

**SIMPLE STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES**  
**THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER**  
**LEADER'S STUDY GUIDE**



**2 Peter 3:18**

*“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.*

**DR. STANFORD E. MURRELL**

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## 2 PETER

Human Author: Peter  
Divine Author: God the Holy Spirit  
Written: c. AD 66-67  
Key Word: Knowledge  
Key Verse: 2 Peter 3:18

*“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 1

1 Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:

1:1 Simon Peter. Peter (rock) is the surname of Simon, one of the twelve disciples of Jesus. The Lord gave him the Aramaic name of Cephas (rock, stone). Peter was a fisherman when he first met Jesus. His father was Jona and his brother was Andrew who first brought Peter to the Master. Noted for impulsive speech and actions (Matt. 16:22; 26:33), Peter became a pillar of the early church (John 21:15, 17; Acts 2-11). On the day of Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ it was Peter who preached and 3000 souls were converted (Acts 2). According to promise the church was established upon Peter (Matt. 16:18).

2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,

1:2 grace. Grace refers to unmerited favor being shown to the undeserving. The concept of grace was understood before Christ, whereby favor was shown to those who were family members or friends. The distinctive Christian contribution to the concept of grace, is to show favor to the undeserving. There is something else. Grace is also showing sensitivity to the weak, the helpless and the ignorant. Grace is a reflection of great character because of a great heart. Jeffrey Zaslow, in *Tell Me All About It*, shares the following story. “Years ago, my father coached a team of eight-year-olds. He had a few excellent players, and some who just couldn’t get the hang of the game. Dad’s team didn’t win once all season. But in the last inning of the last game, his team was only down by a run. There was one boy who had never been able to hit the ball—or catch it. With two outs, it was his turn to bat. He surprised the world and got a single! The next batter was the team slugger. Finally, Dad’s players might win a game. The slugger connected, and as the boy who hit the single ran to second, he saw the ball coming toward him. Not so certain of baseball’s rules, he caught it. Final out! Dad’s team lost!

Quickly, my father told his team to cheer. The boy beamed. It never occurred to him that he lost the game. All he knew was he had hit the ball and caught it—both for the first time. His parents later thanked my dad. Their child had never even gotten in a game before that season. We never told the boy exactly what happened. We didn't want to ruin it for him. And till this day, I'm proud of what my father did that afternoon."

1:2 peace.

- Salvation brings peace with God. *Rom 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*
- Sanctification and prayer brings the peace of God. *Phil 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*
- Being occupied with the person and work of Jesus Christ brings a true and lasting peace. *John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue [valor]:

1:3 His divine power. While the divinity of Christ is mocked, ridiculed and dismissed the church maintains that Jesus is very God of very God. All the attributes that can be ascribed to God the Father are manifested in God the Son.

“All hail the power of Jesus’ Name!

Let angels prostrate fall;  
Bring forth the royal diadem,  
and crown Him Lord of all.  
Bring forth the royal diadem,  
and crown Him Lord of all.

Let highborn seraphs tune the lyre,  
and as they tune it, fall  
Before His face Who tunes their choir,  
and crown Him Lord of all.  
Before His face Who tunes their choir,  
and crown Him Lord of all.

Crown Him, ye morning stars of light, Who fixed this floating ball;  
Now hail the strength of Israel's might, and crown Him Lord of all.  
Now hail the strength of Israel's might, and crown Him Lord of all.

Crown Him, ye martyrs of your God, who from His altar call;  
Extol the Stem of Jesse's Rod, and crown Him Lord of all.  
Extol the Stem of Jesse's Rod, and crown Him Lord of all.

Ye seed of Israel's chosen race, ye ransomed from the fall,  
Hail Him Who saves you by His grace, and crown Him Lord of all.  
Hail Him Who saves you by His grace, and crown Him Lord of all.

Hail Him, ye heirs of David's line, Whom David Lord did call,  
The God incarnate, Man divine, and crown Him Lord of all,  
The God incarnate, Man divine, and crown Him Lord of all.

Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget the wormwood and the gall,  
Go spread your trophies at His feet, and crown Him Lord of all.  
Go spread your trophies at His feet, and crown Him Lord of all.

Let every tribe and every tongue before Him prostrate fall  
And shout in universal song the crownèd Lord of all.  
And shout in universal song the crownèd Lord of all."

John Rippon  
added this verse in 1787

"O that, with yonder sacred throng, we at His feet may fall,  
Join in the everlasting song, and crown Him Lord of all,  
Join in the everlasting song, and crown Him Lord of all!"

Edward Perronet

### **The Story Behind the Song**

The first stanza appeared anonymously in *The Gospel Magazine*, November 1779. In April 1780, the same magazine published eight verses titled, "*On the Resurrection, the Lord Is King.*" It resurfaced half a dozen years later, again anonymously, accompanied by an acrostic poem whose letters spelled out "*Edward Perronet.*" The music titled "*Coronation,*" Composed by Oliver Holden; first appeared in his *Union Harmony or Universal Collection of Sacred Music* (Boston, Massachusetts: 1793).

4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

1:4 partakers of the divine nature. In what sense and to what extent the nature of God has been imparted to the soul is not always easy to determine. What is known is the following.

- In love the Father has made Christians His children. *1 John 3:1* “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” And “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (*Rom 5:5*).
- The Lord rules over His creation and He has made “us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (*Rev. 1:6*).
- God is a holy God and the command comes “Be ye holy; for I am holy: (*1 Peter 1:16*).

To be God-like does not mean to be God, and that is where much modern theology has erred. Some of the most blasphemous teachings are those that declare men have been made into God or that men may become the God of their own universe. Mormonism dares to teach, “As man now is, God once was; as God now is man may become.” The heresy of Mormonism continues by saying that God is a begotten creature who has a mother and father, not to mention plurality of wives, and he has a mother and father in an eternal procession.

To all such teaching the church must rise up and shout, “No! A thousand times no! There is but One God and there is none other!” While the redeemed can partake of the divine nature, the Creator remains distinct from His creation. The purpose of the great and precious promises have been given not to exalt individuals with absurd pride, but to allow a way to escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. If the flesh is mortified, if Christ is loved, if the gospel is obeyed, if righteousness is pursued, the promise of eternal life will be given, and a way of escape will be found from the pollution and power of sin in the soul.

5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

1:5-7

### Growing in Grace

- Faith, more persuasion
- Virtue, valor or excellence
- Knowledge
- Temperance, self control
- Patience, cheerful endurance
- Godliness, holiness
- Kindness, love of the brethren
- Charity, an affection of benevolence

8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1:8 knowledge. There are different types of knowledge.

- There is academic knowledge whereby empirical data is stored and analyzed.
- There is metaphysical knowledge whereby concepts of the mind are explored. .
- There is practical knowledge whereby the lessons of life are learned through trial and error of behavior.
- There is spiritual knowledge where those ideals and concepts reach out to touch the divine. To the question, “*Does God exist?*” the resounding answer returns, “*Yes, God does exist.*”

Moreover, He is not silent. God has provided a way to know Him in and through the person of Christ. John 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.* In as far as Christian virtues are pursued, the soul will not be barren, nor unfruitful in spiritual knowledge, which find ultimate consummation in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Unfortunately, the desire for true spiritual knowledge is often lacking for Christ is not desired as He should be. For the heart that might protest the lack of intensity, and the frustration of not having more spiritual fruit, consider an incident in the life of Socrates, the Greek philosopher of Athens, (469-399 BC). One day a proud young man came to Socrates asking for knowledge. He walked up to the muscular philosopher and said, “*O great Socrates, I come to you for knowledge.*” Socrates recognized a pompous numbskull when he saw one. He led the young man through the streets, to the sea, and chest deep into water. Then he asked, “*What do you want?*” “*Knowledge, O wise Socrates,*” said the young man with a smile.

Socrates put his strong hands on the man's shoulders and pushed him under. Thirty seconds later Socrates let him up. "What do you want?" he asked again. "Wisdom," the young man sputtered, "O great and wise Socrates." Socrates crunched him under again. Thirty seconds passed, thirty-five. Forty. Socrates let him up. The man was gasping. "What do you want, young man?" Between heavy, heaving breaths the fellow wheezed, "Knowledge, O wise and wonderful..." Socrates jammed him under again Forty seconds passed. Fifty. "What do you want?" "Air!" he screeched. "I need air!" "When you want knowledge as you have just wanted air, then you will have knowledge" (M. Littleton in *Moody Monthly*, June, 1989). In like manner, when the Christian is obedient to the gospel commandments of 1 Peter 1:5-7 there will be a knowledge of Christ.

9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

1:9 is blind. It has been observed that a person who will not read is no better off than a person who cannot read. A person who does not use the spiritual eyes that God grants in grace to see and seek after spiritually matters, is no better off than the unconverted who are spiritually blind and remain in darkness. What must the Christian never forget? The believer must never forget he has been purged or washed off from his old sins. While the believer retains a sin nature even after conversation (1 John 1:8), there has been a divine washing from sins which emanate from the sin nature. Time and again in *Scripture* the exhortation comes to the believer to remember what Christ has done on the behalf of those for whom He has died.

“Remember Christ, our Savior  
Who paid the debts you owed  
To God the Heavenly Father  
And to you mercy showed.

When others sin against you  
Be ready to forgive.  
Since you have been forgiven  
With them in peace now live.

Go first to find your brother,  
Your sister or your friend.  
Do not reveal to others  
The hurt you need to mend.

Confront in humble spirit  
The one whose sin caused pain  
That he might seek forgiveness  
And you a friend regain.



When bitter anger tempts you  
To nurse your broken heart  
With brooding thoughts of hatred  
And vows of vengeance start.

Pray to the Lord of Pardon  
For power to release  
Each selfish act against you  
That rage might in you cease.

O Father, Son, and Spirit,  
O Patient Trinity,  
Who lifts from us sin's burden  
And from its debt sets free.

Grant us the will to pardon  
All those who us offend  
That we might enter heaven  
With them when ages end.”

Robert E. Smith, 1991

10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence [haste] to make your calling [invitation] and election [selection] sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

1:10 election sure. The assurance of salvation does not come apart from a changed life characterized by holiness and spiritual growth in grace and virtue. It is not enough to tell God how sorry the heart is for sin, and then return like a dog to its vomit, or a pig to its wallowing in the mud. In *Scripture*, many fearful warnings are given to the religious hypocrite. Tragically, the biblical warning will go unheeded if the heart is completely hardened. *Job 8:13 So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish.*

11 For so an entrance shall be ministered [fully supplied] unto you abundantly [richly] into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

1:11 everlasting life. There is not only a quantity of life that can be measured in terms of minutes, months and years but also a quality. When Christ comes to a person, He offers the abundant life. *John 7:38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* Someone has calculated how a typical lifespan of 70 years is spent. Here is the estimate:

Sleep	23 yrs	32.9%
Work	16yrs	22.8%
TV	8 yrs	11.4%
Eating	6 yrs	8.6%
Travel	6 yrs	8.6 %
Leisure	4.5 yrs	6.5 %
Illness	4 yrs	5.7 %
Dressing	2 yrs	2.8%
Religion	0.5 yrs	0.7 %
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	70 yrs	100 %

*Our Daily Bread*  
November 25, 1992

*Tis' one life and soon shall pass,  
Only what is done for Christ will last.*

12 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth.

13 Yea, I think it meet [right], as long as I am in this tabernacle [body], to stir you up by putting *you* in remembrance;

1:13 remembrance. The Christian is called upon to remember many truths and doctrines, not the least of which is the atoning work of Christ.

“Where He may lead me I will go,  
For I have learned to trust Him so,  
And I remember ’twas for me,  
That He was slain on Calvary.

Jesus shall lead me night and day,  
Jesus shall lead me all the way,  
He is the truest Friend to me,  
For I remember Calvary.

O I delight in His command,  
Love to be led by His dear hand;  
His divine will is sweet to me,  
Hallowed by bloodstained Calvary.

Onward I go, nor doubt nor fear,  
Happy with Christ my Savior near,  
Trusting that I some day shall see,  
Jesus my Friend of Calvary.”

William C. Martin

“Improving one’s memory is not all that difficult. Most of us simply don’t expend the time or effort required. ‘*The true art of memory,*’ wrote an English historian ‘*is the art of attention.*’ We can improve our memories by simply putting our minds to it and by following a few simple rules:

- **Remember to remember.** Telling yourself that you want to remember this or that fact and concentrating on it will improve your memory immediately. We remember what we WANT to remember.
- **Sharpen your observation.** Pay close attention to what you see and hear. Use images. Shut your eyes and try to SEE it. Notice details. Really LOOK at things. Few people actually do.
- **Practice recall.** Forgetting is most rapid soon after learning. It helps, therefore, to make a deliberate effort to repeat and review immediately. Repetition will help fix the fact or image in our minds.
- **Concentrate.** Eliminate distractions. The mind is at its best when it is centered on one thing at a time.
- **Avoid** such things as fatigue, noise, and competing visual images during the time you are trying to learn.”

*Bits and Pieces, October, 1989*

14 Knowing that shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

1:14 put off this tabernacle. For the Christian death holds a different perspective, for it provides an entrance into heaven. The courage of Peter and the other apostles to die for the faith has been a source of inspiration to countless souls over the centuries. “*I am not come hither to deny my Lord and Master*” said Anne Askew on July 16, 1545. She was burned at the stake after torture on the rack, at the age of 25.

“No, not cold beneath the grasses,  
Not close-walled within the tomb;  
Rather, in our Father’s mansion,  
Living, in another room.

Living, like the man who loves me,  
Like my child with cheeks abloom,  
Out of sight, at desk or schoolbook,  
    Busy, in another room.

Nearer than my son whom fortune  
Beckons where the strange lands loom;  
    Just behind the hanging curtain,  
    Serving, in another room.

Shall I doubt my Father's mercy?  
    Shall I think of death as doom,  
Or the stepping o'er the threshold  
    To a bigger, brighter room?

Shall I blame my Father's wisdom?  
    Shall I sit enswathed in gloom,  
When I know my loves are happy,  
    Waiting in another room?"

Robert Freeman

1:14 hath shewed me. Most people would probably not want to be shown they are going to die soon or of some terrible disease. Such a revelation can be very frightening. On August 3, 2005 I was diagnosed with malignant lymphoma, which can be a deadly disease. By God's grace many forms of cancer are treatable. Perhaps mine will prove to respond to chemotherapy and radiation. After the initial shock of the hearing the diagnosis, the grace of God came to my heart, and a peace that passes all understanding. May it be said of all Christians as John Wesley said of the Methodist of his generation, "*Our people die well.*" If the Lord is pleased to show a Christian when they shall die it is in order to prepare for the grand departure, and be a faithful witness to others. (Stanford E. Murrell)

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

1:15 after my decease have these things. The words of D. L. Moody are a source of encourage and great comfort. "*Some day,*" D.L. Moody used to say, "*you will read in the papers that D.L. Moody of East Northfield is dead. Don't believe a word of it! At that moment I shall be more alive than I am now!*" He preached his last sermon in Kansas City on Nov. 23, 1899, from the text *Luke 14:18*: "*And they all with one consent began to make excuse.*" When he gave the invitation, fifty stood to their feet and went across the street into the inquiry room.

He was too ill to continue the Kansas City campaign, so he took the train back to Northfield. On Friday, Dec. 22, he went “home.” Five years before his homegoing Moody had said, “*If it can be said, faithfully said, over my grave, ‘Moody has done what he could,’ that will be the most glorious epitaph.*” Instead, 1 John 2:17 was chosen: “*He that doeth the will of God abideth forever.*” (*The Wycliffe Handbook of Preaching & Preachers*, W. Wiers). Christian, remember what Christ and the apostles have taught. Do the will of God—and live forever.

16 For we have not followed cunningly [to make wiser] devised fables [tales], when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

17 For he [Christ] received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

1:16-18 eyewitnesses of his majesty. Along with James and John, Peter was part of the inner circle in the apostolic band. They were with the Lord on the most sacred occasions and the most memorable moments of His ministry. They were with Jesus at the raising of the daughter of Jarius (Mark 5:37; Luke 8:51). They were with Jesus at the transfiguration (Matt. 17:1; Mark 9:2; Luke 9:28). They were with Jesus during the Lord’s agony in the garden (Mark 14:33).

### **Jehovah Jesus**

“My song shall bless the Lord of all,  
My praise shall climb to His abode;  
Thee, Saviour, by that name I call,  
The great Supreme, the mighty God.

“Without beginning or decline,  
Object of faith and not of sense;  
Eternal ages saw Him shine,  
He shines eternal ages hence.  
As much, when in the manger laid,  
Almighty Ruler of the sky,  
As when the six days’ work He made  
Fill’d all the morning stars with joy.

Of all the crowns Jehovah bears,  
Salvation is His dearest claim;  
That gracious sound well pleased He hears,  
And owns Emmanuel for His name.

A cheerful confidence I feel,  
My well-placed hopes with joy I see;  
My bosom glows with heavenly zeal,  
To worship Him who died for me.

As man, He pities my complaint,  
His power and truth are all divine;  
He will not fail, He cannot faint;  
Salvation's sure, and must be mine".

William Cowper

19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star [morning star] arise in your hearts:

1:19 the Scripture. *"I would recommend you either believe God up to the hilt, or else not to believe at all. Believe this book of God, every letter of it, or else reject it. There is no logical standing place between the two. Be satisfied with nothing less than a faith that swims in the deeps of divine revelation; a faith that paddles about the edge of the water is poor faith at best. It is little better than a dry-land faith, and is not good for much"* (C. H. Spurgeon)

1:19 take heed. Speaking to a congregation in Kidderminster, Richard Baxter said sharply and plainly, *"Were you but as willing to get the knowledge of God and heavenly things as you are to know how to work in your trade, you would have set yourself to it before this day, and you would have spared no cost or pains till you had got it. But you account seven years little enough to learn your trade and will not bestow one day in seven in diligent learning the matters of your salvation."* (John R. W. Stott, *The Preacher's Portrait*, Some New Testament Word Studies).

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private [one's own] interpretation [explanation].

1:19-20 a more sure word. *"I have come to the conviction that no man knows enough to attack the veracity of the Old Testament. Every time when anyone has been able to get together enough documentary 'proofs' to undertake an investigation, the biblical facts in the original text have victoriously met the test."* (Prof. Robert Dick Wilson of Princeton, who held several doctorates and knew 45 languages and dialects of the Near East. As quoted in R. Pache, *The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture*)

## Leader's Study Guide

### *Questions and Answers on 2 Peter 1*

1. How can a person enjoy peace with God, the peace of God and the peace from God?

#### *Answer*

- Salvation brings peace with God. *Rom 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*
- Sanctification and prayer brings the peace of God. *Phil 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*
- Being occupied with the person and work of Jesus Christ brings a true and lasting peace. *John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

2. How can it be said the believer shares the divine nature?

- In love the Father has made Christians His children. *1 John 3:1 "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." And "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Rom 5:5).*
- The Lord rules over His creation and He has made *"us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. 1:6).*
- God is a holy God and the command comes *"Be ye holy; for I am holy: (1 Peter 1:16).*

3. List four types of knowledge.

#### *Answer.*

- There is academic knowledge whereby empirical data is stored and analyzed.
- There is metaphysical knowledge whereby concepts of the mind are explored. .
- There is practical knowledge whereby the lessons of life are learned through trial and error of behavior.
- There is spiritual knowledge where those ideals and concepts reach out to touch the divine.

4. Along with Peter what other disciples formed an inner circle within the apostolic band and what evidence is there for this inner group?

***Answer.***

Along with James and John, Peter formed the inner circle. They were with Jesus at the raising of the daughter of Jarius (Mark 5:37; Luke 8:51). They were with Jesus at the transfiguration (Matt. 17:1; Mark 9:2; Luke 9:28). They were with Jesus during the Lord's agony in the Garden. (Mark 14:33).

5. What name is given to Christ in 1 Peter 1:19?

***Answer.***

The day star refers to Christ, the true Morning Star

***Memory Work***

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

***Personal Reflection and Application***

1. Recall and share an incident when you showed grace to someone who did not merit the moment.
2. How many of the following characterize your growth in the journey of grace?
  - Faith, more persuasion
  - Virtue, valor or excellence
  - Knowledge
  - Temperance, self control
  - Patience, cheerful endurance
  - Godliness, holiness
  - Kindness, love of the brethren
  - Charity, an affection of benevolence
3. Why do you think there are so many challenges to the historic faith of the church from those who profess to be Christian? How can the conservative believer temper the abuses that rise from freedom of private interpretation of the *Scriptures*?
4. As you look back over your life as a believer, what do you remember most about your journey in grace?



5. Are you prepared to die? If the Lord revealed to you that your death was near, how would you respond, or at least hope to respond?

### *Leader's Supplemental Material*

#### **Was the Church Built upon Peter?**

1:1 Simon Peter. Peter was told that, in a specialized way, he would be the foundation of the church. The words of Jesus are very plain in Matthew 16:18. *“Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church.”*

It is customary for conservative Bible commentators to be dogmatic in trying to stress a play on words in this verse by appealing to the original language, so that the second word for rock (*petra*; a mass of rock) refers to Christ, and not Peter (*petros*; a large piece of rock like a detached boulder).

While anyone can be sympathetic to every effort to protect the honor of the Lord and His relationship to the Church, it is not necessary to reword the biblical terminology—or church history.

As Jesus had promised, so it was. The earliest records indicate that Jesus did build His church upon Peter. The Lord honored His commitment. Even a casual reading of the Book of Acts will see that it happened as the Lord predicted.

- It was Peter who preached on the Day of Pentecost and three thousand souls were saved. (Acts 2:42)
- It was Peter who suggested the selection of Matthias to take the place of Judas as an apostle. (Acts 1:15-22) And while the outworking of that suggestion has a lot to be desired, it does show leadership among the brethren.
- It was Peter who healed the lame beggar in the portico of the Temple saying, *“Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk”* (Acts 3:4-6).
- It was Peter who was falsely accused by the Rulers of the People, and the Elders of the Council of Israel; and it was Peter who gave a defense of Christ. (Acts 4:8-12,29)
- It was Peter who foretold the death by divine discipline of Ananias and Sapphira. (Acts 5:1-11)
- It was Peter who was imprisoned and scourged, and who had to give a second defense before the Jewish Council. (Acts 5:17-42)
- It was Peter who was first sent to Samaria as the Church expanded its missionary labors, and souls were brought into the Kingdom in obedience to the command of Christ. (Acts 8:14)

- It was Peter who prayed for the reception of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:15-18).
- It was Peter who rebuked Simon, the sorcerer, when that greedy son of Satan desired to purchase the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:18-24).
- It was Peter who returned to Jerusalem to report on the great grace of God (Acts 8:25).
- It was Peter who received Paul into the fellowship of the church and the work of the ministry (Gal.1: 18; 2:9).
- It was Peter who visited Lydda and healed Aeneas (Acts 9:32-34).
- It was Peter who visited Joppa and stayed with Simon the tanner in order to raise Dorcas from the dead (Acts 9:36-43).
- It was Peter who had a vision of a sheet containing ceremonially clean and unclean animals representing the Gentiles to whom the gospel was to be given (Acts 10:9-16).
- It was Peter who received the servant of the centurion, ministered in Caesarea, preached to the centurion and his household in the middle of the night, and had a baptism service (Acts 10).
- It was Peter who advocated the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles in the hearing of the apostles and elders (Acts 11:1-18; 15:7-11).
- It was Peter who, when imprisoned, was delivered by an angel (Acts 12:3-19).
- It was Peter who wrote some of the earliest letters of the Bible.
- It was Peter who told his story to a young man named John Mark who wrote a gospel that bears his name.

The life of Peter is foundational in manifesting the visible church of Jesus Christ. Of course there is but One ultimate Foundation for the Church as 1 Corinthians 3:11 teaches. *“For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”* In his debates with Erasmus and Meister Eck, Martin Luther stressed this point with the Catholic Church.

However, there is a secondary sense conveyed in the language of Matthew 16, and confirmed by Church history. The Lord really did fulfill His great promise to Peter. Upon his labors, in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Church was built in a visible manner (Rev. 21:14; Eph. 2:20).

1:10 calling and election sure.

### Characteristics of a Religious Hypocrite

1. **The heart of the Religious Hypocrite presents to the world a facade of righteousness** while a secret life is lived full of evil thoughts and intentions with a willingness to indulge itself at the right time and place.
2. **The heart of a Religious Hypocrite is convincing.** Individuals can lead a double life for many years without attracting undue attention. But the religious façade cannot last forever. Abraham Lincoln is reported to have said that *"You can fool most of the people some of the time and you can fool some of the people most of the time but you cannot fool all the people all the time."*
3. **The heart of the Religious Hypocrite is compartmentalized.** This mental exercise allows a person to function without prolonged guilt having to be dealt with or excessive distraction from normal duties.
4. **The heart of the Religious Hypocrite is sincere in as far as it functions and in whatever category it operates.** When the evil in the heart is allowed to manifest itself, the evil is intentional for it will produce a tremendous amount of personal pleasure on some level. And when religious activities are engaged in the activities also bring soulish pleasure.
5. **The heart of the Religious Hypocrite is bold.** Whatever initial apprehensions of being discovered are quickly silenced.
6. **The heart of the Religious Hypocrite is desperately wicked.** As the religious part of the soul grows in its abilities to perform legal duties before God, the part of the soul enslaved to sin also grows more sophisticated and perverse.
7. **The heart of the Religious Hypocrite is impure, and therefore will not see God in the sense of being able to abide in His presence forever.** Jesus said, *"Blessed are the pure in spirit for they shall see God."*
8. **The heart of the Religious Hypocrite is an unhappy heart.**
  - *Psalms 73:3 For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.... 17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.*
9. **The heart of the Religious Hypocrite cannot be helped by human methods** nor by any efforts at moral reformation. The heart of the Religious Hypocrite is beyond human repair or redemption.
  - Every world principle of wisdom will prove false
  - Every program relied upon will have to be replaced by the next
  - Every promise of hope will be shattered

- Every new practice or technique will be discarded
10. Any effort to use the church or the gospel message alone to defeat the Twisted Man in the soul, deny his presence, or control his urges will prove to be meaningless. Only Christ can sanctify the soul and set it free.
11. The heart of a Religious Hypocrite can be found in any spiritually minded person.
- **Ministers.** *2 Corinthians 11:15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.*
  - **Deacons.** *Rev 2:6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.*
  - **Church members.** *Acts 5:3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?*
  - **Apostles.** *John 6:70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?*
12. **The heart of the Religious Hypocrite is emotionally hardened** which allows the mind to move the body from evil, to religion, and then back to more intense expressions of unrighteousness.
13. **The heart of the Religious Hypocrite can be doctrinally correct and morally corrupt.** Many individuals will be surprised in the Day of Judgment to discover they will not be allowed into heaven.
- *Matt 7:22-23 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*
14. The heart of the Religious Hypocrite is delighted to find those of like mind and faith in spiritual matters, and also delighted to find those of like mind and faith in the area of sensuality, or other areas of deviance from *Scripture*.
- *1 Cor 1:1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, 2 Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: 3 Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

- *1 Cor 5:1 It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. 2 And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. 3 For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, 4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, 5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. 6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?*

15. **The heart of the Religious Hypocrite can give good counsel** to others and yet be incapable of applying spiritual counsel to itself due to pride, fear of exposure, or a concern that all will be lost. And so the slow dance with spiritual death continues until the last waltz.

16. **The heart of the Religious Hypocrite is sensitive to spiritual matters and yet enslaved** to the dark side of life. He can weep at the sight of a wounded Savior, and then commit those sins which wounded the Son of the Living God: *“adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, 20 idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, and heresies” (Gal. 5:19-20).*

17. **The heart of the Religious Hypocrite can evaluate itself**, and even at times detest the Twisted Little Man inside the Soul and never be different. What the Religious Hypocrite can never do is go to the temple and say with sincerity, *“God, be merciful to me the sinner.”*

18. **The heart of the Religious Hypocrite eternally lies** to itself at critical moments in order to engage in sin as easily as it sings the songs of Zion. In this manner a soul is carried captive by Satan at his will.

- I am better now
- I am different
- The past is now behind me
- I will never do that again
- I am just curious
- One little look won't hurt
- One little drink is not that much
- I will be different tomorrow
- No one will know
- It has been a long time
- God will forgive me no matter what I do

19. **The heart of the Religious Hypocrite becomes sophisticated** in sin, and sophisticated in acts of religious worship.

20. **There is hope for the Religious Hypocrite.** The hope is not in a change of heart, but in a new heart where upon is written the Law of God.

Ministers of the gospel must give hope to those in the assembly who may be a secret Religious Hypocrite, while taking heed to themselves.

- *2 Tim 2:25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; 26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.*

1:13

### **Doctrine of Remembrance**

1. God has promised that He will not forget some matters, but will remember.

- **God will remember the covenant He has made, not to destroy the earth again by floodwaters.** *Genesis 9:15 And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.*
- **God will remember the covenant He made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.** *Leviticus 26:42 Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.*

*Note.* It is not wrong in prayer to remind God of the covenant He has made. This becomes a strong basis of appeal for the desires of the heart. *Exodus 32:13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever.*

- **God will remember acts of treachery. They will not go unchallenged or unpunished.** *1 Samuel 15:2 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Rom 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*
- **God will remember the early seeking of Him.** *Jeremiah 2:2 Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown.*

- **God will remember and will visit in judgment sin that is unrepented and unforsaken.** *Joshua 24:19 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. Jeremiah 14:10 Thus saith the LORD unto this people, Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet, therefore the LORD doth not accept them; he will now remember their iniquity, and visit their sins.*
- **God will remember to make a new covenant with His people.** *Jeremiah 31:33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Ezekiel 16:60 60 Nevertheless I will remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant.*

2. As God remembers, so Christians are to remember certain matters.

- **Christians are to remember their spiritual heritage.** *Exodus 13:3 And Moses said unto the people, Remember this day, in which ye came out from Egypt, out of the house of bondage; for by strength of hand the LORD brought you out from this place: there shall no leavened bread be eaten.*
- **Christians are to remember to keep the Sabbath day holy.** *Exodus 20:8 8 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.*
- **Christians are to remember the LORD God Himself.** *Deuteronomy 8:18 But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day. Psalms 20:7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God.*
- **During days of national calamity and warfare Christians are to remember the Lord, and then fight to protect heart, hearth and home.** *Nehemiah 4:14 And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.*
- **Christians are to remember how past transgressions provoke the Lord to anger.** *Deuteronomy 9:7 Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the LORD thy God to wrath in the wilderness: from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the LORD.*

- **Christians are to remember the treachery and hostile acts of others at times, in order to make prudent decisions about future relationships.** *Deuteronomy 25:17 Remember what Amalek [a chieftain of an Edomite tribe] did unto thee by the way, when ye were come forth out of Egypt.*

*Note.* Amalek and the Amalekites attacked the Hebrews without provocation or cause. Moses predicted God would continually wage war against them (Ex 17:14-16), which He did in the days of Joshua.

- **Christians are to remember their cultural and spiritual history.** *Deuteronomy 32:7 Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.*

Succeeding generations should say, “*We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work thou didst in their days, in the times of old*” (*Psalms 44:1*).

- **Christians are to remember the Word of God through the lips of His prophets.** *Joshua 1:13 Remember the word which Moses the servant of the LORD commanded you, saying, The LORD your God hath given you rest, and hath given you this land.*
- **Christians are to remember the great acts of divine miracles and righteous judgments of the Lord.** *1 Chronicles 16:12 Remember his marvellous works that he hath done, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;*
- **Christians are to remember the days of old and meditate on the works of God.** *Psalms 143:5 I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.*
- **Christians are to remember the love of God.** *Song of Solomon 1:4 Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.*
- **Christians are to remember the uniqueness of God.** *Isaiah 46:9 Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me,*
- **Christians are to remember past acts of divine faithfulness in providing for daily needs.** *Matthew 16:9 Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?*
- **Christians are to remember Lot’s wife.** *Luke 17:32 Remember Lot's wife.*



- **Christians are to remember the doctrinal teachings of the Lord Jesus.** *Luke 24:6 He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, John 15:20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. John 16:4 But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.*
  - **Christians are to remember the death of Christ often.** *Luke 22:19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.*
  - **Christians are to remember the sufferings of others.** *Hebrews 13:3 Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.*
  - **Christians are to remember to have respect for, and submit to those who rule in the church.** *Hebrews 13:7 Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.*
  - **Christians are to remember and study the apostolic writings.** *Jude 17 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;*
  - **Christians who have backslidden are to remember the exalted position from which they have fallen and repent.** *Revelation 2:5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.*
  - **Christians who are living an inconsistent and hypocritical life, are to remember all the grace and goodness, and bible doctrine they have received and heard.** *Revelation 3:3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.*
3. Sometimes the people of God remember events and circumstances in an unrealistic manner. When they were upset with the food they had to eat the people complained to Moses saying in *Numbers 11:5 We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick:* Because it is possible for perception to become a reality the heart must be guarded to stay close to the truth.
  4. In a spirit of humility it is not wrong to plead with the Lord to remember to show grace and mercy.

- **Samson pleaded for the Lord to remember him, and bless him with strength.** *Judges 16:28 And Samson called unto the LORD, and said, O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.*
- **Hannah pleaded with the Lord to remember her and bless her with a child.** *1 Samuel 1:11 And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.*
- **King Hezekiah pleaded with the Lord to remember and to extend his life.** *2 Kings 20:3 I beseech thee, O LORD, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore.*
- **King Solomon pleaded with the Lord to remember the past mercies promised to his father David, and bless his own reign.** *2 Chron 6:42 O LORD God, turn not away the face of thine anointed: remember the mercies of David thy servant.*
- **Nehemiah pleaded with the Lord to remember his good deeds, and bless him again.** *Nehemiah 13:14 Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God, and for the offices thereof.*
- **Job pleaded with the Lord to remember how fragile he had been made.** *Job 10:9 Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me into dust again?*
- **David pleaded with the Lord to remember His own attributes of mercy and kindness.** *Psalms 25:6 Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy loving kindnesses; for they have been ever of old.*
- **The psalmist pleaded with the Lord to remember the people He had purchased by a great work of redemption.** *Psalms 74:2 Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old; the rod of thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed; this mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt.*
- **Special prayer is asked that the Lord will remember that foolish individuals had dared to blasphemy His holy name.** *Psalms 74:18 Remember this, that the enemy hath reproached, O LORD, and that the foolish people have blasphemed thy name.*
- **The Lord is asked to remember how short time is for mortals.** *Psalms 89:47 Remember how short my time is: wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?*
- **The Lord is asked to remember when the heart carries the best interest of others and still there is suffering for righteousness sake.** *Psalms 89:50 Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants; how I do bear in my bosom the reproach of all the mighty people;*

- **The Lord is asked to remember the treachery of individuals who should have helped but sought to hurt as the Edomites moved to destroy the Hebrews.** *Psalms 137:7 Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof.*
- **The Lord is asked not to disgrace His throne by turning it from a throne of grace and mercy to a throne of utter destruction.** *Jeremiah 14:21 Do not abhor [hate] us, for thy name's sake, do not disgrace the throne of thy glory: remember, break not thy covenant with us.*
- **Habakkuk pleaded with the Lord to remember to have mercy.** *Habakkuk 3:2 O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy.*
- **The dying thief pleaded with the Lord to be allowed to enter into the kingdom.** *Luke 23:42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.*

“There is a fountain filled with blood drawn from Emmanuel’s veins;  
 And sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains.  
 Lose all their guilty stains, lose all their guilty stains;  
 And sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see that fountain in his day;  
 And there have I, though vile as he, washed all my sins away.  
 Washed all my sins away, washed all my sins away;  
 And there have I, though vile as he, washed all my sins away.”

5. As appeals are made for God to remember certain matters, so an appeal is made for the Lord not to remember other events.
  - **God is asked not to remember youthful sins or more mature transgressions.** *Psalms 25:7 Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD. Psalms 79:8 O remember not against us former iniquities: let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us: for we are brought very low.*
  - **God has promised that He will blot out, and not remember the sins of the saints.** *Isaiah 43:25 I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.*
6. Spiritual healing and blessing comes to those who remember.
  - **The heart of the psalmist was encouraged when he remembered the Lord.** *Psalms 42:6 O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee...*



2. Some people have been, or will be, exempt from the act of dying.

- Enoch walked with God and suddenly was not Gen 5:24; Heb 11:5
- Elijah was taken into heaven by a whirlwind 2 Kings 2
- The living saints at the second coming of Christ will not die 1 Corinthians 15:52

3. Some people have been raised from the dead.

- The son of the widow of Zarephath 1 Kings 17:17-23
- The Shunammite's son 2 Kings 4:32-37
- The young man laid in Elisha's tomb 2 Kings 13:21
- The widow's son Luke 7:12-15
- The daughter of Jarius Luke 8:49-55
- Lazarus John 11:43,44
- Dorcas Acts 9:37-40
- Eutychus Acts 20:9-12

4. There are no deaths in heaven.

- *Revelation 21:4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

5. For a variety of reasons, death has been desired by the greatest of saints.

- Moses Leadership burdens Numbers 11:15
- Elijah Depression 1 Kings 19:4;
- Job Sufferings Job 6:8-11; 7:1-3,15,16
- Jonah Pettiness Jonah 4:8
- Simeon Life fulfilled Luke 2:29
- Paul Anticipating the glory 2 Cor 5:2,8; Phil 1:20-23

6. Physical preparation for death included the following rituals.

- A washing of the body Acts 9:37
- An anointing of the body with oils Matthew 26:12
- Wrapping the body in linen Matthew 27:59
- Burning of incense 2 Chronicles 16:14

7. Sometimes the question of cremation arises. For centuries the Catholic Church opposed cremation and regarded it as a great sin. There are several Biblical examples of cremations.

- **The Philistines.** *Joshua 7:25 And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? The LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones.*
- **King Saul and his sons.** *1 Samuel 31:12 All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Bethshan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there.*
- **False prophets.** *2 Kings 23:20 And he [King Josiah] slew all the priests of the high places that were there upon the altars, and burned men's bones upon them, and returned to Jerusalem.*
- **The kings of Edom.** *Amos 2:1 Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; **because** he burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime:*
- **The men of Judah.** *Amos 6:10 And a man's uncle shall take him up, and he that burneth him, to bring out the bones out of the house, and shall say unto him that is by the sides of the house, Is there yet any with thee? and he shall say, No. Then shall he say, Hold thy tongue: for we may not make mention of the name of the LORD.*

**Note.** It seems that the cremations were performed as a form of contempt (Josh 7:25), because the body was badly mutilated (1 Sam 31:12), or because of expediency (Amos 6:10). The passage in Amos 2:1 seems to indicate that the Lord does not totally approve of the act of cremation.

- *Joshua 7:25 And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? The LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones.*
- *1 Samuel 31:12 All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth-shan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there.*
- *Amos 6:10 And a man's uncle shall take him up, and he that burneth him, to bring out the bones out of the house, and shall say unto him that is by the sides of the house, Is there yet any with thee? And he shall say, No. Then shall he say, Hold thy tongue: for we may not make mention of the name of the LORD.*
- *Amos 2:1 Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime:*

8. A premature death may take place as a form of divine judgment.
  - Death came suddenly upon the Antediluvians
  - The Sodomites
  - King Saul
  
9. Death is symbolized in scriptures.
  - By the pale horse
  - King of Terrors
  
10. Because life is short, death is certain, and eternity is real, the Bible commands men to prepare for death.
  
11. To help instruct the heart, the death of several of the saints has been recorded.
  - The death of Isaac
  - The death of Jacob
  - The death of Moses
  - The death of David
  - The death of Zechariah
  - The death of Jesus
  - The death of Stephen
  - The death of Paul
  
12. In contrast to the death of the righteous, is the death of the wicked.
  - The death of Dives *Luke 16:19-31* 19 *There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. 27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. 29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the*

*dead, they will repent. 31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*

13. The death of the wicked is called the Second Death

- *Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*
- *Revelation 20:14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.*

14. There are a number of different types of deaths mentioned in Scripture.

- *Physical death. Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.*
- *Spiritual death. Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. Colossians 2:3 In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*
- *Operational death. James 2:17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.*
- *Death to self. Matthew 16:24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*
- *The death of the Old Man. Romans 7:9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.*
- *Sexual death. Hebrews 11:12 Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable.*
- *The Second Death. Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. ..14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.*

15. The origin of death is associated with The Fall of man, and the effects of natural depravity.

- *Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:*

16. There are many ways to prepare for death.



- **Pray for divine discernment**

*Psa 39:4 LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am.*

*Psa 90:12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*

- **Work diligently**

*Eccl 9:10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.*

- **Serve the Lord**

*John 9:4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.*

*Rom 14:8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.*

- **Live humbly**

*James 4:15 For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.*

- **Remember that to die is gain**

*Phil 1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

1:16-18

**A First Persons Dramatic Narrative of the Apostle John's  
Eyewitness to Majesty**

**Stanford E. Murrell**

“I first knew about Christ by the testimony of others. My mother Salome was His aunt. It was only natural that I be told of our remarkable family member. It was whispered about that he was born of Mary while she was still a virgin. While the talk of Jesus was interesting, there was work to be done and, with my brother James, I worked.

Our father Zebedee had been very successful in the fishing business. He owned his own vessel, and we were prosperous enough to hire servants. While I was mending my nets one day, a shadow fell across my path. Naturally I glanced up to see who was blocking the sun. Silhouetted against the blue sky was the form of a Man. I shaded my eyes with my hand, and then I saw the face of Jesus. He was ordinary looking in many ways. People did not call Him handsome. He was of medium height, and had a grown man's full beard. His feet were shod with sandals, and He wore an ordinary seamless robe. But there was something compelling about His mere presence.

As I looked up and He looked down, it was as if Jesus was looking into my soul. Suddenly he said something that changed my life forever. He invited me to follow Him. To this day, I cannot explain it, but I rose up and I followed Him. And that is how I came to know Jesus personally. I never expected that I would come to know Christ by Divine revelation, but I did.

One night Peter and James and I were taken by Jesus up into a mountain to pray and talk.

We were very tired and fell asleep only to be awakened by a bright light that glowed all around us. After rubbing our eyes, we actually saw Christ being transfigured before our eyes (Matt. 17). His face suddenly began to shine as the sun, and His clothing became white as the light. That in itself was spectacular, but there was more to come. From out of nowhere appeared Moses and Elijah. Don't ask me how I knew it was Moses and Elijah; I just knew. They had stepped from the realm of eternity into the stream of human consciousness.

I hope you can appreciate what I am saying. Perhaps you have had a sense of the eternal in a small way yourself. You know that a person can pick up a book on history and enter into a particular time period. The narrative can be so intensely followed that the soul is almost transported backwards or forward in time. But then the consciousness of it all abruptly comes to a conclusion and the mind is back in the present.

Of course the difference between that experience, and what I experienced is Moses and Elijah were literally present that night in the mountain. I saw them, and so did Peter and James.

And speaking of Peter, you know he was so excited by the displaying of the Divine glory that he wanted to stay on that mountain forever. An impulsive thought crossed his mind, and Peter blurted it out. *"Lord! He said. This is wonderful! It is good for us to be here. Now, with your permission, let us make three dwelling places; one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."*

I don't know where Peter got the "us" part for the work he was planning that night. James and I were not consulted about his vision to build. We had no desire to stay in the mountain permanently. And why only three dwelling places?

Maybe Peter did not mind the elements, but James and I did. If Peter was going to build three dwelling places, he could just as easily build six, so we could all be more comfortable together.

While Peter was busy making his fantastic plans, and trying to persuade the Lord to let everyone stay, a cloud of light overshadowed us all. That made Peter hush up, and then we heard a voice. It was the voice of God the Father saying, *"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him."*

I do not mind telling you that when we heard the voice of God, we were terrified. We fell down on our faces we were so afraid. We were still hugging the earth when Jesus walked over to us and touched us one by one. *"Peter, James, John, Arise,"* He said, *"and be not afraid."* I remember rising up slowing to my knees and looking around.

James and Peter also looked around. We looked at each other in astonishment. Elijah was gone. Moses was gone. The cloud of light was gone.

There was no one present except the Lord. Other people can say what they will, but I have known Jesus by divine revelation.”

## 2 PETER 2

1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

2:1 the Lord. The word “*Lord*” speaks not of Christ, but of the sovereign God and His authority over all. The word “*bought*” speaks of a purchase, which establishes ownership and authority. What is taught, is that God is sovereign, and reigns in authority over all, even over these false teachers who deny His sovereignty and *rule*. What is not taught in this verse is a universal redemption. The false teachers are not denying the Christ who paid a general redemption price for them. Rather, they are denying the sovereign God who owns them by the right of creation.

2 And many shall follow their pernicious [damnable] ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

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

2:3 many. Of the writing of books, said the Wise Man, there is no end. The same can be true of heresy, which is extreme error. There are many who have advocated religious teachings that will only bring ruin and damnation. The Kingdom of the Cults, and the Kingdom of the Occult, continues to grow year-by-year, century-by-century.

### **Distinguishing Marks of False Teachers**

- False teachers speak evil of the truth. How many, for example have mocked and ridiculed the doctrines of grace, or the vicarious and substitutionary death of Christ, by way of the bloody cross?
- False teachers are greedy, and seek to make merchandise out of God’s people. In his generation Martin Luther attacked in righteous anger, the selling of forgiveness for sins in papal indulgences. Today the church needs to protest the hawking of healing oil for a donation etc. It is an abomination.
- False teachers use clever vocabulary with a double meaning. They suggest prophetic events that will never happen, or divine promises that will never be fulfilled, because God has not given people permission to believe what is being taught. Those who advocate the position that God wants all people to be healthy and prosperous, offers one illustration of the use of equivocation.

- False teachers make merchandise out of God’s people. In some religious structures pastors dare to charge to do weddings, or perform baptisms, and funerals. They charge for the use of the building, and in the name of “*good business*”, make merchandise of God’s people, instead of ministering to them.

**The Promised Fate of  
False Teachers**

- Divine judgment upon false teachers shall not linger. God knows how to deal with charlatans, in time, as well as eternity.
- Damnation sleeps not, but awakes to bring the false teachers to their “*own place*” as Judas found his “*own place*” (Acts 1:25).

4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

2:4 spared not. As God did not spare the angels that sinned in their unholy revolt against the Lord, but prepared a special place for them (Matt. 25:41), so God will not spare judgment upon false teachers. It is a terrifying warning that needs to be heard by ministers in every generation. Oh beware of unholy boldness that dares to say, “*Thus saith the Lord*”, when God has not spoken. Beware of fake healings. Beware of boasting about a ministry larger than it is, and making merchandise out of God’s people by getting them to support projects and programs that are rooted in the lust for power and control.

5 And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

2:5 and spared not. Using a second illustration, Peter presses his point by noting that God did not spare the angels, neither did He spare men and women and young people in the ante-diluvia world. God looked in the hearts of a generation and “*saw that that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. 7 And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them*” (Gen 6:5-8). *Only Noah and his family found grace in the eyes of the LORD.* It is Peter’s argument, that as God did not spare the angels, and he did not spare the world with the exception of a few souls, He will not spare false teachers.

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

2:6 cities of Sodom. So adamant is Peter that God will not let false teachers go unpunished, he uses a third historical event to press his point. As God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah with the divine intent they should be a witness to the world, so God will move against false teachers. The ungodly are given a visible object lesson, neither to live without righteousness, nor to teach contrary to sound doctrine. During the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah, individuals may have attributed the devastation of the cities to natural causes and dismissed the death and destruction as the forces of nature. However, there is a divine interpretation of history to consider. The events of time are united with the eternal decree of God who is the One who works all things after the counsel of His own will.

7 And delivered just Lot, vexed [weary] with the filthy conversation [manner of life] of the wicked:

2: 7 delivered Lot. If there is a ray of hope in the midst of fearful warnings and historical examples of divine rage against evil, it is the Lord knows how to deliver the godly. That Lot is considered to be a just man comes as a surprise. Apart from this inspired insight into the heart of Lot, it would have been impossible to ascribe to him saving grace, according to human observation.

8 (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed [tortured] *his* righteous soul from day to day with *their* unlawful deeds ;)

2:8-9 vexed. Greek, to torture.

**Question.**

*“If the sight of sin wore Lot down, if he was tortured in his soul by the swirling lusts around him why did Lot not leave Sin City? “*

**Answer.**

The answer in part is this. *“Hypocrisy is a weed naturally springing in all grounds. The best heart is not perfectly clear or free of it all” (John Flavel).* Lot was either hypocritical with the citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah by pretending to understand and accept their wicked lifestyle, or he was a hypocrite to his God, pretending to be the friend of God, while in love with the world. Only the goodness of God kept Lot from perishing and dying with others, who were destroyed.

9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the Day of Judgment to be punished:

2:9 out of temptation.

### **Divine Deliverance Techniques from Temptation**

- **God delivers by His Word** *Ps 119:11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee*
- **God delivers by direct intervention.** *Gen 20:6 And God said unto him [Abimelech] in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.*
- **God delivers by the power of His Holy Spirit.** *Rom 8:13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.*
- **God delivers by prompting the use of common sense.** For example, some Christians need to stop making provision for sin. It is foolish to put one's self in the path of temptation. Some Christians need to stop staying up late at night to surf the Internet, or party, or carry on inappropriate conversations. *Rom 13:14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.* The way of escape is through natural sleep.
- **God delivers through sickness or setbacks.** *Ps 119:67 Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.* Every Christian should “kiss the hand that strikes the blow” of adversity.
- **God delivers through exposure.** *2 Sam 12:7 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man.* Had King David not been publically exposed of his sins, he might have progressed in evil, for there is an unholy boldness associated with wrong behavior.
- **God delivers through a premature death.** *1 Cor 11:30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.* Though death may come early, sin ceases, as the Lord brings individuals home to sin no more.
- **God delivers through angelic intervention.** *Luke 17:32 Remember Lot's wife.* Though she looked back to her own peril and destruction, she and Lot had been delivered by the hand of an angel.

- **God deliverers by putting some great principle, or concept, such as honor and trust upon the heart, that subdues the evil passions of the heart** as when Potiphar's wife tempted Joseph. He refused, "*and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand. 9 There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*" (Gen. 38:8-9).

Once the thread of personal and private integrity has been pull out of line the whole fabric of the soul comes unraveled. It is only a matter of time until the divine mosaic of a life of honor is marred, and then destroyed to the point there is no vestige of the original intent of a man made in the image of God.

10 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous [daring] *are they*, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

2:10 after the flesh. The term "*flesh*" is used in the Bible to speak of the lower impulses of man. The term flesh characterizes a man without God, but given to his own thoughts and passions.

#### **Characteristics of those in the Flesh**

- **Those who are in the flesh have moral and mental uncleanness.** Those who are in the flesh have dirty minds, unregenerated by the work of the Holy Spirit, and unwashed by the Word. They are contaminated by the world, the flesh and the devil.
- **Those who are in the flesh are lawless.** They despise government of every sort, including self-government, social government, and especially the government of God. Of God's Son they say, "*We will not have this man to reign over us*" (Luke 19:14).
- **Those who are in the flesh are presumptuous.** They dare to take foolish risks. The story is told of a man who made a small fortune and invested his money in a costly jewel. While on board a ship he toyed with the expensive property and brought it out to look at it. Carelessly he tossed the valuable jewel slightly into the air expecting to catch it in his hand, but suddenly the ship lurched having hit a violent wave. The man, who had been standing near the railing was thrown against it. Instinctively catching himself, he failed to grasp the jewel. It dropped over the side of the ship into the depths of the ocean. Many a person is just as careless with their immortal soul. They toss it about lightly. They dare to take moral and ethical chances for a variety of reasons. They are presumptuous. The ship of life lurches, and all is lost.
- **Those who are in the flesh are self-willed.** One of the greatest WWII propaganda film produced was called *Triumph of the Will*. This 1934 black and white German documentary set forth the rise to power of Adolf Hitler, who understood the principle of the will to power.



- **Those who are in the flesh are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries.** For those Christians who like to rebuke the devil and speak to demons, and other fallen angels, in an authoritative and arrogant way, trying to bind them, beware.
- Not even the holy angels, “*which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord*” (2 Pet. 2: 11). Remember the seven sons of Sceva. “*And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? 16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded*” (Acts 19:14-16).
- **Those who are in the flesh speak evil of the things they understand not.** A woman once assaulted a pastor for his serious study of the *Scriptures*. “*God does not need your education and your degrees,*” she sniffed. “*And madam,*” said the wise pastor, “*God does not need your ignorance either.*” Ps 14:1 *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.*

11 Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

12 But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

13 And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the daytime. Spots [stains] *they are* and blemishes [disgraceful], sporting [reveling] themselves with their own deceivings while they feast [entertain sumptuously] with you;

- **Those who are in the flesh deceive themselves.** No tyrant who has ever lived, no dictator who has ever risen to rule a nation has been free of self-deception. Like king Nebuchadnezzar, the heart can be lifted up with inordinate pride. What is forgotten is a simple lesson of life. If a person were to come along and see a turtle sitting on top of a fence post, it is certain the turtle did not get there alone. Someone put him there. And if a person finds himself the ruler of a nation, or in an exalted position in life, someone put him there. *Rom 9:17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.*

#### **The Fate of those who are in the Flesh**

2:12 natural brute beasts. Those who are in the flesh can know their fate because they are openly told they are as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed. This is a startling statement but not uncommon in Scripture. God has not been silent, or secretive, about the fate of the ungodly, so that in the day of ultimate judgment they will be without excuse claiming they were not warned about the seriousness of their condition, or the severity of the impending judgment.

Rather than fear being stricken in the heart of those who are in the flesh, the heart is hardened so that gospel arrows bounce off. Words no longer touch the soul. “Surely,” it is thought, “no one will willingly die in such a state.”

But people do die, and will continue to die in the flesh and will be destroyed as naturally as a brute beast, because there are spiritual laws that govern the universe according to divine design. There is, for example, the law of sowing and reaping.

*Gal 6:8 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.* Those who are in the flesh “shall receive the reward of unrighteousness” (2 Pet. 2: 13).

The conclusion of the matter is that knowledge is not enough. God must regenerate the heart before there is any turning from a certain burning destruction. Oh for anyone who is walking in the flesh, and meet the characteristics of this divine commentary, I plead with you now, pray this prayer.

*“Lord God, my heart is very hard. It is as hard as a stone. Father God only You can break it up. Only You can give me a heart of flesh that feels and quivers at your touch. I pray now for You to make me willing to obey Your will. Whatever it takes cause me to bend to Your will and your way or I shall certainly perish. Having sown to the flesh I cannot hope but reap the natural results of my foolish and willful decisions. Father God, have mercy on me as one of Your creations. Have mercy on me for the sake of Your Son Jesus and the redemptive work He accomplished at Calvary. Have mercy on me so that You might be glorified by my salvation. Have mercy on me for without mercy I shall perish as I am not perishing. Have mercy I plead on bended knee. Amen.”*

Pray this until you mean it. Pray this until heaven hears. Pray this before you plead in hell for the gospel to be sent to loved ones still living, lest they come to the same place of torment (Luke 16: 27, 28). In all of the prayer and pleading, do not think that sin is logical. It is not. Sin defies logic, which is why despite plain gospel warnings there is no repentance. I tell you the plight of the natural man, the plight of the fleshly man is desperate beyond imagination, and yet, because of the *Scriptures*, all are without excuse.

14 Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling [entrapping] unstable [unfixed] souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous [fraudulent] practices; cursed children:

2:14 eyes full of adultery. Many religious men and women and young people are addicted to pornography. The Internet has made this possible in a way unimagined before. To the pornographic web sites is the lure of the chat room, where in many rooms sexual acts are verbally and mentally engaged twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Multitudes of professing Christians find themselves “having eyes full of adultery”. They find they cannot “cease from sin” despite a guilty conscience, a high risk of exposure, a diminishing spiritual life, the loss of intimacy with their family or spouse, and the cultivation of a secret and hypocritical double life.

The heart has become hardened to gospel exhortations. And so in the chat rooms new comers are taught the language of lust, and unsuspecting and unstable drifters are lured to try a new form of psychological fantasy that becomes all too real as the body responds to the power of words, and the use of the imagination.

15 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son* of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

2:15 loved the wages of unrighteousness. When a professing minister of the gospel declares he does not care how he gets his money, just as long as he gets a fixed amount, something is fundamentally wrong.

16 But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.

2: 16 dumb ass speaking. A scientist was once ridiculing the idea of a donkey talking because the size and shape of the larynx was not just right. Hearing the argument a Christian walked up and said, “*Man, you make a donkey and I will make him talk!*” For the Creator to make, or allow any animal to talk, is nothing remarkable. For example, unlike humans, parrots do not have vocal cords. Instead, they learn to control the movement of the muscles in the throat to direct the airflow in such a way as to reproduce certain tones and sounds—sometimes even human sounds. The presence of parrots’ gives credence to the biblical stories, which would be believed nevertheless apart from empirical data for God has spoken. The point is established. If a bird can talk, why not a snake and a donkey, if God so wills it?

17 These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest [squall]; to whom the mist [gloom] of darkness is reserved forever.

2:17 wells without water. In dry arid countries water is essential to survival. To come to a well without water is to come to that which brings despair and doom. There is a deep dark place reserved for heartless souls that seek to hurt others for personal profit. There is a special judgment reserved for those who are carried from one doctrinal position to the next with ease.

18 For when they speak great swelling *words* of vanity [emptiness], they allure [entrap] through the lusts of the flesh, *through much* wantonness [lasciviousness], those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

2:18 escaped. The pastoral heart of Peter seems to be breaking here as he thinks of individuals who were escaping the ways of error only, on the verge of spiritual liberty, to be ensnared by false teachers who appealed to them on the basis of lustful desires of sinful human nature. The Health and Wealth Prosperity Gospel, which is so popular in America, is known to be sweeping many countries in Africa.

The people who are poor and needy, are being promised material blessings by clever individuals speaking in a boastful manner. The Liberation Gospel of other countries has found a way to kill in the name of Christ, as one class of society is pitted against another in envy.

19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

2:19 a man is overcome. It is possible for a man to preach liberty, and live in bondage to lust. It is possible for a person to preach against greed, and then exploit the poor. It is possible for a person to speak of sacrifice, all the while pursuing riches and honor and power. Jesus warned, "*Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity*" (Matt. 7:22,23).

20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

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

22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

2:20-22 to have known. There is an intellectual knowledge of the gospel that does not save. It is possible to be a student of *Scripture* and not be converted. It is possible to be religious without being regenerated. It is possible to know the God of grace, without having experienced the grace of God in the act of regeneration. Being entangled again with the lusts of the world is a sure sign of such a sad state of the soul. Professing Christian be warned. If you return time and again to a particular sin, with greediness, and an abandoned will, then you are no better than a dog which returns to its vomit, or a washed pig to it wallowing in the muck and mire. You are a hypocrite. "*An hypocrite may be troubled for sin as it blots his name, and wounds his conscience, and brings a scourge, and destroys his soul, and shuts him out of heaven, and throws him to hell. But he is never troubled for sin, he never mourns for sin, he never hates sin because it is contrary to the nature of God, the being of Christ, the Law of God, the glory of God, the design of God, or because of the evil that is in the nature of sin, or because of the defiling and polluting power of sin*" (Thomas Brooks).

## Leader's Study Guide

### *Questions and Answers on 2 Peter 2*

1. Is a universal atonement taught in 2 Peter 2:1?

**Answer.**

The word “*Lord*”, speaks not of Christ, but of the sovereign God and His authority over all. The word “*bought*”, speaks of a purchase, which establishes ownership and authority. What is taught is that God is sovereign, and reigns in authority over all, even over these false teachers who deny His sovereignty and *rule*. What is not taught in this verse is a universal redemption. The false teachers are not denying the Christ who paid a general redemption price for them. Rather, they are denying the sovereign God, who owns them by the right of creation.

2. List four distinguishing marks of a false teacher.

**Answer.**

- False teachers speak evil of the truth.
- False teachers are greedy and seek to make merchandise out of God's people.
- False teachers use clever vocabulary with a double meaning.
- False teachers make merchandise out of God's people.

3. List nine ways God delivers His children from the power and pollution of sin.

**Answer.**

- God delivers by His Word *Ps 119:11*
- God delivers by direct intervention. *Gen 20:6*
- God delivers by the power of His Holy Spirit. *Rom 8:13*
- God delivers by prompting the use of common sense. *Rom 13:14*
- God delivers through sickness or setbacks. *Ps 119:67*
- God delivers through exposure. *2 Sam 12:7*

- God delivers through a premature death. *1 Cor 11:30*
  - God delivers through angelic intervention. *Luke 17:32*
  - God delivers by putting some great principle or concept such as honor and trust upon the heart that subdues the evil passions of the heart such.
4. List seven characteristics of those who are in the flesh.

***Answer.***

- Those who are in the flesh have moral and mental uncleanness.
  - Those who are in the flesh are lawless.
  - Those who are in the flesh are presumptuous.
  - Those who are in the flesh are self-willed.
  - Those who are in the flesh are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries.
  - Those who are in the flesh speak evil of the things they understand not.
  - Those who are in the flesh deceive themselves.
5. How might a person know if they are a religious hypocrite?

***Answer.***

As a dog will return to its vomit, and as a pig to its wallowing in the mud so a hypocrite will return to some strong lust with a hungry appetite, and a smile of delight. The language of lust will be enjoyed, and the body will give itself to its passion and pleasure.

***Memory Work***

*2 Peter 2: 9 The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the Day of Judgment to be punished:*

***Personal Reflection and Application***

1. Do you believe in a universal atonement, or a particular redemption? Explain your position.
2. Of the characteristics of those who are in the flesh how many, if any, applies to you at this very moment? What, if anything, are you doing to put to death the lust of the flesh that war against the soul?
3. If you have tried and failed to subdue the flesh what spiritual lessons have you learned in the process? Will you keep trying to mortify the flesh even if you keep failing? Why or why not?
4. What is your attitude toward sin? Do you run after certain practices you know are contrary to the holiness of God? If so, what specifically are you doing that violates your conscience? Make a list of your various lusts and practices so they will stare back at you from a sheet of paper and bring conviction to your heart and repentance.

## *Leader's Supplemental Material*

2:15

### **The Story of Balaam**

1. Balaam was an ungodly prophet who lived at Pethor, a city of Mesopotamia (Deut. 23:4).
2. Although he was identified with the Midianites (Num. 31:8) Balaam possessed some knowledge of the true God. Balaam gave honor to the Lord for his prophetic gifts, but in the end he was absorbed with himself.
  - *Numbers 31:8 And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.*
3. In the year BC 1401, the Israelites encamped in the Plain of Moab. Balak, the king of Moab, united with the Midianites to drive the Israelites away. He wanted Balaam to curse the Israelites for money.
  - *Numbers 22:5 He sent messengers therefore unto Balaam the son of Beor to Pethor, which is by the river of the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying, Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt: behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me:*
4. Despite his initial apprehensions over the lawfulness of cursing the Israelites, Balaam decided to speak whatever the Lord gave him. Balak agreed.
5. Seven altars were prepared, upon each of which Balak and Balaam offered a bullock and a ram. Three times Balaam started to speak against Israel and three times his cursings were turned to words of blessing and magnificent prophecies.
  - *Numbers 24:17 I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.*
6. Realizing that he could not curse the Israelites, Balaam suggested that the Israelites be led into acts of sexual immorality (Num. 31:16). The results are recorded in Num. 25.
  - *Numbers 31:16 Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.*
7. Balaam's life came to an end when Balaam sided with the Midianites in a pitched battle against the Israelites.

- *Numbers 31:8 And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.*
8. The Word of God looks upon Balaam as an evil person full of evil deeds. Jude 1:11 warns about the error of Balaam, which was believing that God must in righteousness curse the nation of Israel because of the evil in it. Natural morality gives way to a higher morality based upon the work of Christ at Calvary, whereby sinners can be justified in the sight of the Lord.
9. The way of Balaam (2 Pet. 2:15) is the great sin of simony, or commercializing the gifts of God.
- *2 Peter 2:15 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;*
10. The doctrine of Balaam (Rev. 2:14) is to abandon godly separation in favor of worldly conformity. Balaam taught Balak to corrupt people he could not curse (Num. 31:15,16; 22:5; 23:8) by encouraging them to marry Moabite women, and so commit spiritual fornication (James 4:4).
- *Revelation 2:14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.*
  - *Numbers 31:15-16 And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive? 16 Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.*
  - *Numbers 22:25 And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall: and he smote her again.*
  - *Numbers 23:8 How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the LORD hath not defied?*
  - *James 4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.*

The tragedy of Balaam is reflected in that he was a man who could have been used in a positive way in the service of the Lord. His soul was sensitive to spiritual matters, and he had contact with God in a most unusual way until the day greed was found in his heart.



## 2 PETER 3

1 This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:

3:1 pure minds. Christian, take hope. It is possible to have a pure mind in time

### Characteristics of a Pure Mind

- **A pure mind has been renewed by the Holy Spirit.** *Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

- **A pure mind is constantly occupied with the person and work of Jesus Christ.**

“Turn your eyes upon Jesus,  
Look full in His wonderful face,  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,  
In the light of His glory and grace.”

Helen H. Lemmel, 1922

- **A pure mind does not dwell on defiling thoughts that pollute the soul, grieves the Holy Spirit and defiles the conscience.** *Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*
- **A pure mind is able to pray often.** *1 Thessalonians 5:17 Pray without ceasing.*
- **A pure mind is one that is at peace.** *Isa 26:3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*
- **A pure mind is a humble mind.** *Phil 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.*
- **A pure mind is not afraid of anything but sin.** *2 Tim 1:7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

2 That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:

3: 2 spoken before. There is a divine consistency to the gospel message. What the apostles taught and commanded, as the representatives of the Lord and Savior do not violate the testimony or teaching of the holy prophets. Any radical cleavage of doctrinal teaching according to various alleged dispensations will find no support in the *Scripture*. The church is instructed to contend, without being contentious, for the faith delivered to the saints. *Jude 3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*

***Question.***

*“How can the church contend for a faith that was not fully known or developed until the middle of the nineteenth century?”*

***Answer.***

*“It cannot do it.”* The year 1830 is critical in church history, for after this date a System arose that has challenged the *Scripture*. Since 1830 it has been postulated that Jesus is not only coming again the second time for all who believe (Acts 1:11; Heb. 9:28), but a third time as well, in an event called the Rapture. Of course the Rapture event is disguised as a third coming, for it is coupled with the Second Advent proper to form a single second coming – but that can only be accomplished at the expense of language which becomes nonsensical. According to the teaching of the System established by John Nelson Darby and others, the Rapture precedes the coming of Christ to earth by seven years. Its participants, embodied in the church, go back to heaven while great tribulation takes place on earth. Surprisingly enough, according to the System, this removal of the church, and thus the Holy Spirit does not hinder a world wide revival breaking out in the midst of great tribulation, though how souls are saved apart from the preaching of the gospel and the presence of the Holy Spirit, is not always clear.

***Question.***

*“How can two events separated by seven years with the participants moving in different directions be called a single event of two Phases or Stages? And how can anyone come to faith apart from the person and work of the Holy Spirit?”*

***Answer.***

*“It cannot happen.”* A mockery is made of language. The simplicity of *Scripture* is scoffed at.

3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

3:3 last days. Biblically speaking, the “*last days*” have stretched from the days of Christ, to the present hour. *Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.* Any attempt to associate the events of the twenty and the twenty-first century as the last days in a technical and exclusive sense in order to press a prophetic bias is mishandling the Word of God.

4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation.

3:4 the promise of his coming. The promise of the coming of Christ is very simple as set forth in *Scripture*.

- **Christ will come in the same manner in which He went away into heaven.** *Acts 1:10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; 11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.* Since Jesus went away into heaven in a slow but visible manner, the church can believe that He will return in a slow and visible manner when He comes from heaven.
- **Christ will come the second time, not in phases or stages, but as a single event.** *Hebrews 9:28 So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*
- **Holy angels will be present when Jesus comes the second time for all who believe.** *1 Thessalonians 4:16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God:*
- **When Jesus comes the second time for all that believe “the dead in Christ shall rise first” (1 Thess. 4:16).** Others will rise as well, for the resurrection is a general resurrection, as Jesus taught in John 5:28 “...all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”
- **When Jesus comes the living saints shall rise to greet the coming King of kings and Lord of lord.** *1 Thess. 4: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

- **When Jesus comes death will be swallowed up in victory.** *1 Cor 15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*
- **When Jesus comes the kingdoms of this world will be no more.** *1 Cor 15:24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.*

“Down life’s dark vale we wander,  
Till Jesus comes;  
We watch and wait and wonder,  
Till Jesus comes.

All joy His loved ones bringing,  
When Jesus comes;  
All praise through heaven ringing,  
When Jesus comes.

All beauty bright  
and vernal [fresh],  
When Jesus comes;  
All glory, grand, eternal,  
When Jesus comes.

Oh, let my lamp be burning  
When Jesus comes;  
For Him my soul be yearning  
When Jesus comes.

No more heart pangs nor sadness,  
When Jesus comes;  
All peace and joy and gladness,  
When Jesus comes.

All doubts and fears will vanish,  
When Jesus comes;  
All gloom His face will banish,  
When Jesus comes.

He'll know the way was dreary,  
When Jesus comes;  
He'll know the feet grew weary,  
When Jesus comes.

He'll know what griefs oppressed me,  
When Jesus comes;  
Oh, how His arms will rest me!  
When Jesus comes."

Philip P. Bliss, 1873

5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

3:5 willingly are ignorant. There is a personal responsibility that is placed upon each person to accept the gospel and respond to the message of salvation that is received. The heart that says "*I cannot believe*" is telling a truth and yet is without excuse, for what such a person can do is to ask to be made willing in the day of salvation. To the unconverted comes this appeal. Call upon the name of the Lord and He will come and help you. "*Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages*" (Isa 49:8). Let no man, woman, or child, be found to be willingly ignorant of the way of salvation or the truth of Scripture. "*We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. 2 (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation)*" ( 2 Cor 6:1-2),

6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

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.

3:5-7 reserved unto fire. Peter returns to the theme of divine judgment upon the unbelieving and the unrepentant. The apostle is not being mean spirited or harsh. He simply knows it is a fearful matter to fall into the hands of the living God without the protection of the Cross-and the shed blood of Christ. The floodwaters that once covered the earth during the days of Noah are designed to remind succeeding generations that God will not be mocked. The wicked can be and will be suddenly cut off and that without warning.

8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

3:8 beloved. In contrast to those who mock and scoff and are willingly ignorant Peter speaks to the “*beloved.*” He does not want the church to be ignorant of one matter in particular concerning time. In the divine economy there is no past or present or future. God is the eternal now. Is that significant? It is because the only hope for the salvation of any soul is the patience of God in this spiritual matter. With this in mind Peter continues to teach.

9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

3:9 The Lord is not slack. “*When the end shall come, and when the final judgment shall take place, all men and women who have ever lived shall be raised to stand there before God in judgment, and then this delay will in itself be the one thing that will finally condemn them. The world will be left without an excuse. God will be able to say, ‘The Gospel was preached, Christ was offered to you and throughout all these long centuries I waited, I delayed, I gave you the opportunity.’ The righteousness of God will be revealed. The world will be left without a vestige of an excuse. Thank God that there has been this delay. Where would you and I have been had it not been for it? The long-suffering and the patience of God! ‘The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance,’ says Paul. And again at the end of this chapter we find Peter saying once more, ‘Account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation’*” (Dr. Lloyd-Jones).

3:9 not willing that any should perish. In contrast to universal passages, there are many *Scriptures* that teach in definite terms that Christ performed a saving work so as to infallibly redeem a particular people, even the elect given to Him by the Father. Peter illustrates this truth by teaching that the Second Coming of Christ will take place according to the will and purpose of God, which includes the calling out of a people prior to that hour. God is not slack regarding the fulfillment of His promise. Rather, there is a group that is the object of His forbearance. God is not willing that these certain ones perish. He wants them to come to repentance and they will. Christ will then return when this people is complete in number. Until then God will work in a patient manner to bring the elect to salvation.

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

3:10 a thief in the night. One technique of a thief in the Middle East, in ancient times, was to use overwhelming force at an unexpected hour, such as the middle of the night. When Christ comes the second time (Heb. 9:28) there will be no secret silent appearance. He will come at an unexpected hour, and with overwhelming force to startle the nations of the earth.

11 *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation [manner of life] and godliness,

3:11 what manner of persons. As Peter contemplates the end of time and the destruction of heaven and earth, he considers the temporal to be a strong motive for emphasis on the eternal. Peter was concerned about the low level of spiritual life in his generation as A.W. Tozer was concerned during his lifetime (April 21, 1897 – May 12, 1963). Mr. Tozer was constantly exhorting the church to think more seriously in her pursuit of God. “*We must have better Christians,*” he wrote, and for this reason.

*“Evangelicalism as we know it today in its various manifestations does produce some real Christians. We have no wish to question this; we desire rather to assert it unequivocally. But the spiritual climate into which many modern Christians are born does not make for vigorous spiritual growth. Indeed, the whole evangelical world is to a large extent unfavorable to healthy Christianity. And I am not thinking of Modernism either. I mean rather the Bible-believing crowd that bears the name of orthodoxy.*

*We may as well face it: the whole level of spirituality among us is low. We have measured ourselves by ourselves until the incentive to seek higher plateaus in the things of the Spirit is all but gone. Large and influential sections of the world of fundamental Christianity have gone overboard for practices wholly unscriptural, altogether unjustifiable in the light of historic Christian truth and deeply damaging to the inner life of the individual Christian. They have imitated the world, sought popular favor, manufactured delights to substitute for the joy of the Lord and produced a cheap and synthetic power to substitute for the power of the Holy Ghost. The glowworm has taken the place of the bush that burned and scintillating personalities now answer to the fire that fell at Pentecost.*

*The fact is that we are not today producing saints. We are making converts to an effete type of Christianity that bears little resemblance to that of the New Testament. The average so-called Bible Christian in our times is but a wretched parody on true sainthood. Yet we put millions of dollars behind movements to perpetuate this degenerate form of religion and attack the man who dares to challenge the wisdom of it.*

*Clearly we must begin to produce better Christians. We must insist on New Testament sainthood for our converts, nothing less; and we must lead them into a state of heart purity, fiery love, separation from the world and poured-out devotion to the Person of Christ. Only in this way can the low level of spirituality be raised again to where it should be in the light of the Scriptures and of eternal values” (Excerpted from Of God and Men).*

12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

3:12 shall be dissolved. While God has made a covenant not to destroy the earth by water (Gen. 9:14-15), He will renovate the universe by fire. With the present knowledge of the atomic structure of the universe it is conceivable how such an act could occur.

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

3:13 dwelleth righteousness. Of all the questions left unanswered perhaps no question is more important than this one: “*Lord, why did you create the way you did?*” Because individuals can conceive of a world without sin or sickness, a world without sorrow or suffering it is tempting to stand in judgment upon God and say He was wrong to create the way He did. It would also be wrong to do that. God is holy, just and good. He is wise and wonderful and can do no wrong. Therefore, while the great mystery of the present creation remains, so does hope for the future. Paradise lost will one day be paradise restored. There will be new heavens and a new earth untouched and untarnished by sin. Perfect righteousness shall one day be a spiritual reality and God will be most glorified. With this hope in the heart, Peter exhorts believers to be found faithful.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot [unblemished], and blameless.

3:14 beloved. With a tender heart Peter addresses the church as the “beloved”. God’s people are exhorted to be found in Christ with the characteristics of peace, moral purity and without personal blame or the need to be censured.

15 And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;

16 As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.



3:16 hard to be understood. “Many of us would agree with Peter when he says that parts of Paul’s letters are hard to understand! And there are difficulties and apparent discrepancies in other parts of the Bible too. On this matter of discrepancies, I remember reading something written by an old seventeenth-century Puritan named William Bridge. He said that harping on discrepancies shows a very bad heart, adding: ‘For a godly man, it should be as it was with Moses. When a godly man sees the Bible and secular data apparently at odds, well, he does as Moses did when he saw an Egyptian fighting an Israelite: he kills the Egyptian. He discounts the secular testimony, knowing God’s Word to be true. But when he sees an apparent inconsistency between two passages of Scripture, he does as Moses did when he found two Israelites quarreling: he tries to reconcile them. He says, ‘Aha, these are brethren, I must make peace between them.’ And that’s what the godly man does”’ (*Your Father Loves You*, James Packer).

17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

3:17 the error of the wicked. The basic error of the wicked is that of unbelief. They do not believe they will suffer the consequences of their actions. The goodness and meekness of God is mistaken for weakness. Moral carelessness sets in. Because judgment is not immediate an unholy boldness to sin grows. Reason is abandoned and the principle of pleasure with the will to power is followed. “*Do not be led away with the error of the wicked*” pleads Peter.

3:17 fall from your own steadfastness. The exhortations in *Scripture* to guard the heart and to not fall from grace or from a holy resolve should not be carried to the extreme to teach the loss of salvation. Those whom the Father has given to the Son shall not be ultimately and finally lost. This is the promise of Jesus. *John 6:37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*

With that said the careless professing believer should be careful lest the grace of God has been received in vain. The careless professing Christian can be finally lost for not persevering in the sphere of faith which characterizes those truly born again. There is no room in the kingdom of God for the careless carnal Christian, not in theory and not in practice. Peter does not expect the beloved to be led away with the error of the wicked. Nor does he expect the beloved to fall from their own resolve to be steadfast in the sphere of the faith any more than a parent expects an obedient child to act in an inappropriate manner when they exhort them to “*behave*” while away from home. These gospel exhortations are not without serious consequences and meaning. But they must be balanced with the whole counsel of God on the matter of the ultimate salvation of the soul. The heart of a Christian hears these exhortations and in holy fear resolve to be faithful to the end and to do right. “*Though the stars fall from the heavens,*” said Dr. Bob Jones, Sr. “*do right.*”

18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and forever. Amen.

3:18 grow in grace and in the knowledge.

### **Growing in Grace**

- The believer grows in grace when sin is resisted and virtue is embraced.
- The believer grows in grace when a spirit of retaliation is not desired, for the heart has learned to esteem others better than themselves.
- The believer grows in grace when pain and suffering is endured without complaining in a spirit of meekness and submission to the will of the Father. The hand is kissed that strikes the blow.
- The believer grows in grace when those who have rendered a harsh judgment, or sought to hurt, are prayed for without anger and with sincere good will.
- The believer grows in grace when there is a seeking of the salvation of the wicked with patience as God is patient and waits to bring souls to Himself.
- The believer grows in grace when the Lord's sovereignty is accepted in every situation because the heart is finally and fully convinced He knows best.

### **Growing in Knowledge**

- The believer grows in the knowledge of Christ when the Lord's spirit is understood as well as His doctrinal teaching.
- The believer grows in the knowledge of Christ when the essence of His attributes are comprehended as to why He does what He does.
- The believer grows in the knowledge of Christ when there is a better understanding of the great love the Savior manifests in His longsuffering to those who shall yet be the heirs of salvation.
- The believer has grown fully in the knowledge of Christ when the "Why" question is no longer asked but the heart says of the Savior, "*He does all things well.*"

3:18 Lord and Savior. There is no salvation of the soul until the lordship of Christ is thoroughly recognized. The modern theology of "making" Christ "lord" of one's life subsequent to salvation and uniting it to sanctification is a reversal of the divine order and has produced havoc in the body of Christ with superficial expressions of conversions. Jesus asked plainly, "*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*" (Luke 6:46).

3:18

## A Grand Doxology

*“To him be glory both now and forever. Amen. “*

### Leader’s Study Guide

#### *Questions and Answers on 2 Peter 3*

1. List seven characteristics of a pure mind.

#### *Answer.*

- A pure mind has been renewed by the Holy Spirit. *Romans 12:1,2*
  - A pure mind is constantly occupied with the person and work of Jesus Christ.
  - A pure mind does not dwell on defiling thoughts that pollute the soul, grieves the Holy Spirit and defiles the conscience. *Philippians 4:8*
  - A pure mind is able to pray often. *1 Thessalonians 5:17*
  - A pure mind is one that is at peace. *Isa 26:3*
  - A pure mind is a humble mind. *Phil 2:5*
  - A pure mind is not afraid of anything or anyone but sin. *2 Tim 1:7*
2. Question. *“How can the church contend for a faith that was not fully known or developed until the middle of the nineteenth century”?*

#### *Answer.*

*“It cannot do it.”* The year 1830 is critical in church history for after this date a System arose that has challenged the *Scripture*. The System postulates a third coming of Christ, though it covers this novel teaching in meaninglessly language, and attaches it to the promise of the second coming of Hebrews 9:28. It also anticipates a great tribulation period for the world, minus the church, contrary to the historical fulfillment of the prophecy of Jesus in Matthew 24, Mark 14 and Luke 21.

3. What will happen when Jesus comes again the second time for all that believe?

**Answer.**

- Christ will come in the same manner in which He went away into heaven. *Acts 1:10*
  - Christ will come the second time, not in phases or stages, but as a single event. *Hebrews 9:28*
  - Holy angels will be present when Jesus comes the second time for all who believe. *1 Thessalonians 4:16.*
  - When Jesus comes the second time for all that believe “*the dead in Christ shall rise first*” *1 Thess. 4:16.*
  - When Jesus comes the living saints shall rise to greet the coming King of kings and Lord of lord. *1 Thess. 4: 17*
  - When Jesus comes death will be swallowed up in victory. *1 Cor 15:51*
  - When Jesus comes the kingdoms of this world will become no more. *1 Cor 15:24*
4. Provide six ways to grow in grace.

**Answer.**

- The believer grows in grace when sin is resisted and virtue is embraced.
  - The believer grows in grace when a spirit of retaliation is not felt, for the heart has learned to esteem others better than themselves.
  - The believer grows in grace when pain and suffering is endured without complaining in a spirit of meekness and submission to the will of the Father. The hand is kissed that strikes the blow.
  - The believer grows in grace when those who have rendered a harsh judgment, or sought to hurt, are prayed for without anger and with sincere good will.
  - The believer grows in grace when it seeks the salvation of the wicked and are patient as God waits to bring them to faith.
  - The believer grows in grace when he truly accepts the Lord’s sovereignty in every situation being finally convinced He knows best.
5. State four ways to grow in knowledge of Christ our Lord and Savior.

**Answer.**

- The believer grows in the knowledge of Christ when the Lord's spirit is understood as well as His doctrinal teaching.
- The believer grows in the knowledge of Christ when the essence of His attributes are comprehended as to why He does what He does.
- The believer grows in the knowledge of Christ when He understands the great love the Savior manifests in His longsuffering to those who shall yet be the heirs of salvation.
- The believer has grown fully in the knowledge of Christ when he no longer asks "Why" but says of the Savior, "*He does all things well.*"

**Memory Work**

*2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

*2 Peter 3:18 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.*

**Personal Reflection and Application**

1. Of the seven characteristics of a pure mind, how many honestly convey your own spiritual maturity in this area?
2. Of the four ways to grow in knowledge of Christ Jesus have you learned these lessons? What other great truth or insight has the Holy Spirit taught or given you about Christ?
3. Do you believe that Jesus is coming again in the same manner in which He went away—slowly, visibly, bodily—or have you been taught something different, such as a secret silent coming of Christ for His saints, and then a return with them after seven years with His saints?
4. Can you provide one clear passage in the *New Testament*, from which the church should get its ultimate view of eschatology, which clearly and simply teaches a seven-year tribulation for the world minus the church? If not, would you consider returning to the simplicity of *Scripture* and Hebrews 9:28?
5. Is the biblical emphasis on the Lordship of Christ for salvation an imposition position to hold? Why or why not?

### *Leader's Supplemental Material*

3:18 Lord and Saviour.

Only those who have first bowed to Christ as the divine LORD GOD can hope for Him to be their Savior. Notice the divine order and emphasis in this matter of the Lordship of Christ.

- *Luke 1:47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.*
- *Luke 2:11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*
- *John 4:42 And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.*
- *Acts 5:31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*
- *Eph 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Saviour of the body.*
- *Phil 3:20 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:*
- *1 Tim 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope;*
- *1 Tim 2:3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;*
- *2 Timothy 1:10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:*
- *Titus 1:3 But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;*
- *Titus 1:4 To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.*
- *Titus 2:10 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.*
- *Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;*

- *Titus 3:4 But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,*
- *Titus 3:6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;*
- *2 Peter 1:1 Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:*
- *2 Peter 1:11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*
- *2 Peter 2:20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.*
- *2 Peter 3:2 That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:*
- *2 Peter 3:18 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.*
- *Jude 25 To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.*