 Peter 1:7); (c) to express the essential nature of God (1 Jn. 4:8).”
- F. Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament has love (AGAPAO) as “...to have a preference for, wish well to, regard the welfare of (Eph. 5:25)...to take pleasure in the thing, prize it above other things, be unwilling to abandon it or do without it (Jn. 14:23)...to welcome with desire, long for (2 Tim. 4:8)...”
- G. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia says of love (AGAPAO) “...whether used of God or man, is an earnest and anxious desire for, and an active and beneficent interest in, the well being of the one loved.”

## II. Usage.

- A. The word AGAPAO, or its derivatives, appears 116 times in the New Testament. It is translated as “love” 87 times and as “charity” 29 times. There appears to be no reason for this distinction. The choice seems to have depended upon the discretion of the KJV translators. As we noted before, using the alternative word “charity” does not diminish, but rather increases, an appreciation for the act.
- B. Love is displayed by God and man:
1. God.
    - a. He is love (**1 Jn. 4:8**).
    - b. He has demonstrated His love (**Jn. 3:16**).
  2. Man’s love to go in two directions (**Lk. 10:27**).
    - a. Toward God (**1 Jn. 5:3**).
    - b. Toward men (**1 Peter 1:22; Matt. 5:43-48**).
      - 1) Of course, we are to love the brethren (**1 Peter 2:17**).
      - 2) This is the example of our Lord (**Lk. 23:34**), of Stephen (**Acts 7:60**), of Paul (**Rom. 10:1-3**).
      - 3) When Jesus explained about loving a neighbor He used a Samaritan (despised by the Jews) as one who was truly a loving neighbor (**Lk. 10:30-37**).
- C. J. W. McGarvey, in *The Fourfold Gospel*, says of **John 3:16**: “It is a lesson as to God’s love:
1. *Its magnitude--he gave his only begotten Son.*
  2. *Its reach--he gave to a sinful world (Rom. 5:8).*
  3. *Its impartiality--he gives to whomsoever; that is, to all alike (Matt. 5:45; Rev. 22:17).*
  4. *Its beneficial richness--it blesses with life eternal.*
  5. *Its limitations--it is nowhere said that God so loves that he will save unbelievers.”*
- D. **“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you” (Jn. 15:13-14).** Clearly Jesus is giving an example of sacrifice in the putting of others first which is the supreme act of love.

## III. Application.

(I think that the best way to show the application of love (charity) is by examining **1 Cor. 13:4-8**).

- A. **“Suffereth long.”** An enduring love (**Eph. 4:2**).
- B. **“Kind.”** Love in action (**Eph. 4:32**).
- C. **“Envieth not.”** Rather rejoices in the success of others (**Rom. 12:15**).

- D. ***“Vaunteth not itself, not puffed up.”*** Humble (***Matt. 6:1-6***).
- E. ***“Doth not behave unseemly.”*** Mannerly, good behavior (***1 Cor. 14:33***).
- F. ***“Seeketh not her own.”*** Unselfish (***Heb. 13:5***).
- G. ***“Is not easily provoked.”*** Good control of temper (***James 1:19***).
- H. ***“Thinketh no evil.”*** Fair, just (***Col. 3:13***).
- I. ***“Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but in truth.”*** The wicked rejoice in sin (***Rom. 1:32***). The righteous rejoice in truth (***2 Jn. 4***).
- J. ***“Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, never faileth.”*** Anything else is included in these.

**Conclusion:** Love is indeed the more excellent way (***1 Cor. 12:31***). In it our worship and obedience is directed toward pleasing God. In it our work in teaching our fellow man is exhibited. As one has said, *“Love isn’t love until we give it away.”* We need to share it with others as God has shared it with us.

# Make Your Calling And Election Sure

2 Peter 1:8-11

**Introduction:** Verses 5-7 start with the expression “...giving all diligence, add...”

These words strongly imply personal action and, we should also realize, a corresponding personal responsibility in them. It is very simple: do them and success; don't do them and failure. These points are brought out very clearly in our text.

[Note: The doctrine of “once save, always saved” is soundly defeated in our text]

## I. Spiritual Growth (vv. 8-9).

### A. “...if these things be in you, and abound...”

1. “**These things**” are the things of vv. 5-7.
2. A Christian is to “**abound**” in them. This word means “**increase**” (Strong). The NIV has “... **if you possess these qualities in increasing measure...**” The obvious teaching is for a continuous increase.
3. Other teaching:
  - a. **Mark 4:8.** In the parable of the sower, the result has increase. The different amounts indicates the difference in reception. Nevertheless, **all had some** increase. **No** increase is unacceptable.
  - b. **2 Cor. 10:15.** Faith is to be increased. “**These things**” are to be added to faith (v. 5).
  - c. **2 Peter 3:18.** In the last passage in this letter, Peter is still wishing for their increase.
4. The one who is diligent in achieving increase is described as “... **ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful...**” “**Barren**” means “**idle**” (ASV). One who is increasing is hardly idle and is also fruitful (**Gal 5:22-23**).
5. In what area this increase is to be is specified with “... **in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**”

### B. “... he that lacketh these things...” We know that there is the possibility of no increase. This is now addressed:

1. “... **is blind, and cannot see afar off...**”
  - a. “**Blind**” is a word that means “**smoky**.” In this case like looking through smoke. Vision is limited. One squints in an attempt to see and “**cannot see afar off**” (MYOPAZO, “**shortsighted**,” Earle, p. 445). This is spiritual vision that is impaired due to a lack of increase in faith. (**cf. Heb. 5:12-14**).
  - b. This one is spiritually blind sees only a little way into the gospel. The greater and deeper things are unseen by him who is spiritually blind. His sight is upon the material things instead of the spiritual things (**2 Cor. 4:18; 5:7**).
2. “...**hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.**”

- a. Not only is there a problem with vision, but a “spiritual amnesia” is also an affliction on the part of the one who fails to increase.
- b. The conviction that once burned so brightly in the heart at obedience to the gospel of Christ has been extinguished. A lack of appreciation and ingratitude has moved in where conviction once was.
  - 1) It is sad to see those who were once zealous for the cause of Christ fallen to such a state that it is impossible to discern any difference now from them before they obeyed the gospel (**Heb. 10:29**).
  - 2) Fire must be tended everyday to keep it burning (**Phil. 3:13-14**).

## II. A Sure Way (v. 10).

### A. “... give diligence...”

- 1. “**Diligence**” is “*be zealous or eager, take pains, make every effort,*” AG, p. 771).
- 2. Obviously, Peter has returned to the point of making an effort. To be an approved workman of God, one must be diligent. “**Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth**” (2 Tim. 2:15, NKJV).

### B. “... make your calling and election sure...”

- 1. This “**calling**” can be thought of as an “*invitation*” (Strong). That invitation comes through the gospel (2 Thess 2:14; Luke 14:7-24 {NKJV has “*invited*” for “*bidden*”}).
- 2. “**Election**” is “*divine selection*” (Strong).
- 3. One is not elected unless called. One answers the calling by obedience to the gospel commands. Then that one is elected of God.
- 4. To make it “**sure**” is to be increasing, by adding to one’s faith (Eph. 4:1).

### C. “... for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.”

- 1. This is the way which is right and cannot be wrong.
- 2. This shows that it is conditional and also offers assurance and instills confidence to the recipients (Heb. 3:14; 1 Jn. 3:19-21; Heb. 6:11-12).

## III. An Eternal Result (v. 11).

### A. “... an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly...”

- 1. A narrow way is difficult to find (Matt. 7:14). Yet, it becomes easy to find with help of a trusted guide.
- 2. “**Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me**” (Jn. 14:6). The entrance and directions are provided by Jesus Christ.

### B. “... into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

- 1. This is where the narrow way and those directions leads.
- 2. A place of preservation (2 Tim. 4:18).

**Conclusion:** Be obedient to the faith and make increase unto it. Start today!

# A Reminder

## 2 Peter 1:12-15

**Introduction:** Peter is very aware of his own personal circumstances. He now wants to leave his readers with reminders of their privileges and duties as Christians.

### I. Remembrance.

- A. Three times Peter mentions a “**remembrance**” {“**reminder,**” NKJV} (2 Peter 1:12-13, 15).
1. He has a personal feeling of responsibility to do so (“...**I will not be negligent...**,” 2 Peter 1:12).
  2. The number of times he uses the first person singular “**I**” shows this feeling.
  3. He plans to do this as long as he remains “...**in this tabernacle**” (2 Peter 1:13).
- B. Memory.
1. Sometimes folks choose to forget. They block out the truth.
    - a. Thus they are self-deceived.
    - b. Because fallen (Rev. 2:5). I believe this **is** the case at Ephesus due to the rebuke. Not just overlooked, but a determined effort to leave their first love.
  2. Sometimes folks slip and need a gentle reminder.
    - a. This is what I believe Peter is doing.
    - b. “**Stir**” means “to wake up, rouse” (Kistemaker, p. 261).
    - c. “*Man is by nature very prone to forget the lessons of the past, and truth once received may become dim and indistinct to those whose hearts incline toward the world. There is therefore a weighty responsibility upon those who preach and teach the word to be tireless in exhorting to greater fidelity and devotion to the cause which they have espoused. The only guarantee against apostasy is ceaseless vigilance against error and constant instruction of those who have received the truth*” (Woods, p. 155).
    - d. In the context, Peter wants them to remember:
      - 1) Salvation (2 Peter 1:1-4).
      - 2) Growth (2 Peter 1:5-7).
      - 3) Assurance (2 Peter 1:8-11).
  3. Other teachings.
    - a. “**Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God**” (Rom. 15:15).
    - b. “**Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe**” (Phil. 3:1).

- c. ***“I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth” (1 Jn. 2:21).***

## **II. Established In The Present Truth.**

- A. ***“Established”*** means *“to set fast, to turn resolutely in a certain direction, or to confirm:--fix, stablish, stedfastly set, strengthen”* (Strong).
- B. ***“Present truth”*** or ***“truth which is in you”*** (ASV).
  1. Earlier Peter had written: ***“But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you” (1 Peter 5:10).***
  2. He was reminding **seasoned Christians** (primarily) of their privileges and duties.
  3. This also confirms that there is a fixed body of truth consistently available in the teachings of the New Testament.
    - a. Truth came by Jesus Christ (***Jn. 1:14***).
    - b. Truth that can be known (***Jn. 8:32***).
    - c. Truth obeyed will purify the soul (***1 Peter 1:22***).
    - d. Truth **is** the gospel of salvation (***Eph. 1:13; Col. 1:5; 1 Thess. 2:15; 1 Tim. 2:4***).
    - e. Truth is to continue (***Gal. 2:5***).
    - f. Truth is to be handled aright (***2 Tim. 2:15, ASV***).

## **III. One Thing Is Sure.**

- A. Peter has several remarks in these verses that indicate that he was close to the end of life (***2 Peter 1:13-15***).
  1. Such is common to man (***Heb. 9:27***).
  2. Tabernacle, a temporary dwelling place.
    - a. The Old Testament was temporary, portable. Temple was permanent.
    - b. Here a temporary dwelling place for the inner man (***2 Cor. 5:1-6***).
      - 1) Spirit to God (***Eccl. 12:7***).
      - 2) Body to dust (***Eccl. 12:7***).
- B. Some opportunities diminish, some do not, with the passing of years.
  1. Peter had been told this by Jesus (***Jn. 21:18-19***).
  2. He was very aware of it, evidenced by his remarks (op cit, III. A.).
  3. Yet, there were still things he could do and things you and I can do.
    - a. Be a Christian (***Acts 21:16***).
    - b. Be faithful (***Rev. 2:10***).

**Conclusion:** All of this is a reminder of our privileges and duties as Christians. No matter where we are in life, we can still meet them successfully as we have ability.

# Trustworthiness Of The Word And Its Messengers

*2 Peter 1:16-21*

**Introduction:** In order for the trustworthiness of the New Testament to be unilaterally acceptable, certain things are necessary: 1) The message be without questionable origin; 2) The messengers be without reproach.

That these things are met successfully is without doubt. The fact that the New Testament is the Word of God (not the word of men) stands. Also, the fact authors of the New Testament had did what they did without any motive except a sense of duty to deliver is unquestionable. So, a two fold proof exists. Peter writes about this in the text under our consideration.

## I. The Honesty Of The Apostles.

- A. Nothing has been made up (“...*we have not followed cunningly devised fables...*”)
  - 1. “*We*” indicates Peter and other apostles.
  - 2. “*Fables*” are myths, legends, stories devoid of fact.
  - 3. They were not influenced by those things at all. Nor were the things they taught anywhere similar to such fables.
  - 4. Apostles were companions in close association with Jesus (*Acts 10:41; 1 Jn. 1:1-3*).
- B. Foundation of the message (“*power and coming*”).
  - 1. The message was always for the benefit of the hearers (*Acts 20:20-21*).
  - 2. Never any ulterior motive (greed, power, etc.) present in messengers (*Acts 20:33*).
- C. Eyewitnesses of His majesty (*v. 16c-18*).
  - 1. Recalls events in *Matthew 17:1-6*.
  - 2. One eyewitness is something to consider. More than one is formidable (*see. Deut. 19:15; 2 Cor. 13:1*).
  - 3. Glory and honor were present:
    - a. Physical transfiguration.
    - b. With Moses and Elijah.
    - c. Approval from the voice of God.
  - 4. Affirmed in this account (*Matt. 17:1-6*).
    - a. The Deity of Jesus.
    - b. His relationship to God.
    - c. The intimacy between Jesus and God.
    - d. God’s good pleasure in His Son.

## II. The Need To Heed.

- A. Words of Old Testament prophecy were confirmed by what the eyewitnesses observed.
- B. Use of prophecies in teachings of apostles  
(**Acts 2:16-21, 25-28, 34-35; 17:1-3**).
- C. Exhortation to heed. There is always an urgency to this.
- D. From dark to light.
  - 1. There is a progression (**Mk. 4:28**).
  - 2. Here is how it goes:
    - a. **“Dark place”** is *“a squalid, filthy, and dark dungeon”* (Woods, p. 160).
    - b. Light begins to dispel darkness.
    - c. Soon, the light overcomes the darkness completely.
    - d. A new day has come.
  - 3. While this is true in the physical sense, it is also true of spiritual growth (**Jn. 1:9; 8:12**).

## III. The Word Has Come From God.

- A. Old Testament prophecies were not *“inventions of men.”*
  - 1. Prophets were not allowed to prophesy *“on their own.”*
    - a. **“Thus saith the Lord”** appears 349 times in the Prophets.
    - b. Notice **Jeremiah 23:16** and **Ezekiel 13:3**.
- B. Spoke as inspired through Holy spirit.
  - 1. **2 Timothy 3:16-17**. **“All”** includes Old Testament and New Testament.
  - 2. **1 Peter 1:11-12**. Holy Spirit active in Old Testament and New Testament.

**Conclusion:** The trustworthiness of the word and its messengers is on this wise:

- 1) Prophets spoke of things to come, though they never got to see them (**1 Peter 1:10**).
- 2) Apostles were eyewitnesses of the fulfillment of those prophecies (**Acts 3:18; 26:2-23**).
- 3) This combination cannot be the product of some plot. If so, it has been carried off over thousands of years, mostly by ignorant men lacking the wherewithal and opportunity to carry it off. Who can believe it?
- 4) The only conclusion one can reach is that the word and its messengers are without question honest and true (**2 Peter 3:2**).

# Destructive Doctrines

## 2 Peter 2:1-3

**Introduction:** The first chapter of this letter is filled primarily with exhortations for growth. The second chapter is filled with admonitions about false teacher and false doctrines. Peter is very frank with his words on this subject.

### I. There Are Going To Be False Teachers And False Doctrines.

- A. Due to the many warnings about falling away and an equally impressive number of warnings about false teachers and false doctrines, the teaching on the impossibility of apostasy is found wanting.
  - 1. Falling away (**Heb. 3:12-13**).
  - 2. False teachers (**1 Jn. 4:1-3**).
  - 3. False doctrines (**Eph 4:14**).
- B. Notice the connection made between the false prophets of the Old Testament and the false teachers of the New Testament.
- C. **“False teacher”** comes from one word in the original language [pseudodidaskalos] and means *“a spurious teacher, i.e. propagator of erroneous doctrine”* (Strong).
- D. The false doctrine taught by these false teachers is described as **“damnable heresies.”**
  - 1. This is rendered as **“destructive heresies”** in the NKJV. {more later}
  - 2. This is not the case of one who is simply mistaken about some point. It is rather one who knows better and chooses to teach what is false anyway.

### II. Methods Of False Teachers.

- A. They will work **“privily”** (**“secretly,”** NKJV).
  - 1. This word means *“slip in stealthily, sneak in”* (A-G, p. 630).
  - 2. False teachers are seldom “upfront.” They will use deception (**Matt. 7:15**).
  - 3. They may even be well known and trusted (**Acts 20:30**).
  - 4. They will always have an agenda (**Rom. 16:17-18**).
- B. They will appeal to **“covetousness.”**
  - 1. Peter says, **“While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption...”** (**2 Peter 2:19**).
  - 2. An appeal made to the desires of man (**1 Jn. 2:16**).
  - 3. Much preaching that is popular today is centered upon these things.
    - a. Engage in sin – doesn’t matter – God loves you anyway.
    - b. Changed **Prov. 4:7** to **“with all thy getting get money.”**
- C. They will utilize **“feigned words”** (**“deceptive words,”** NKJV).
  - 1. Described well in **2 Peter 2:17-18a**. **See also Jude 12**.
  - 2. These words are *“made up, fabricated, false”* (A-G, p. 672).

3. May not be able to give a “straight answer.”
  4. Will not make an appeal to Book, Chapter, Verse.
    - a. Appeal to reputation and fame.
    - b. Appeal to certain theological quarters.
    - c. Appeal to popularity of teaching.
  5. There are those that like to be deceived “...**many shall follow their pernicious ways...**”
    - a. Israel liked false prophets (*Isa. 30:10; Jer. 5:0-31*).
    - b. Some have a fondness for false teachers (*2 Tim. 4:3-4*).
    - c. They cause the “**way of truth**” to “**be evil spoken of**” and they could care less!
- D. They “**make merchandise of you.**” This means to “**exploit you,**” NKJV.
1. Literally means “*buy and sell, trade*” (A-G, p. 256).
  2. “*These false teachers are cheats who barter in men and women for their own benefit. This is a chilling picture of debased, licentious, and immoral men, but Peter warned them to expect to see such people operate among them. One can hardly think of more loathsome conduct than to barter in people, but this is the picture he paints of these ‘false teachers’ who hold their own opinions instead of the revelation of truth from God*” (Hamilton, p. 117).

### III. The Damnable Heresies.

- A. “**Damnable**” means “*a perishing, ruin, destructive*” (A-G, p. 703). “**Heresies**” means “*opinion, dogma...destructive opinions*” (A-G, p. 23).
- B. The text says “...**denying the Lord that bought them.**”
  1. Deny Jesus Christ came in the flesh (*2 Jn. 7*).
  2. Deny resurrection of Jesus Christ (*1 Cor. 15:12, 15*).

### IV. The End Of All False Teachers And False Doctrines.

- A. “**Swift destruction.**” Some “fall apart” in this life (Aimee Semple McPherson, A. A. Allen, Jimmy Swaggart, et al).
- B. God allows some to continue (“**linger**”). This may be wrongly interpreted as approval. However, God is not “sleeping through this.” He will judge accordingly. Not only are the false teachers in jeopardy, but also the followers.

### Conclusion:

- A. “**Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world**” (*1 John 4:1*).
- B. “**Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them**” (*Matt. 7:20*).

# Doom Of False Teachers

2 Peter 2:4-11

**Introduction:** There is a tendency today to act as though false teaching is something totally unconnected to a false teacher. It is as though false teaching exists without false teachers! Such a concept is preposterous to the maximum and expects the listener to be naïve. Folks, false teaching can only come from a false teacher! It cannot exist without a false teacher.

I do not know if this concept existed in the first century, but somehow I have no problem understanding that it likely did. There are so many warnings about false teachers and false doctrine to think otherwise.

Peter has been very pointed in addressing false teachers in **vv. 1-3**. There he referred to their teaching as “**damnable (“destructive,” NKJV) heresies.**” Obviously, Peter did not share the view that some do today. We now enter a section in which false teachers are still being addressed. Here Peter teaches that judgment is due upon those who are false teachers. He uses three examples to get his point across.

## I. Examples Of Judgment.

### A. Angels that sinned (**v. 4**).

1. When did this happen?
  - a. Some will suggest **Genesis. 6:1-4**.
  - b. However, angels do not procreate (**Matt. 22:30**).
  - c. Really do not know when this happened and that is not the point.
2. Where did this happen?
  - a. **Jude 6** gives the only clue.
  - b. Yet, not enough evidence to be definitive and this also is not the point.
3. What is the point?
  - a. The point is about judgment.
    - 1) Angels are higher beings than humans (**Heb. 2:7**).
    - 2) Yet, these angels sinned.
      - a) Transgressed a law of God (**1 Jn. 3:4**).
      - b) What, we are not told.
    - 3) Cast into “**hell**” (“*tartarus*”{Grk.}, “*a place of torment*,” see **Lk. 16:23**).
    - 4) “**Reserved unto judgment.**”
  - b. The angels that sinned will not escape judgment even though they are higher beings.

- B. The pre-flood world (v. 5).**
1. There is a difference between what was before the flood and what followed after (**2 Peter 3:6-7**).
    - a. Yet, those before the flood were judged when it came to ungodly behavior (**Gen. 6:5, 11-12**).
    - b. Judgment was in the flood.
    - c. The judgment of Noah's day is a reminder of judgment to come (**Matt. 24:37-41**).
  2. There is mention of salvation in this passage.
    - a. Noah (also his family, **1 Peter 3:20**).
    - b. Saved due to righteousness (**Heb. 11:7**).
  3. This idea of condemnation and deliverance is continued in next example.
- C. Sodom and Gomorrah (vv. 6-8).**
1. Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed due to ungodliness (**v. 6; see also Gen. 19:24-29**).
    - a. An example to others of God's condemnation and judgment.
      - 1) If Israel disobedient (**Duet. 29:23**).
      - 2) Of ungodliness (**Jude 7**).
    - b. "...every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward" (**Heb. 2:2b**).
  2. Yet Lot and his family were offered deliverance (**v. 7; see also Gen. 19:12-13**). His sons in law disbelieved him (**Gen. 19:14**). His wife disobeyed (**Gen. 19:17, 26**). Lot and his two daughters escaped through the mercy of God.
    - a. Lot was delivered due to being accounted as righteous {"just"="righteous"} (**vv. 7-8**).
      - 1) Lot made mistakes, but God was merciful to him.
      - 2) One can only imagine what kind of mental anguish Lot went through while living in such a wicked place (**v. 8**).
        - a) There is hope for us to be able to endure likewise today.
        - b) Mercy will come to those who do endure.
    - b. There was no mercy for the wicked and disobedient.
  3. Here is another example of God's judgment and deliverance. This is post-flood and is contemporary as an example today.
- D. What these examples teach.**
1. All of these examples teach that ungodliness and disobedience are incompatible to God and will be judged.
  2. God has judged such in all times. Whether it is angels, pre-flood and post-flood, God judges.
  3. Now, where are false teachers supposed to get by without judgment?

## II. Assurance Of Fairness.

- A. These examples show that God can deliver the godly from trials (**v. 9a**).
  - 1. Providentially (**1 Cor. 10:13**).
  - 2. Deliverance and preservation (**2 Tim. 4:18**).
- B. There is also the punishment of the wicked (**v. 9b**).
  - 1. Some, as in our examples, received judgment in this life.
  - 2. Some it follows after (**1 Tim. 5:24**).
- C. God's deliverance and protection is fair throughout.
  - 1. Wicked are punished because of their actions.
  - 2. Godly are delivered because of their righteousness.
- D. Points to consider:
  - 1. God's judgment, whether favorable or not, is not based upon whim.
  - 2. Judgment is certain. May be in this life, may be in the next, may be in both. But it is certain.

## III. Flagrant Misconduct.

- A. Peter adds some words to show that flagrant misconduct is not overlooked (**vv. 10**).
  - 1. Some mock (**Jude 15-19**).
  - 2. Some despise (**Matt. 6:24**).
  - 3. These false teachers are guilty of both.
- B. Some might think that false teachers did not commit the same level of sins as these three examples. Yet, we find that they are just as guilty for their "**pernicious ways**" (**2 Peter 2:2**).
- C. Faithful angels are careful not to accuse (**v. 11**).
  - 1. **See Jude 9.**
  - 2. "**For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people**" (**Heb. 10:30**).

**Conclusion:** False teachers are weighed in the balance and found wanting. They have the rebuke of God in this life and the promise of punishment. Those who resist their false doctrine have the assurance of deliverance.

***"Thou hast a few names even in Sardis  
which have not defiled their garments;  
and they shall walk with me in white:  
for they are worthy"  
(Revelation 3:4)***

# Depravity Of False Teachers

2 Peter 2:12-17

**Introduction:** There is a chilling facet to false teachers and their depravity. It is not that these ones are ignorant or weak. It is that they are like “...***grievous wolves [that] enter in among you, not sparing the flock (Acts 20:29).***”

## I. Description Of Their Depravity.

### A. The immorality of these false teachers (v. 12).

1. “...***as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed...***”
  - a. Placed on a level with animals. Animals are not immoral, but amoral.
    - 1) Immoral -- Contrary to established moral principles (AHTD).
    - 2) Amoral -- Lacking moral sensibility; not caring about right and wrong (AHTD).
  - b. Do not we see an encouragement of animal morality today? And yet people think they can engage in such and still be saved while doing so!
  - c. Man was created to be better than a best. Unfortunately, man chooses to act as though on the level of brute beasts.
2. “...***speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption...***”
  - a. Not that they cannot know, but that they choose not to know (***Jude 10***).
  - b. “ ***For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you***” (1 Peter 4:3-4).
  - c. “***Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools***” (Romans 1:21-22).
3. “...***shall utterly perish in their own corruption...***”
  - a. “ ***Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting***” (Gal. 6:7-8).
  - b. “***For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad***” (2 Cor. 5:10).

### B. The flaunt their depravity (vv. 13-14).

1. Bold to “...***count it pleasure to riot (“carouse”, NKJV) in the day time.***” (This is not to say that it is OK to do so at night). They take pleasure in flaunting their sin.

- a. Enjoying the pleasures of sin (**Heb. 11:25**).
- b. Enjoying the grief their actions cause (**Prov. 10:23**).
- 2. **“...Spots they are and blemishes...”** Stains and defects which tarnish the image. Their image is one of disgrace.
- 3. **“...sporting (“revelling”, NKJV) themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you...”** They count it a pleasure to mislead and deceive as many as they can. Like their father they will say, **“Ye shall not surely die” (Gen. 3:4)**.
- 4. **“Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin...”**  
These are looking for sin (**Matt. 5:28**). *“Being daring, head-strong, arrogant persons, they are incessant in the practice of sin and cannot be restrained from it. They are so unrestrained in their desire to sin that their eyes are unable to cease the search for an adulteress to satisfy their sexual drive”*(Hamilton, p. 166). All that such an one sees in a member of the opposite sex is a sex object.
- 5. **“...beguiling unstable souls...”** Dangerous to weak, immature, and ungrounded souls
- 6. **“...an heart they have exercised with covetous practices...”** It is no surprise, at this point, to realize that man can sink so low as to train himself in depravity. Yet, that is what the result of long time practice does.
- 7. **“...cursed children...”** This sums it all up.
- C. Their only interest is in satisfying their desires.
  - 1. There is little doubt that these false teachers are “users” when it comes to satisfying their desires.
    - a. They will use all things they can.
    - b. They will use all others they can.
  - 2. The thrill is the chief thing.
  - 3. **“Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things” (Phil. 3:19) .**

## II. Parallel To Balaam.

- A. Balaam **“loved the wages of unrighteousness.”**
  - 1. Balaam was a prophet.
  - 2. He was willing to pronounce a curse upon Israel at the request of Balak, the king of the Moabites. God prevented him from doing so (**Num. 22-24**).
- B. Rebuked (by God) through the donkey.
  - 1. It was the donkey that spoke (**Num. 22:28-30**).
  - 2. But it was the LORD (Jehovah) who put the words in the donkey’s mouth and gave it the ability to speak.
  - 3. Balaam admitted his error, **“I have sinned” (Num. 22:34)**.
  - 4. Balaam, though, kept going along with Balak even after this.
  - 5. The attempts to curse fail (**Num. 24:10**).

6. Balaam did more damage with an alternative plan. He counseled Balak to entice Israel to sin (**Num. 31:16; Rev. 2:14**).
7. Balaam's depravity was apparent in his desire to do what Balak wanted despite the fact that he knew better and knew what God had told him!

### III. What False Teachers Are Good For.

- A. A well (spring) without water is useless and dangerous.
- B. A need storm approaches. Clouds indicate rain, but none falls (**Jude 12**).  
Likewise useless.
- C. In saying "...to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever," Peter refers to the previous mention of judgment (**2 Peter 2:4-9**).
- D. False teachers are good for nothing.

**Conclusion:** We see that such characters are to be assiduously avoided at all times. Indeed this is completely true. Even though it is not always so easy to detect a false teacher, it is still a dangerous situation. The solution is to be sure – be very, very sure.

# Deception Of False Teachers

*2 Peter 2:18-22*

**Introduction:** We saw in the last installment of this series that false teachers are described as ***“...wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever” (2 Peter 2:17).*** This leads us to the deception of false teachers. They are not what they appear to be (***Matt. 7:15***).

## I. Deceptive In Methods.

### A. Empty words.

1. Earlier Peter had briefly addressed this point (***2 Peter 2:3***).
2. Their words are of ***“vanity”*** (emptiness).
  - a. Their motive was to allure and lead astray (***Acts 20:30***).
  - b. Their method was through high sounding words (***Jude 16***).
  - c. The enticement was through the lust of the flesh {wantonness=lasciviousness, sensuality} (***Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Jn. 2:15-17***).
  - d. The bait (enticement) was in their own bold indulgence (***James 1:14***).
3. The ones who were the chief victims were new converts, ***“those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.”***

### B. Occurrences today.

1. “Health and wealth” preachers.
2. My personal opinion is that this fits the case of Joseph Smith, the so called “prophet” of the Mormons, as well as other modern false prophets.
3. Even among brethren is there an occurrence of placing more emphasis upon performance than content.

## II. Deceptive In Promises.

### A. Empty promises of liberty.

1. ***“Ye shall not surely die” (Gen. 3:4).***
2. Ought to heed Paul’s warning (***Gal. 5:13***).

### B. Actually offering slavery.

1. Cannot offer what one doesn’t have (***Jn. 8:34***).
2. Their corruptness has been revealed:
  - a. They attempt to exploit through covetousness (***2 Peter 2:3***).
  - b. They ***“walk after flesh in the lust of uncleanness” (2 Peter 2:10a).***
  - c. They ***“despise authority” (2 Peter 2:10b).***
  - d. They ***“speak evil of the things they understand not” (2 Peter 2:12).***
  - e. They ***“count it pleasure to riot (carouse) in the daytime” (2 Peter 2:13).***
  - f. They have ***“eyes full of adultery that cannot cease from sin” (2 Peter 2:14a).***

- g. They have ***“a heart they have exercised covetous practices”*** (***2 Peter 2:14d***).
- 3. How could these offer liberty?
  - a. They are ***“bought in bondage”*** (***2 Peter 2:19d***).
  - b. They are ***“overcome”*** (***2 Peter 2:20***).
- C. The end is worse than the beginning (***vv. 20-22***).
  - 1. The difficulty in restoring one who is fallen is well documented in the New Testament (***Gal. 6:1; Heb. 6:4-6***).
    - a. Apostates usually dive deeper into sin than before.
    - b. More guilt is involved due to the knowledge of truth.
    - c. The resistance on the part of apostates is higher than that of those who have never obeyed.
  - 2. The ***“true proverb”*** presents the pitiful state of apostasy.

### **III. An Example Of Such Deception.**

- A. The best example of such deception is related to these very verses!
- B. There are those who teach that a child of God cannot fall away.
  - 1. Misuse of passages such as ***John 10:28-29***.
  - 2. An ignoring of ***2 Peter 2:18-22***.
- C. There are so many warnings about falling away, how can someone deny its possibility?
  - 1. ***“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God”*** (***Heb. 3:12***).
  - 2. ***“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace”*** (***Gal. 5:4***).
  - 3. ***“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it”*** (***1 Cor. 10:12-13***).
  - 4. ***“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall”*** (***2 Peter 1:10***).

**Conclusion:** We must be on guard that we are not deceived by these false teachers.

***“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap”*** (***Gal. 6:7***).

***“Do not be deceived: ‘Evil company corrupts good habits.’ Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame”*** (***1 Cor. 15:33-34 NKJV***).

# The Sure Promise Of God

2 Peter 3:1-9

**Introduction:** Peter mentions once again of “*stirring up minds in remembrance*” (v. 1, cf. 1:13). In verse 2 he reminds them of “*the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior.*” This is to lead them into his next subject. By mentioning the Old Testament prophets and apostles of Jesus Christ, Peter is implying the unity of their message over a long period of time. This combination of unity and time is essential in what he discusses in this section.

## I. Scoffers And Their Detractions.

- A. Scoffers in the last days.
  - 1. Word used as “**scoffer**” (“**mock**er,” **ASV**) comes from a word that originally meant “*to sport, play, jest or divide*” (Strong, Vine). (**Prov. 10:23, NKJV**).
  - 2. These ones are “**walking after their own lusts.**”
    - a. They do not believe and intend to deride those who do believe.
    - b. The same type of scoffing had taken place in Athens (**Acts 17:32**).
    - c. It is sad how some appear without knowing how they appear (**Jn. 3:19; Rom. 1:22**).
- B. The scoffers’ point of attack was over the Lord’s promise of His coming which they viewed as not only delayed, but not coming at all!
  - 1. Many understood the promise:
    - a. Jesus (**Matt. 24:36**).
    - b. Paul (**1 Cor. 15:51-52; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Thess. 1:7-12**).
    - c. Peter (**Acts 10:42; 1 Peter 4:5**).
  - 2. The fact that many died before the Lord’s coming does not disprove His coming.
    - a. when men die, they still await the judgment (**Heb. 9:27**).
    - b. Some will be dead, some alive when the Lord returns (**1 Thess. 4:13-18**).
  - 3. The scoffers claim nothing has changed and nothing is going to change. In this they err as we shall see.

## II. God’s Sure Promise.

- A. These scoffers have overlooked history.
  - 1. Things most certainly changed when the flood came. “**...the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now...**” implies a change that the scoffers deny.

2. Thus, the scoffers argument is found to be wanting.
- B. If God could produce a flood of this proportion, judgment day is not as far fetched as they allege.
  1. God has promised and He is no liar (***Titus 1:2***).
  2. Men, however, are often times found to be liars (***Rom. 3:4***).
  3. Not only has God promised a judgment day, but Jesus promise it also.
    - a. Directly (***Jn. 14:3, 28***).
    - b. Indirectly (***Matt. 25:1-13; Mk. 13:31-37***).

### III. The Longsuffering Of God.

- A. God does not operate on our timetable. The scoffers assume that He does.
- B. Men forget, God does not.
  1. He is ***not*** like us (***Psa. 50:21***).
  2. He has higher thoughts and a better way (***Isa. 55:8-9***).
- C. Any “delay” is actually the longsuffering of God with man’s salvation in mind.
  1. This longsuffering is for the living.
  2. Repentance and obedience are in this life (***Eccl. 9:10***).

**Conclusion:** Do not be deceived. Jesus and judgment are coming. This has been true since Jesus ascended into heaven (***Acts 1:11***). It will be true until He comes again. We should concern ourselves with our readiness when the day does indeed come.

# The Day Of The Lord

2 Peter 3:10-13

**Introduction:** In our previous study, we saw where Peter taught not to be troubled by those who scoffed at the Lord's promises. Peter alluded to the Lord's return in **verse 7:** ***"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."***

In the verses we will study, Peter gets into more detail about the Lord's return, an event he calls ***"The Day Of The Lord."***

## I. The Day Of The Lord Will Be Sudden.

- A. Without warning (***"...as a thief in the night..."***).
  - 1. Suddenness exemplified (***Matt. 24:36-44***).
  - 2. Some will think He is not coming, only to find out otherwise (***Matt. 24:45-51***).
  - 3. Some will procrastinate, thinking there is plenty of time (***Matt. 25:1-13***).
- B. A day which will produce different reactions.
  - 1. Christians – joy (***2 Tim. 4:8***).
  - 2. Non-Christians – terror (***Matt. 25:30, 41***).
- C. ***"In the twinkling of an eye"*** (***1 Cor. 15:52***).

## II. It Will Be Final.

- A. These words (***vv. 10b, 12b***) show the complete destruction of the heavens and earth. This indicates an elimination of all further activity.
- B. What are some of the events when this happens?
  - 1. ***1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11***.
    - a. Faithful dead AND living dead met the Lord (***4:16-17***).
    - b. Meet Him "in the air." Not on earth as it will be destroyed (***4:18***).
    - c. Unable to discern ***"the times and the seasons"*** (***5:1***).

**See *Matthew 24:36; Acts 1:7*.**
  - 2. ***1 Corinthians 15:23-58***.
    - a. Delivers kingdom to God. He does not, at that time, set it up (***v. 24***).
    - b. All destroyed, even death (***v. 26***).
    - c. Bodies will be changed (***42-54***). **See *1 John 3:2***.
  - 3. ***John 5:28-29; Revelation 20:13***.
    - a. Graves give up righteous dead and wicked dead.
    - b. Sea gives up dead.
    - c. Hadean realm gives up dead.
  - 4. ***2 Corinthians 5:10; John 12:48***.
    - a. All judged.
    - b. Words of Christ the standard of judgment.

### III. We Are To Be Ready.

- A. These passages point out that preparation for that day is imperative.
- B. Consider the question of **verse 11**. The answer is found in **1 Peter 4:18**.  
Righteous (doing the right things).
- C. Therefore, we ought to be in “all holy conversation and godliness.”
  - 1. **“Holy conversation”** (conduct, NKJV) is **“laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life” (1 Tim. 6:19).**
  - 2. **“Godliness”** has the **“promise of the life...that is to come” (1 Tim. 4:8).**
- D. We ought to be **“looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God.”** We ought to be living our lives in such a way that we can say with eager anticipation, **“Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22:20).**

**Conclusion:** Enough has been said, I cannot think of a better way to end than by standing together and singing **“There’s A Great Day Coming”** (#361 in our book).

# Final Exhortations

*2 Peter 3:14-18*

**Introduction:** This letter of Peter's is like many other New Testament letters in that it ends with some words of exhortation. When one meditates on these words of exhortation, it becomes apparent that this is the goal God had in the beginning—growth.

As an aside, these are the last recorded words of the apostle Peter.

## I. Be Diligent.

### A. *"In peace."*

1. Peace with God (*Rom. 5:1*).
2. Peace with fellow man (*Rom. 12:18; Heb. 12:14*).

### B. *"Without spot."*

1. Brought about by the blood of Christ (*1 Peter 1:18-19*).
  - a. Redemption and forgiveness (*Eph. 1:7*).
  - b. Sins washed away (*Rev. 1:5*).
2. Through baptism (*Acts 2:38; 22:16*).

## II. Remember.

### A. *"The longsuffering of the Lord is salvation" (v. 15).*

1. Not slack as we have noted in an earlier lesson (*2 Peter 3:9*).
2. Any "delay" is longsuffering toward repentance (*2 Peter 3:9*) and salvation.

### B. God's patience is to be a motivating influence.

1. Moves to salvation (*Rom. 2:4*).
2. It demonstrates His desire to see all saved (*Rom. 3:23-26*).

## III. Be Growing.

### A. Be careful.

1. Scriptures are for benefit.
  - a. *"God breathed" (2 Tim. 3:16-17, NIV)* and given to us so *"that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."*
  - b. Is able to save the soul (*James 1:21*).
  - c. *"Living and powerful" (Heb. 4:12, NKJV)*.
2. If used incorrectly, they are of no benefit.
  - a. *"Wrest(ed) ... to their own destruction."*
  - b. Any "right" thing used incorrectly has potential for great harm.

- 1) Automobile used as an airplane.
  - 2) Ax used as scalpel in brain surgery.
  - 3) Hair dryer as water heater in bath tub.
- c. Brought about because they are ***“unlearned and untaught.”***
- 1) *“A little learning is a dangerous thing”* (Alexander Pope).
  - 2) Drifting with the winds of doctrine (***Eph. 4:14***).
- B. Grow.
1. ***“In the grace.”***
    - a. We have graciously been given the opportunity (***2 Peter 1:1-4***).
    - b. It is the duty of every Christian to be a fruit-bearer (***Col. 1:3-6***).
  2. ***“In the knowledge.”***
    - a. Steps and procedure of growth takes time and effort (***2 Peter 1:5-11***).
    - b. To be an approved workman should the goal of every Christian (***2 Tim. 2:15***).

**Conclusion:** Before one can grow, one must first be ***“planted”*** (***Rom. 6:5***). Are you planted? Are you growing? Why not do what is necessary today?

***“To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”***