2 Peter

Lesson notes on the Second Epistle of Peter

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"Knowing God: The Secret to Success"

(2 Peter 1:1-4)

1/11/09

Introduction:

- ***Knowing God Personally (through His Word) is the Secret to Successful Christian Living!***

I. Knowing God is the secret to a life <u>filled</u> with <u>grace and peace</u> (v.2)

II. Knowing God is the secret to a life <u>lived</u> with <u>Godliness and moral virtue</u> (v.3)

III. Knowing God is the secret to a life <u>powered</u> by <u>God's character</u> and <u>not the world's corruption</u> (v.4)

"Knowing God: The Secret to Success"

(2 Peter 1:1-4)

1/11/09

Introduction:

Two things always seem to go together:

1) Persecution & 2) False Teaching

1 Peter emphasized (stressed) the believer's need to be armed against persecution, and this letter of 2 Peter emphasizes the need to be armed against false teaching.

This epistle is a reminder (1:12, 3:1) of truth Peter previously taught God's people. This letter is to remind God's people that the most effective way to resist the heretics and false teachers and false teaching is to mature or grow in their knowledge of God/Christ through His Word, the Bible.

Warning regarding false teachers (cp. 2 Pet. 2:1) makes this epistle similar to that of Jude. Both books are vital to know and understand in these days of mass deception.

The clear theme of verses 2 – 4 involves the word "knowledge" (v. 2, 3; cp. v. 5, 6, 8).

To know the sciences, social studies and mathematics is great knowledge, but the greatest of all knowledge is to know God (the One Who made it all).

We can know about God via creation (Ps.19:1; Rom.1:20); However, we get to know God through a relationship with Jesus Christ and that through a knowledge of God's self-revelation in the Bible.

> The word "theology" is derived from the Greek word *theos* meaning God and *logos* meaning word or rational study of. The Bible teaches that the infinite God transcends the finite, limited, dependent mind of man (Is. 55:8-9). Although God is incomprehensible (Job 11:7, 23:3, 8, 9; Is. 40:18), the Scriptures teach that God has revealed Himself so that we can know about Him and know Him (Deut. 29:29; Jn. 14:7, 17:3; I Jn. 5:20).
>
> **What will a knowledge of God do for me?**
>
> A knowledge of God will:

1) Instruct you (You will formulate a sound and sane world-view or philosophy of life)

2) Humble you (When you see Him as He really is, you will then be able to see yourself as your really are)

3) Encourage you (When His awesome attributes are considered, your heart will be stirred, strengthened, and secure)

4) Mold you (It will provide a pattern for you to follow; we should shape our lives after the moral characteristics of our Creator - I Peter 1:16)

- ***Knowing God Personally (through His Word) is the Secret to Successful Christian Living!***

I. Knowing God is the secret to a life filled with grace and peace (v.2)

v. 1
"Simon" – Peter's real name; named after Jacob's son, Simeon (Gen. 29:33).

"Peter" – Simon's surname (nicknamed by Jesus – Mk. 3:16, Mt. 16:18; cp. Acts 10:5, 32, 11:13). Peter, from *petros* meaning a stone. He would be a servant and apostle of the "Rock of Ages," Jesus Christ (the Petra).

Jesus Christ is called a "stone" or "rock" in Scripture.

--"Spiritual rock" in the O.T. (I Cor. 10:4)
--"Stumbling stone" (Rom. 9:33)
--"Rock of offence" (I Pet. 2:8)
--"Cornerstone" (Eph. 2:20; cp. Mt. 21:42)
--The "foundation" stone (I Cor. 3:11)
--"The Lord is my rock and my fortress" - Ps. 18:2
(cp. Ps. 18:31, 46; 28:1; 31:2-3; 40:2; 42:9; 61:2, 6; 71:3; 78:35; 89:26; 92:15; 94:22; 95:1; cp. I Sam. 2:2; II Sam. 22:3, 32, 47; 23:3)
--The "stone" in prophecy (Zech. 3:9; cp. Rev. 5:6)

When Peter identifies himself, he calls himself a "**servant"** (*doulos*) – a lowly, dedicated bond-servant (note: he never refers to himself as a "Pope").

He also reveals his God-given title, **"apostle"** (sent one, commissioned one – with the task of spreading the Gospel and feeding God's sheep – John 21:16-17).

"An apostle <u>of Jesus Christ</u>" –

--Sent <u>by</u> Jesus Christ (in the Great Commission – Mt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15-16)

--Sent <u>for</u> Jesus Christ (to spread the gospel primarily among the Jewish world – Gal. 2:7-8)

As an apostle, Peter was appointed by Jesus Christ to carry out a task <u>on behalf of</u> Christ and with the <u>authority</u> of Christ (backing him up).

"Obtained" - to obtain by lot (by God's grace); our faith (the capacity to believe the Gospel) is a gift from God.

"Here it is not the faith as a body of doctrine, but the faith or God-given capacity to trust Him that brings a man salvation" (Green, cited by Rogers, p. 581).

"Like precious faith" – faith equal in value or worth. Our faith and Peter's faith are of the same status, which makes every child of God equal in privilege. We are "equally privileged" in Christ. Not only are both Jews and Gentiles sharing a common precious faith, but we share the same blessing of faith that Peter and the rest of the Apostles had.

Our faith is as precious as Peter's!

We have received the same precious faith as Peter, just as we have received the same gift of the Holy Spirit: **Acts 11:17**
Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?

This equally precious ability to believe the Gospel came to us by means of Christ's righteousness. He is just and right to grant the same gift of precious faith to all of His children.

When it comes to the quality of our faith, no one has it above anyone else. Quantities of faith may differ among God's children, but the quality of faith is shared in common. Faith is simply the capacity to fully trust Jesus Christ.

Note: It is through our God and Savior Jesus Christ that we share this precious faith (implied here by the one definite article governing two nouns is the Deity of Christ!).

v. 2

"Grace and peace" - Having received the grace of God and peace with God for salvation, Peter wishes God's people to experience a greater measure of grace and peace as we live the Christian life.

Such blessings of "grace and peace" can be more than added to us – they can be multiplied to us. But how? The answer: In your knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord. By knowing more about God, we tap into greater repositories of grace and peace. Implied here is this: to know God is to know grace and peace, and to not know God is to not know grace and peace.

"Grace" – the unmerited kindness of God flows unreservedly deeper/richer & fuller to those who know Him more deeply, richly, & fully.

"peace" – the serenity of soul or calmness of spirit is showered upon those who sit at His feet and learn of Him.

Matthew 11:28-29

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

The word **"knowledge"** is a strengthened form of *gnosis* (1:5-6, 3:18) and implies a more intimate and personal relationship than the simple term. . . the meaning (with *epi*) is "know exactly, completely, through and through" (Hiebert, p. 39).

II. Knowing God is the secret to a life <u>lived</u> with <u>Godliness and moral virtue</u> (v.3)

v. 3
"According as" = In the same way as grace and peace come by <u>knowing God</u>, so real living and godliness come to us by knowing God.

It's because of God's great power and enablement that we have already received all that we need for successful Christian living. My Christian friend, we are already equipped with everything we need for good living and good reverential obedience to our Maker. How is this quality of life and godliness ours? By or through our "knowledge of Him."

"All things" – spiritual, not material, provisions are in view (Hiebert, p. 44).

Nothing I need for successful Christian living is unavailable! It is all here in God's Word! This is why Peter will make such a strong appeal for us to take heed to the written Scriptures (1:19-21).

Have you come to know God? Have you come to know the One who is inviting you to Himself? If not, He is calling out to you by His glory and goodness! He is requesting that you come to Him today.

III. Knowing God is the secret to a life <u>powered</u> by <u>God's character</u> and <u>not the world's corruption</u> (v.4)

v. 4

"Whereby" - by means of God's splendid glory and moral goodness ("virtue") are given to you and me "MEGA" promises and precious promises. These promises are so great and so valuable because they involve the believer sharing in the very life of God.

Verse 3 describes God's "divine power" and verse 4 His "divine nature."

"Partakers of the divine nature" - not that we will share in Divinity but in Divinity's character. We can actually take on certain attributes of God! Moral attributes which Peter will expand upon in vv. 5-7.

We have already in large measure escaped the rotten, putrefying, stinking corruption that operates in the world by means of man's sensual appetites.

The promise here is that we can to ever-increasing levels attain more God-likeness and less world-likeness.

Conclusion:

Truth shall set you Free!

See: John 8:30-32

"As he spake these words" – While Jesus taught about His equality with God the Father and the Father's authentication of His Son, many of the Jews believed in Him. They came to trust His Person while they listened to His words.

This is exactly how "faith" comes into a person's life – by their hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). You cannot have faith in Christ apart from the Word of God. Faith and the Word cannot be separated. To have faith apart from God's Word is to have a faith without a solid foundation.

Therefore, whenever you witness, always give the Word of God.

At the very least these people made an outward profession of faith (Rienecker, citing Morris & Schnackenburg).

There is a belief which is not a true saving faith (Acts 8:13-24; Ja. 2:19; 1 Cor. 15:2).

The "belief" was perhaps "nominally at any rate, as in John 2:23" (Robertson Word Pictures V, p. 148).

"Many believed. Yet before long they were picking up stones to cast at him (8:59). It is the old story of pseudo faith" (The Wycliffe Bible Commentary, Pfeiffer & Harrison, Moody Press, p. 1091).

v. 31
Some might profess to be believers (or true disciples) but the real test is whether or not they remain committed to the Word of Christ.

Jesus now singles out those whose faith has been ignited upon hearing His words.

"Continue" = to <u>remain</u> or <u>abide</u> in the Word of Christ

The grand mark of a true disciple of Christ is <u>continuity</u> in His Gospel message.

A true disciple is one who holds on to the truth and never lets go. There is no apostasy for a true disciple; there are no defectors from genuine Christianity; there is no true child of God who will ever abandon his/her faith in the word of Christ.

"Then are ye" – Jesus uses His words carefully. He does not say "then will ye be."

He is not saying that continuing in His Word will make you a disciple, but rather that continuing in His Word reveals that you "are" a true disciple.

"My disciples indeed" – A disciple is one who has come under the spiritual teachings and disciplines of His master (the word discipline and disciple are related terms).

The word "disciple" refers to one who has been trained in such a way that he mimics, imitates, or copies the lessons and lifestyle of his teacher.

That is why the first-century Antiochian believers were called "Christians," because others noticed how much they resembled Christ (in their actions and reactions, in their attitudes and motivations).

"Disciples indeed" – the word "indeed" means truly. It is the same word as the word "truth" in v. 32.

A disciple "indeed" refers to a true, bonafide, real or genuine disciple. The statement then does not refer to a good disciple or a better disciple (as if some might assume that Jesus is implying that one might be a disciple but not a good one, unless He continues in His Word).

Here, Jesus is referring to a real disciple (a real Christian) as opposed to a false one.

Jesus is saying: "Your future loyalty to My teaching will prove the reality of your present profession. . . continuance in the word (teaching) proves the sincerity or insincerity of the profession. It is the acid test of life" (R.W.P. p. 149).

"Ye shall know the truth" – Here, the term "truth" is linked to the term "word" in v. 31. It is interesting that Christ, who is the living "word" (*logos* – Jn. 1:1, 14) and who is the living "truth" (Jn. 14:6), is the one who gave us His written word which is written truth (Jn. 17:17 – "Thy word is truth").

"Knowing the truth" is inseparably connected to continuing in Christ's Word (v. 31). Therefore, your relationship with God's Word will determine your knowledge of the truth which will in turn determine whether or not you are **"free"** from sin.

Question: How much time have you spent in God's Word this week?

Truth is the engine or driving force of the Christian's life.

Apart from the truth we dwell in the realm of lies, deceit, darkness, and death!

A good definition of truth: Truth (*aletheian*) is reality; it comes to us as reality that has been revealed, unveiled, unsealed, or opened up. When God's revelation opens up before our eyes, we come to see and know reality. The fog and mist of Satan's lies is lifted and the reality of Jesus Christ and His will becomes clear to us.

He is the truth (Jn. 14:6) because He not only tells us reality, but He is reality. He is really God. He is in fact God in visible form. He is the personification of everything that is real.

"**You will know" –** future middle – meaning: you will come to know for yourself. You will be personally enlightened or illuminated to the truth.

'The truth shall make you free" –

***"the" truth -
Truth is exclusive (truth is not relative; ex. What is true for you may not be true for me)
Truth is not optional, where you can pick any set of beliefs and turn out okay

***"shall make you"
Truth is powerful

***"shall make you free" –
Truth is liberating

The word "free" means to be released from enslavements; to be unshackled from that which held you captive.

"Free" – free from what?

Free from enslavement of <u>sin</u> (v. 34)

Free from the lies of <u>Satan</u> (v. 44-45)

"Freedom *intellectual, moral, spiritual) is only attainable when we are set free from darkness, sin, ignorance, superstition and let the light of the world shine on us and in us" (RWP, p. 149).

The precious theme of freedom from condemnation of the Law and from the enslavement of sin is found in verses such as:
Romans 6:18
Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

Romans 8:2
For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

2 Cor. 3:17
Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

Galatians 5:1
Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

1 Peter 2:16
As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

Knowing the truth about . . .

- God sets you free from the lie and enslavement of idolatry
- Man sets you free from the lie and enslavement of humanism
- Creation sets you free from the lie and enslavement of evolution
- Salvation sets you free from the lie and enslavement of false religion
- Love sets you free from the lie and enslavement of self-centeredness
- Marriage sets you free from the lie and enslavement of divorce and adultery
- Church sets you free from the lie and enslavement of the cults

There is one main truth for all. The Gospel of Jesus Christ.

John 8:36 - If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Get to know God! *(not just know about God; but to know Him personally)*

John 17:3 - And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

> *If a servant of God is uncertain of his Master, he will be uncertain of everything that follows in his service. If you and I have no doubt about having seen God, then our divine service will grow sweeter and clearer and easier every year we live. I have had men say to me, "Didn't Paul's Christian life begin with the question, 'What wilt thou have me to do?' " No, it did not; no life begins with that question. It began with the question, "Who art thou, Lord?" (Acts 9:5ff). —Bible Illustrations*

If you know Him, get to know Him better!

- To know someone, you must spend time with them.
- To know someone, you must be a good listener.
- To know someone, you must see them in various situations and circumstances.

To know God is to trust God (and this is the key to all successful living)

When you come to know God's attributes (His character), you come to know Him and His will (plan).

God's Attributes

A. **GOD'S ESSENCE** (Attributes of ***Personality***)
(God's Attributes that reveal His personal nature)

* 1. God is Spirit
2. God is Life
3. God is Intelligent
4. God is Emotional
5. God is Purposeful
6. God is Active

B. **GOD'S GREATNESS** (Attributes of ***Perfection***)
(God's Attributes that reveal His distinctive ability
[i.e. attributes that belong only to deity])

*	1.	God is Self-Existent	(the independence of God)
	2.	God is All-Powerful	(the omnipotence of God)
	3.	God is All-Knowing	(the omniscience of God)
	4.	God is All-Wise	(the omnisapience of God)
	5.	God is Always Present	(the omnipresence of God)
	6.	God is Sovereign	(the control/authority of God)
	7.	God is Unchangeable	(the immutability of God)
	8.	God is Eternal	(the timelessness of God)
	9.	God is Beyond Full Comprehension	(the incomprehensibility of God)

C. **GOD'S GENUINENESS** (Attributes of ***Purity***)
(God's Attributes that reveal His moral character)

*	1.	God is Holy	(the set-apartness of God)
	2.	God is Righteous	(the justice of God
	3.	God is True	(the honesty / truthfulness of God)
	4.	God is Faithful	(the loyalty / trustworthiness of God)

D. **GOD'S GOODNESS** (Attributes of ***Piety***)
(God's Attributes that reveal His expression of benevolence)

* 1. God is Love
2. God is Merciful
3. God is Gracious
4. God is Patient

Make the pursuit of this knowledge the greatest pursuit of your life, and you will come to know true success!

Diligent Spiritual Determination

2 Peter 1:5-11
1/18/09

Introduction:

- ***If you claim to be His, make up your mind to be spiritually determined!***

When you are deeply concerned about your spiritual life, you will…

I. **Be determined to <u>PILE UP</u> Christian Graces upon your <u>faith</u>** (v.5-7)



II. **Be determined to <u>be USEFUL & FRUITFUL</u> in your <u>knowledge of Christ</u>** (v.8-9)

III. **Be determined to make <u>ABSOLUTELY SURE</u> that you are <u>truly God's child</u>** (v.10-11)

Diligent Spiritual Determination

2 Peter 1:5-11
1/18/09

Introduction:

The emphasis in verses 5 – 11 is found in the word: **"diligence"** (v. 5, 10)

All of us are diligent about one thing or another.

Some are diligent regarding their pursuit of wealth; others over their physical appearance; others over their personal pleasure, etc.

We need to be spiritually conscientious!

We put great effort into many secular things that do not matter nearly as much as our Christian character.

- ***If you claim to be His, make up your mind to be spiritually determined!***

When you are deeply concerned about your spiritual life, you will…

I. Be determined to PILE UP Christian Graces upon your faith
(v.5-7)

v. 5
"Add to your faith" – Faith is the foundation of the Christian life. Everything builds from faith. Without faith in Christ as revealed in God's Word, you do not have anything to build on. Faith is the bottom line essential.

Note: Peter does not ask his readers to supply faith (Hiebert, p. 52); he is appealing to those who already profess to have faith.

But "faith" is not to be left alone. Faith is to be exercised. Faith is to produce. Faith is not to be lacking in virtue. Faith is to produce works and good fruit (James 2).

"This faith is the seedbed out of which Christian character grows. A vital orthodoxy produces a willing orthopraxy" (Hiebert, p. 52).

"Besides all this" – God gave to us His precious promises (v. 4) (contained in the gospel) that we might share in the divine nature and escape the world's corruption. Also, it was for that very same reason that we might add Christian characteristics to our faith so as to grow and mature in our Christian life.

"Giving all diligence" - bringing in every effort (alongside of what God has done), every ounce of determination we can muster (Rogers, p. 581).

All of us with total resolve are to spare no expense and to go all out to add character to our faith.

This is to be our goal, our aim, our purpose.

The Christian life is not meant to be an entirely passive life (certainly, we are taught to wait upon god, to rely upon God, to yield passively to God).

However, Peter here clearly delineates our active role in pursuing Christian excellence, striving after Christian character.

Some things just will not happen all by themselves.

We need to "give all we have" to make sure we lavishly add on top of our faith the following qualities:

1) **"Virtue"** (*aretei*) – moral energy. "In classical times the word meant God-given power or ability to perform heroic deeds – whether military, athletic, or artistic accomplishments" (Rogers, p. 582).

   "Virtue" refers to excellence of character. Let's invest our best for our great God! He is worthy of our heroic effort.

2) **"Knowledge"** (*gnosis*) – spiritual knowledge is in view here. Biblical knowledge, theological knowledge, and most importantly the personal knowledge of Christ (the emphasis of 1:2-4). To attain academic knowledge is admirable, but to be an "expert" in God's Word is to achieve the supreme knowledge.

Make every effort to spend time with God. Overcome every obstacle to get to know God!

"The knowledge of the Holy is understanding" (Prov. 9:10).

v. 6

3) **"Temperance"** (*egkrateia*) – self-control. Lit. to hold oneself in; to have strength over one's passions and desires. To be able to say "No" to oneself is to have great character. What kind of effort do we give to restraining our lusts? We ought to exert great effort in holding in the reins of our appetites.

Proverbs 25:28
He that *hath* no rule over his own spirit *is like* a city *that is* broken down, *and* without walls.

4) **"Patience"** (*hupomone*) – endurance or perseverance. Lit. the ability to "remain under" the pressure without blowing up or blowing out. It is the character trait of not quitting; to keep on keeping on. Learn to never raise up the white flag and quit on what you know to be God's will. The example if Jesus Christ –

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

5) **"Godliness"** (*eusebeia*) - from *"eu"* = well or good; and *"sebomai"* = to be devout. To have good piety, to be reverential or God-fearing. Make extreme effort to be well-pleasing to God!

v. 7

6) **"Brotherly kindness" –** (*"philadelphia")* brotherly affection; deep affection for your fellow brother or sister in Christ.

7) **"Love"** (*agape*)- the pinnacle attribute; the premiere characteristic (1 Cor. 13). Agape love is that attribute of unconditional giving to meet the needs of others, as demonstrated by God's gift of His Son (John 3:16) and the Son's sacrifice of His life (Rom. 5:8).

If faith is the <u>foundation</u> of the Christian life, love is the <u>apex</u>!

II. Be determined to <u>be USEFUL & FRUITFUL</u> in your <u>knowledge of Christ</u> (v.8-9)

v. 8

For if these seven characteristics or qualities of verses 5-7 exist in your life and "abound" (or overflow in excess).

You and I can never do enough good. We can never say, "I've reached my limit and do not need to expand these graces." Our goal ought to be to overflow in these qualities.

"To fervent Christianity there can be no excess of good" (Mayor, cited by Rogers, p. 582).

"Barren" - inactive; idle; useless (like a womb that produces no offspring).

"Unfruitful" - to be unproductive, to bear no fruit.

"In the knowledge *(epiginosko*) **of our Lord Jesus Christ" -** i.e. in the direct, personal, relational knowledge of our Savior. If we have come to know Him, such knowledge should not be unfruitful and barren, but full of fruit and good works.

Is a knowledge of Christ of any practical benefit if it is not accompanied by fruit?

The world is looking at you. Is there enough evidence to convince them that you could really belong to the Savior you claim to know and love?

v. 9

One who lacks the graces or character traits of verses 5 – 7.

Note the phrase **"these things"** (v. 8). . . **"these things"** (v. 9) . . . **"these things"** (v. 10).

"Blind. . . and cannot see afar off" – here Peter describes one who has <u>lost his vision</u> of what <u>Christ has done for him</u>. He has forgotten the cleansing he received when he first had a "knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v. 8).

Peter here describes one who not only suffers from short-sightedness but also from spiritual amnesia (he can't see and can't remember).

When any believer loses sight of what Christ did for him/her, they will fail to attain the seven qualities God expects us to add to our faith. Such failure should cause one who claims to be saved to re-examine his claim (v. 10).

III. Be determined to make ABSOLUTELY SURE that you are truly God's child (v.10-11)

v. 10

"The rather" = even more; of greatest importance is to make sure of your calling and election by god. Make absolutely certain that you are in the faith. Do you genuinely believe on Christ? Did you respond to His invitation (His calling)? Are you one of His chosen (elect) ones?

How does one know? He will bear fruit!

The fruit mentioned in verses 5 – 7. There will be a desire to add to your faith, and a practice of those character traits.

"Give diligence" – be eager; be in a hurry; exert all of your effort to speedily start examining the reality of your salvation. This matter of salvation is the most urgent matter in the world.

"If ye do these things" – if you practice the "things" mentioned in verses 5 – 7.

"Ye shall never fall" – you will absolutely never stumble in any way.

"The holy life is the guarantee demonstrating one's calling and election" (Rogers, p. 582).
The proof is in the evidence. "By their fruit ye shall know them."

Note: Practicing those seven character traits is not the means by which one is saved, but is the evidence or proof of salvation.

"<u>Never</u> fall" - a double negative (*ou mei*) – meaning: absolutely, by no means whatsoever will one who practices those things ever stumble and fall away from Christ.

Those who stumble so as to fall away entirely from Christ were never saved (never called and elected) to begin with.

Paul said to the Corinthians: *"Examine yourselves, whether ye be <u>in</u> <u>the</u> <u>faith</u>; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" 2 Cor. 13:5*

> **"Examine yourselves" –** put yourselves to the test to see whether or not you are genuinely in the faith (i.e. in Christ and His saving Gospel). This is an examination none of us should avoid.
>
> It would be better for a man to examine himself now than to find out later after death that he was never really in the faith.
>
> Many in the Corinthian church who had succumbed to the sins of 12:20-21 had ample reason to examine their true spiritual status.
>
> Can you imagine how foolish it would be for a man who has all the signs of stomach cancer or ulcers to do nothing about it; to have constant abdominal pain and to be spitting up blood and to go on his way thinking he's okay would be the height of folly. So, to be living in sin with no remorse or divine chastisement and to assume you're on your way to Heaven anyway is foolishness.
>
> Some might say: "But Pastor, you're making me to doubt my salvation." Some of you have adequate reason to doubt your salvation.
>
> I'd rather have you doubt your salvation but have it, than to never entertain a doubt and not have it.
>
> The little book of 1 John is given for the purpose of the professing believer to examine himself so that he might know that he has eternal life

Evidences of Genuine Salvation from the Epistle of 1 John

1. Obedience to God's Commands
   1 John 2:3; 1 John 2:5; 1 John 3:24

2. A Lifestyle of Righteousness
   1 John 2:29

3. A New Nature which does not practice sin
   1 John 3:9; 1 John 5:18

4. A Love for the Brethren
   1 John 3:14-15; 1 John 3:18-19; 1 John 4:7

Some of the evidences of true salvation are:

1) Love of God and His people

2) Spiritual desire for God's Word

3) Grief over sin accompanied with chastisement by God

4) Obedience to God and a desire to be more obedient

v. 11

Those who practice God's seven character qualities will have a wide open door into His everlasting kingdom.

This does not mean that they earned or merited their entrance, but that their faith in Christ was real and their life proved it.

Their godly lifestyle was the authenticating seal that they shared in the "like precious faith" that Peter and the other apostles had (v. 1). Their godly lifestyle is evidence that God's divine power truly did give them everything necessary for life and godliness(v. 3).

Not just an entrance, but an **"abundant**" entrance, i.e. a rich, wide-open way into Heaven. You are not merely squeaking in through a tight door, but walking in through a wide opening.

Conclusion:

Our goal, our quest, our aim is to have diligent spiritual determination for our Lord!

What we all need is a dose of DSD ------ Diligent Spiritual Determination!

"Spiritual growth in the Christian life calls for the strenuous involvement of the believer" (Hiebert, p. 50).

Beware of spiritual slothfulness!

This message is a wake-up call for all of us to abandon our lazy, sluggishness when it comes to our Christianity!

Spiritual Reminders



2 Peter 1:12-15
1/25/09

Introduction: (v.13-14)

Like Peter, we have just <u>a brief opportunity</u> on earth to remind one another of God's Truth!

- **Spiritual reminders are vital for all of us!**

Why?

I. **Spiritual Reminders <u>SURE UP</u> Truth in our minds**
so that God's Word makes its full impact upon our lives (v.12)
(I will <u>not</u> be <u>negligent</u> to remind you so that you <u>totally comprehend</u> the truth)

II. **Spiritual Reminders <u>STIR UP</u> Truth in our minds**
so that God's Word does not become stagnant (v.13)
(I will be <u>right</u> to remind you so that you <u>stay awake</u> to the truth)

III. **Spiritual Reminders <u>STORE UP</u> Truth in our minds**
so that God's Word does not become lost for generations to come (v.15)
(I will <u>endeavor</u> to remind you so that you <u>retain and pass on</u> the truth)

Spiritual Reminders



2 Peter 1:12-15

1/25/09

Introduction: (v.13-14)

"Any good teacher realizes the value of repetition. Research has shown that within an hour after hearing a spoken message, people forget up to ninety percent of it. Certainly God knew that when He said to Israel": (MacArthur commentary, p. 48)

America has forgotten God.

--His memory has been erased from the <u>textbooks</u> of the public schools.

--His name is no longer uttered in prayer from the lips of children and teachers in classrooms and auditoriums of the public schools in our land.

--The faith of our founding fathers and the righteous, Biblical principles that our country was founded upon have been deliberately eradicated from memory.

It is a gravely serious matter for a nation to forget God: *"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God"* (Ps. 9:17).

Hos. 4:6 - *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me; seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children."*

"For you have forgotten the God of your salvation and have not remembered the rock of your refuge" (Is. 17:10a).

Even believers tend to remember things that are better forgotten and to forget things that should be remembered (MacArthur) (cp. Rom. 7:15, 18-19; Heb. 12:5).

If we do not make deliberate efforts to retain God's Word in our hearts, all of us run the risk of gradually forgetting all that He is, all that He has done (in the past), all He will do (in the future), and all He can do (in the present).

How do we forget?

1) Negligence - We fail to take the steps necessary to remember:

   a. Daily reading of God's Word (in devotions)
   b. Frequent hearing of God's Word (in church)

2) Distractions - We become distracted by the world with its glitter, pomp, and pleasures

3) Business - We become so bus in lower-priority matters that we neglect the weightier matters

4) Wine & Women - (Prov.31:3-5)

The Bible is filled with examples and illustrations of means by which God's people were to remember their Lord, His Word, and His mighty acts in history:

1) The Song of the Law, taught to Israel by Moses (Deut. 31:19, 21 - *"Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel. . . And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed: for I know their imagination which they go about, even now, before I have brought them into the land which I sware.")*

2) The rock piles left as memorials (Josh. 4:7 - *"Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.")*

3) God's Law written on door posts and gates (Deut. 6:9 - *"And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.")*

Deuteronomy 6:4-9
Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

4) The Jewish holidays (Lev. 23)

5) The Lord's Supper (Lk. 22:19 - *"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given f or you: this do in remembrance of me.")*

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:

Philippians 3:1
Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed *is* not grievous, but for you *it is* safe.

Jude also sought to remind his readers of what they once knew - **Jude 1:5**
I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

v. 14
Peter knew that he would soon be meeting the Lord in Heaven. He would in a short time lay aside his earthly tent and exchange it for a heavenly dwelling place. Just as Paul wrote to the Corinthians when he said:

2 Corinthians 5:1-2
For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:

"**tabernacle" -** tent – a metaphor for the body.

To the ancients, the idea of the body being likened unto a "tent" conveyed the thoughts of:

--Frailty (tents are easily damaged; unlike a more permanent structure, like a "building" – v. 1)

--Transiency (tents are easily moved, can be pitched here today and uprooted and transplanted tomorrow)

--Limitations (you can only do so much with a tent; it has its limits)

--Insecurity (tents are not completely safe, they can be easily harmed and ruined)

--Temporality (they only last so long; they must be replaced; tents are not permanent structures)

v. 13
"As long as" – How long did Peter have? Not very long. He would soon die as a martyr for the Lord.

How long do you and I have? We do not know. But while we are here god has a taskf or us. This job involves giving the truth of God's Word to those who don't have it, and continually reiterating God's truth to those who do have it, so that they fully understand it, live it, and never forget it.

v. 14

Now the way Peter would **"put off"** his **"tabernacle"** (tent) would be by martyrdom, just as Jesus explained to him in John 21:18 - Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldest not.

According to history, Peter would also be forcibly carried away and crucified as his Lord was, but would not consider himself worthy to be crucified exactly as his Lord, so he requested that he be crucified upside down.

Like Peter, we have just <u>a brief opportunity</u> on earth to remind one another of God's Truth!

- **Spiritual reminders are vital for all of us!**

Why?

I. Spiritual Reminders <u>SURE UP</u> Truth in our minds
so that God's Word makes its full impact upon our lives (v.12)
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"Wherefore" – A reference backt o the previous context whee Peter was encouraging his professing believer friends to examine their salvation, to make sure of their calling and election of god (v. 10). This was and is of infinite value due to the fact that no one will enter Christ's eternal kingdom (v. 11) who has not been genuinely called and elected.

This matter of self-examination regarding **"these things"** and this matter of trusting God's Holy Scriptures (v. 16-21) is of such importance that Peter says, "I cannot neglect to <u>remind</u> you" about it!

"I will not be negligent" - I will not be so unconcerned or careless about your souls so as to neglect my duty to <u>remind</u> you of God's precious truth! Giving spiritual reminders was Peter's continual intention.

"<u>Always</u> in remembrance" – Peter's goal in ministry was to <u>continuously</u> remind them of "these things." Reminding God's people was a <u>constant</u> practice of Peter and the other apostles.

"These things" - a repeated phrase in this context (v. 8, 9, 10, 12, 15), and a specific reference to the virtues and characteristics which ought to be added to our "faith" (v. 5-7).

"Though ye <u>know</u> them" - They needed reminders even though they had already come to know (*oida*) certain truths. Even people of great spiritual understanding need reminders. There are so many facets of a truth and so many aangles and perspectives of seeing it that reminders are necessary.

ILLUS: the hymn "Tell Me the Old, Old Story"

This is why God's people need to keep coming to church. To be reminded of God's great truth (in the Gospel) and God's great truths regarding every other aspect of life and eternity. This is why we must not forsake the assembly of the saints (Heb. 10:25).

Reminders are also needed by those who are already **"established"** (settled, firmly grounded, or solidly anchored) in the truth. They now have **"the present truth"** – is the truth which is available now and the truth which can be personally understood and fully grasped presently.

Repetition is the "mother of learning."

How many of us totally understand a deep concept the very first time we hear it?

A god teacher is one who can restate a truth or message using different words and ways so as to make as striking and as permanent an impact as possible upon the hearer.

The necessity of repetition in preaching/teaching is evident by the fact that God often repeats Himself for emphasis. For example: Deuteronomy is the <u>second</u> giving of the Law; 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, and 1 & 2 Chronicles have many repeated historical accounts and facts so that the reader will have a deeper impression made upon his mind and heart by hearing it twice. Repeated words or phrases like "his mercy endureth forever" (Psalm 136) drives home the point most effectively. Having four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, & John) not only gives the support of two or three witnesses to validate the accounts and details, but also reemphasizes vital truth.

II. Spiritual Reminders <u>STIR UP</u> Truth in our minds
so that God's Word does not become stagnant (v.13)
(I will be <u>right</u> to remind you so that you <u>stay awake</u> to the truth)

"Yea, I think it <u>meet</u>" - But I consider it <u>right</u> to remind you.

Giving spiritual reminders of God's truth is the <u>right</u> thing to do. It is righteous activity to repetitively provoke one another unto love and good works.

It is righteous activity to remind each other of the importance of sanctification (sexual purity).

It is righteous activity to remind each other of the need to spread the Gospel and make disciples.

"Stir you up" (*diegeiro*) – to wake out of sleep; the preposition in compound is perfective – meaning to stir up or wake up <u>thoroughly</u>! (Rogers, p. 582).

We often got o sleep on some things or we get distracted to the point that some truths are not fresh with us. At times like this we neeed to be stirred up.

Good preaching will stir up the lukewarm Christian!

Vain repetition is <u>not</u> necessary in our prayer life (Matthew 6:7), because God is not hard of hearing nor forgetful as we are. But our meaningful repetition of hearing His voice by reading our Bibles repeatedly or by hearing a lesson or doctrine by God's man repeatedly is necessary, because we do not always "get it" the first time nor do we always remember what we at one time understood.

Or it may be, as here, that we need to be re-awakened to something we already heard in our past.

"A Memorial Message from Deuteronomy!"

1. **NEVER FORGET the <u>BONDAGE</u> you were chained to before God redeemed you** (Deut. 5:15; 15:15; 24:18, 22)

   Deut. 5:15 -*"And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day."*

2. **NEVER FORGET the <u>PROVIDER</u> by becoming preoccupied with His abundant <u>provision</u>** (Deut. 6:10-12; 8:7-11a)

   Deut. 6:12 -*"Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage."*

3. **NEVER FORGET God's <u>PAST VICTORIES</u>; they will encourage you in future battles** (Deut. 7:17-19)

   Deut. 7:18 -*"Thou shalt not be afraid of them: but shalt well remember what the LORD thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt."*

4. **NEVER FORGET the <u>LESSONS</u> God taught you through life's difficult experiences** (Deut. 8:2-5; 9:7)

   Deut. 8:2 -*"And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness; to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments, or no."*

5. **NEVER FORGET God's <u>PRECEPTS</u> which you learned from His Word, the Scriptures** (Deut. 8:11)

   Deut. 8:11 -*"Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day."*

6. **NEVER FORGET God's <u>ENABLING STRENGTH</u> which empowered you to achieve what good you have in life** (Deut. 8:12-18)

   Deut. 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."*

III. Spiritual Reminders <u>STORE UP</u> Truth in our minds
so that God's Word does not become lost for generations to come (v.15)
(I will <u>endeavor</u> to remind you so that you <u>retain and pass on</u> the truth)

"Endeavor" – to give due diligence; to expend great volitional effort; to thoughtfully give careful attention to reminded them of God's message.

"That ye may be able after my decease" - "Here he speaks of making provision for them after his death" (Mayor, cited by Rogers, p. 583).

Of infinite more value than providing material wealth and finances to our children is to leave behind a legacy of truth that they can then pass on to their families for generations to come.

You remind this generation, and they will remind theirs (and by God's grace this pattern can continue to flow deep into the future!)

"<u>Always</u> in remembrance" - throughout all occasions in life, God's truth can be retained and recalled when someone invested the time and effort to be in the reminding business.

Dear parent, do not be discouraged by thinking that your parental admonitions are in vain. Though you may have to repeat a lesson over and over, it will pay off in the end. In the end that child ". . . will not depart from it."

Conclusion:

NEVER FORGET God's <u>PRECEPTS</u> which you learned from His Word, the Scriptures (Deut. 8:11)

SEE: Psalm 119:16, 83, 93, 109, 141, 153, 176.

<u>How to NOT FORGET God's Word</u>:

1) <u>Hide it</u> in your heart systematically (memorize Scripture)

Psalm 119:11 - *"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."*

2) <u>Meditate</u> on it continually

Joshua 1:8 - *"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."*

3) <u>Obey it</u> intently

James 1:25 - *"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."*

4) <u>Sing</u> it joyfully

Colossians 3:16 - *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."*

5) <u>Teach</u> it diligently

Deuteronomy 6:7 - *"And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."*

"A More Sure Word"



2 Peter 1:16-21
2/1/09

Introduction: v.19



- ***The written Scriptures are more sure, more reliable, more dependable than anything else in life!***

Why? Because Scriptures are the very Words of God!

Because the Scripture is God's Word…

I. Scriptures are more trustworthy than one's own <u>personal experience</u> (v.16-18)

II. Scriptures are <u>as necessary as</u> <u>light</u> is in the midst of darkness (v.19)

III. Scriptures are <u>not</u> the production of <u>man's own understanding</u> or <u>imagination</u> (v.20)

IV. Scriptures are the Divine production of <u>God's Holy Spirit</u> (v.21)

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Because the Scripture is God's Word…

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v. 16
"<u>For</u> we have not followed. . ." – Peter's work of <u>reminding</u> (v. 12-15) God's people of the truth of Christ was not in vain and would endure even after his death <u>because</u> of the absolute trustworthiness of the Scriptures the Christian faith rests upon.

"Cunningly devised fables" – cleverly concocted myths. Peter did not propagate "wise-guy" manipulative stories.

His message was <u>not</u> a subtle, crafty, well-disguised, made-up bunch of stories in order to manipulate people and gather a following (like so many of the cult leaders of our time, Joseph Smith [the founder of Mormonism] being one example of a manipulative story teller).

"Made known" – "This word is a somewhat technical tern for imparting a new revelation – something previously hidden but now revealed" (MacArthur, Study Bible note).

"The power and coming" – Christ's powerful appearance on earth was not a myth. His powerful miracles and His powerful messages which were displayed at His first coming were not contrived stories in Peter's mind, but he was an actual on-the-scene eyewitness of Christ's kingly sovereign majesty.

v. 17

"For He received from God the Father honor and glory" – a reference to Christ's transfiguration in the presence of Peter, James, and John up on a high mountain (probably Mount Hermon).

Matthew 17:1-2, 5

And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. . . . While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

Brief exposition of Matthew 17:1-f

"Transfigured" - aorist passive voice - The Father transformed the incarnate Son to give the disciples a preview of the same glory Christ will display when He comes to establish His future eternal kingdom.

"Transfigured" - metamorphoo - to undergo a change in form, to be totally transformed

According to Luke 9:29, this alteration of Christ's appearance occurred "as He prayed". As Jesus prayed, the disciples slept (Lk. 9:32), and when they awoke "they saw His glory."

"As the sun" - John saw the blazing glory of Christ in Rev. 1:13-18 and described "His countenance" as being "as the sun shineth in his strength" (at high noon) (Rev. 1:16).

This is the same bright, brilliant intense supernatural light that blinded Saul of Tarsus in Acts 9:3.

"Many years later, John recalled this event as the Spirit led Him to write: "And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn. 1:14). (cited by Wiersbe, p. 61)

(Jesus is called: "the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person" (Heb. 1:3).

"Raiment was white as the light" - Mark includes this detail - Mark 9:3 - "And His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them."

Such whiteness speaks of the absolute purity, holiness and righteousness of Christ, just as the white garments of the saints signify their righteousness in Christ (Rev. 3:4, 5; 6:11; 19:8, 14; cp. Is. 1:18).

This display of Christ is a picture of His glory (Lk. 9:32) that will be manifested at His second coming (Rapture) (Mt. 16:27, 24:30, 25:31; cp. Jn. 1:14, 12:41, 17:24; I Pet. 1:11, 4:13).

When Christ returns He will destroy the Antichrist "with the brightness of His coming" (II Th. 2:8)

V. 3

"Moses and Elijah" - Two men representing the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah).

These two prophets of old (Moses and Elijah) appeared (somehow, miraculously materialized **"in glory"** - in glorified form) and spoke with Jesus concerning **"His decease"** (lit. "his exodus") from the earth by death at Mt. Calvary in the city of Jerusalem (Lk. 9:31).

V. 4

Peter instantly wakes up out of his slumber and impetuously requests permission to build three tabernacles (tents, booths, or shelters, like that built in the Old Testament) - **"one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah**".

When Peter said this, he did not realize what he was saying (Lk. 9:33b).

Why does Peter ask to build such things?

Peter, being a Jew, recalled the bright, Skekinah glory that filled the O. T. tabernacle (Exod. 40:34-38). Now, seeing the splendid glory of Christ, he asks to build three tabernacles to house the glorified Christ as well as the glorified Moses and Elijah.
What is wrong with such a request? Answer: Peter gives Jesus, Moses , and Elijah "equal billing." He wrongly puts them on par with the Son of God. So now the Father comes on the scene and straightens this matter out.

V. 5
This **"bright cloud"** overshadowed (enveloped) them - while the words were in Peter's mouth, suddenly this extremely brilliant cloud (like a white fog) falls upon them, sending a fearful feeling through their "spines" (Lk. 9:34), and a voice (which Peter never forgot - II Pet. 1:17, 18) began to speak out of the cloud.

The voice of God the Father said: **"This (one) [not the other two - Moses and Elijah) is my beloved** (Eph. 1:6) **Son" --** The Father proclaims the UNIQUENESS of the Son! Jesus was not a mere prophet (like Moses and Elijah).

"In whom I am well pleased" - As Jesus testified - "I do always those things that please Him" (Jn. 8:29).

These are almost the identical words the Father spoke at Christ's baptism (Mt. 3:17).

2 Peter 1:18

"We heard. . . we were with him" – Peter's experience was real. James & John could bear witness.

v. 19

As real as that experience was, Peter says in effect, we have something more real. As certain as it was for Peter to see and hear what he did, he says we have something more certain. That experience confirmed the promises of the Old Testament, but Peter says we have something of a great confirmation – that being the Holy Scriptures!

Peter here places Scripture above experience; what God said in His Word, the Bible, over what God said from the holy mountain!

"More sure" – more certain, more firm, more reliable.

"The prophetic word (Scripture) is more complete, more permanent, and more authoritative than the experience of anyone" (MacArthur, Study Bible note).

We are to base our beliefs on Scripture, not experience or emotional feelings.

Experience cannot dictate doctrine. In other words, we are to test any experience by doctrine, not test doctrine by experience. We must "try the spirits" (I Jn. 4:1; Is. 8:20).

The Bible

For feelings come and feelings go,
And feelings are deceiving.
My warrant is the Word of God;
Naught else is worth believing.
Tho' all my heart should feel oppressed
For want of some sweet token,
There is One greater than my heart,
Whose Word cannot be broken.
I'll trust in God's unchanging Word,
Till soul and body sever;
For tho' all things shall pall away,
His Word shall stand forever!

II. Scriptures are <u>as necessary as</u> <u>light</u> is in the midst of darkness (v.19)

"Ye do well that ye take heed" – You are doing very well to pay attention to God's written Word. To not forget it, or neglect it, but to mentally <u>hold on to it</u>.

Hold on to God's Scriptures and don't let go; let His Book be always retained in your heart.

Hold on to it as you would hold on to a lantern that provided light in a dark, dingy, dusky, murky place where things are obscure and hard to discern (cp. Rogers, p. 583).

Hold on to God's Word as you would require light (if you wanted to see clearly) until morning when the sun would rise.

"Until the day dawn" – Perhaps a reference to the day of Christ's return in glory, when all things will be perfectly clear.

What is the **"day star"**? It is the star which brings a new day for the world – namely the <u>sun</u>. Until the sun rises--not merely over the horizon but in our hearts—we must cling tightly to God's Word.

In this world which lacks clarity, where many issues of life seem uncertain and foggy, your only chance at discernment is to know your Bible.

"Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." (Ps 119:105)

III. Scriptures are <u>not</u> the production of <u>man's own understanding</u> or <u>imagination</u> (v.20)

"Knowing this <u>first</u>" – *proton* – first in <u>priority</u>. Of all things that you can "<u>know</u>," know this first and foremost!

No prophecy contained in written Scripture stems from someone's own imagination. Scripture does not originate in one's own (*idios*) interpretation of life, morals, eternity, etc.

No true prophecy as recorded in Holy Text originated with man.

"It was a mark of a false prophet (cp. 2:1) to speak 'his own thing' from himself" (Rogers, p. 584).

"Interpretation" – "The genitive (ablative) here indicates source. Peter is talking about the divine origin of Scripture, not about its proper interpretation" (Green, cited by Rogers, p. 584).

The word almost comes to mean <u>inspiration</u> (2 Tim. 3:16).

v.21 "<u>Men</u> of God spake": Even though it was God's Word, it was <u>men</u> who wrote/spoke it.

EX: Jesus credited Moses with commands of God (Mk. 7:10). He credited Isaiah with prophecy of God (Mt. 13:14). Peter credited Paul with Scripture from God (II Pet. 3:15-16).

Even though Scripture came from the very mouth of God, He in His wisdom used the instrumentality of men. God, in using men, controlled and directed them, not stifling their own personalities or using them as machines or robots but as conscious, sober instruments.

On the one hand, while it can be said that man had <u>nothing</u> to do with the production of Scripture (he was passive), on the other hand, he did have an active part in its production.

This is a paradox.

[NOTE: However, man's part was also controlled by God - what occurred was "passive activity," in which God so worked in the writers that He gave them the will and the ability to write what He wanted (cp. Phil. 2:12-13).]

Throughout the entire life of a prophet or apostle, God's providential control prepared him with the particular talents, education, and experience which would be needed for the message which he was to give orally or by writing (Boettner, p. 24).

--God used the extensive education and patience of Moses to write the Pentateuch.

--God made use of the worshipful tender heart of David to write most of the Psalms.

--God employed the wisdom of Solomon to write Proverbs.

--God utilized the heavy heart of Jeremiah to write Lamentations.

--God applied the loving heart of John to write the Gospel and Epistles of love that bear his name.

--God exercised the detailed thinking of Dr. Luke to write Luke and Acts.

--God put into service the logical mind and appropriate religious background of Paul to write Romans and his other deep epistles.

[Remember, however, that it was God who equipped these men with the qualifications and personalities which they had.]

"God is One who in His infinite power can use as His agents and instruments fallible human beings, who can bring into His employ all the gifts, talents, and characteristics of those human beings, and yet can cause them to pen His own Word, and keep that Word utterly separate and distinct from their

own sinful nature and the consequent imperfections which are the result of that nature" (Young, Thy Word is Truth, p. 74).

3) Chosen men -

"Holy men of God" - men whom God had set apart for the special task of writing His Word.

God chose specific men to write His Word. These prophets and apostles proved that they were authorized to write Scripture by the signs and miracles that God did by their hands. God always vindicated His messengers (Ex. 4:28-31; II Cor. 12:13; Heb. 2:3-4).

When God chose select men to write His Word, He assured them that He would put His words into their mouths (EX: Moses - Ex. 4:11-16; Jeremiah - Jer. 1:5-9).

IV. Scriptures are the Divine production of <u>God's Holy Spirit</u> (v.21)

"In old time" – in the Old Testament

'Not. . . by the will of man" – while utilizing a prophet's mind, vocabulary, and personality, the words written down did not find their origin in man's will. Rather, God utilized men to write down His will. What He desired us to know, He revealed to His prophets.

All other "books" that purport to be from God (other than the Holy Scriptures) stem from a source other than God, and "the proof is in the pudding."

"The emphasis in the phrase is that no part of Scripture was ever at any time produced because men wanted it so. The Bible is not the product of human effort. The prophets, in fact, sometimes wrote what they could not fully understand (1 Peter 1:10, 11)." (MacArthur).

Scriptures are <u>not</u> a product of <u>human</u> investigation, reason, or origin.

Men wrote as they were "<u>moved</u> by the Holy Ghost."

"Moved" - lit. "borne alone"; "carried along." The Spirit lifted them up, causing them to be led to write what God wanted. "The metaphor here is that the prophets raised their sails and the Holy Spirit filled them and carried their craft along in the direction He wished" (Rienecker, p. 773)

<u>Biblical</u> View of Inspiration

2 Tim. 3:16
All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

<u>Definition</u> of Inspiration: Inspiration describes the unique process of the Holy Spirit in which He controlled and directed the hearts, minds, and wills of chosen men as they wrote exactly and totally what God wanted, so that the original manuscript was without error or omission.

Inspiration was the unique process of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 14:26).

The Holy Spirit guided every word that was penned by the apostles and prophets.

David wrote "by the Holy Ghost" (Mk. 12:36).

"The Holy Ghost" spoke by Isaiah (Acts 28:25-26).

God spoke "by the prophets"
(Heb. 1:1-2).

Cp. I Cor. 2:13; II Pet. 1:20-21.

The word translated "inspiration" is derived from the Greek Word "theopneustos" ("theo" meaning "God"; "pneustos" meaning "breathed").

Because the word is passive in its usage, it should be translated "breathed of God" or "God-breathed."

Scripture was "produced by the creative breath of the Almighty . . . it was God-given" (Boettner, Studies in Theology, p. 21).
The word "pneustos" which refers to both "breath" or "spirit" implies the divine creative action of God.

Just as the universe has its source in the God who spoke it into existence (Heb. 11:3; Ps. 33:6), and just as man's life had its source in the creative breath of God (Gen. 2:7; Job 33:4), the Scriptures came to man in the same way--right out of the mouth of God! Therefore, they are exactly what God wanted written.

NOTE: The word "God-breathed" does not suggest that God breathed into Scriptures that already existed; rather, He breathed the Scriptures out of Himself.

Isaiah 45:23 - "The word is gone out of my mouth."

Matthew 4:4 - "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

1) "Wrote" - "All Scripture": The word translated scripture is from the Greek word "graphe," which refers to that which was written. The word "graphe" refers to sentences, phrases, and words! (not just ideas).

Inspiration can only be applied to the writings, and not to the writers (i.e., God did not inspire the writers but the Scriptures).

2) Exactly what God wanted - "All Scripture" - the word "all" refers to every individual, written part.

Every detail of the Bible was inspired! Right down to the words, letters, and distinguishing parts of letters! This is called "Verbal Inspiration."

"Christ did not say of His thoughts, but of His words that they are spirit and life" (John 6:63). -- Luther

The message of Scripture at times depends on a single word. Therefore, God inspired every detail.

Cp. Gal. 3:16 - singular as opposed to plural
Cp. Jn. 8:58 - present tense as opposed to past
NOTE: God put specific words into the mouths of His prophets - Jer. 1:7-9; Num. 22:38, 23:12, 16; II Sam. 23:2.

NOTE: The grammatical/syntactical study of Scripture is based entirely upon the acceptance of verbal inspiration. (Those who have a low view of Scripture don't preach expositionally, and don't care about the details of the Bible)

"Without error" - Jesus claimed authority for every letter that was written, even the parts of written letters (distinguishable marks that differentiated one letter from another were also inspired!) See Mt. 5:18 -

"Jot" = the smallest Hebrew letter, called the yodh י (See Ps. 119:73).

"Tittle" = a part of a letter that would distinguish one letter from another (compare the daleth ד with the resh ר).

"John Wesley said, `If there be any mistakes in the Bible, there may as well be a thousand. If there is one falsehood in that Book, it did not come from the God of truth'." (Ryrie, Inerrancy, p. 26).

"Without omission" - The Scriptures are complete. All that God intended for us to have, He has given.

The Scriptures, as God gave them, are free from all errors, defects, or imperfections.

This is called "inerrancy."

Since the Bible was
1) inspired, it is
2) inerrant
(because God could not make a mistake); and because the Scriptures are inerrant, they are 3) infallible (incapable of failing or leading you astray; the Bible is wholly true and wholly authoritative - Jn.17:17).

Eight Rational Proofs for Inspiration

1. Unity - The Bible was written by means of 40 different writers, in three languages (Hebrew and Aramaic - O.T.; Greek - N.T.), over a 1,500 year period, and yet the Scriptures have only one theme: namely, Jesus Christ and His salvation of mankind through His sacrificial and substitutionary death (See: Lk. 24:25-27; Jn. 5:39, 46; Acts 10:43, 18:28; I Cor. 15:3).

2. Prophecy - Fulfilled by Jesus at His first coming (Mt. 5:17; Lk. 24:27; Jn. 19:24)

   EX: Ps. 22 - written about 1,000 B.C.
   Is. 53 - written about 750 B.C.

3. Honesty - Shows people as they really are. The Bible's heroes are not "sugar-coated!" Rather, the faults of even the greatest are brought out (Abraham, Moses, David, Peter).

   The Bible also describes sin as it is; heaven and hell as they are; and God as He is (example of the tension between election and free will - If man wrote the Bible, he would have relieved it).

4. Durability - The Bible has lasted through the ages, though attempts have been made to exterminate this Book as no other (EX: Jer. 36:1-2, 27-28).

   Voltaire, the French infidel, said: "Another century, [and] there will not be another Bible on earth." After his death, his printing press was used to print Bibles!

5. Power - To change (transform) lives.

6. Freshness - George Mueller said: "I read through the Bible 100 times, and each time it is new to me."

7. Scientific Accuracy –
   The earth is round (a circle) – Is. 40:22
   The earth hangs on nothing – Job 26:7
   The life of the flesh is in the blood (Gen 9:4; Lev. 17:11)
   Circumcision on 8th day – Lev. 12:3

Universal flood
Uncountable multitudes of stars – (Gen. 15:5, Jer. 33:22)
100 billion stars in our Galaxy alone!
Plants and Animals reproduce only after their Kind (Species) Gen. 1 etc

8. Historical Accuracy – Proven by – Recent Archaeological discoveries (cities discovered customs proven etc.)
Proven by – Comparing the Bible with other Historical writings contemporary with the Bible
Ex. Josephus- cp. Acts 12 – Herod's speech and Death
With Josephus. Antiquities Book XIX chap. 7:2-5 & 8:1-2

Because the Bible is inspired by God, it is therefore profitable, authoritative & complete. This is Paul's point in II Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: [17] That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

THE POWER OF THE BIBLE

The Holy Spirit can use the Bible to totally change (transform) our lives
See how the following word pictures show the unique power of the Bible:

1. The Bible is a Sword (Heb. 4:12; Eph. 6:17)

   a. The Holy Spirit's offensive and defensive weapon is the Bible (Eph. 6:17). God is speaking by no other means today.

   b. According to Heb. 4:12, the Bible as a sword is:
      (1) Living ("quick" KJV)
      (2) Powerful
      (3) Piercing ("sharper...piercing")
      (4) Penetrating ("dividing asunder")
      (5) Convicting ("discerner [judge] of the thoughts and intents of the heart")

2. The Bible is a Mirror (James 1:23-25)
   It reflects the mind of God and the true nature and condition of man.

3. The Bible is a Seed (Mk. 4:1-20 *v. 14)
   As a seed, the Bible produces life, growth and fruit.

4. The Bible is water (Eph. 5:26)
   The Bible cleanses and quenches thirst.

5. The Bible is a Lamp and Light (Ps. 119:1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 105)
   It offers protection from danger and guidance into the right way.

6. The Bible is a hammer (Jer. 23:29)
   It has ability to tear down (humble) and build up (edify).

7. The Bible is a Fire (Jer. 20:9; Lk. 24:32).
   It convicts, judges, and purifies.

8. The Bible is Milk (I Pet. 2:2)
   It causes growth.

9. The Bible is Meat (Heb. 5:14; I Cor. 3:1-3)

It gives strength.

The Marks of a Heretic

2 Peter 2:1-3
2/8/09

Introduction:

- ***For your sake and for the sake of the truth, you must know the marks of a Heretic****!*
  (realize the characteristics and mode of operation of a divisive false teacher)

I. ***The heretic does his work by*** **INFILTRATION** (v.1a)
(They mingle & blend with believers)

II. ***The heretic does his work by*** **INDOCTRINATION** (v.1b)
(They teach divisive & false doctrines)

III. ***The heretic does his work by*** **INSTIGATION** (v.2)
(They gather a cultic following and shame the Truth's reputation)

A. They instigate others to FOLLOW their ways of deceit (v.2a)

B. They instigate others to REJECT Christ's way of truth (v.2b)

IV. ***The heretic does his work by*** **EXPLOITATION** (v.3a)
(They cleverly extract money from God's people)

Conclusion: The heretic will come to his end by **inevitable CONDEMNATION** (v.3b)

The Marks of a Heretic

2 Peter 2:1-3
2/8/09

Introduction:

This whole chapter describes the characteristics, conduct and condemnation of false teachers. Peter devotes his time and attention to this matter so that we will do the same.

In these last days, we need to be keenly aware of false prophets and false teachers. As John McArthur writes, “Nothing is more wicked than for someone to claim to speak for God to the salvation of souls when in reality he speaks for Satan to the damnation of souls” (MacArthur, note, p. 1925).

Note the warning of Jesus concerning the last days (Mt. 24:4-5, 11, 24) (Lk. 21:8; Mk. 13:21-22)

False Prophets and Cults thrive in a societal climate where people have the following problems:

Loneliness - They "approach the unwary with an excessively friendly invitation to a lecture, free meal, weekend workshop, or other activity offering instant solutions to overwhelming problems (most often without identifying themselves) (Bob Larson, Cults, p.15)
They then, offer a "family" and employ a "love-bombing" technique to people who are longing for acceptance, approval, and a belonging relationship.

Indecision - They thrive on people who are totally dependent on strong leadership

Disappointment - With organized religion and denominations that had a form of religion but did not meet the people's inner-most needs. The bitter taste of dead orthodoxy created a thirst for fresh enthusiasm and a new spiritual experience.

Mental & emotional disorders - People who lack the ability to think rationally, and analytically are prime victims.

Doctrinal confusion - The cult will offer dogmatic answers

Pride - They believe God has raised them up to accomplish what others have failed to do. Their vision is to recover the lost purpose of the "apostate" church. With exclusivistic arrogance they delude themselves into thinking that they alone have been entrusted with the truth. The opportunity to be a part of a select group of God's chosen servants is attractive.

Beware: Cults are seductive!

1. They <u>look</u> good - Mt. 7:15; II Cor. 11:13-14)

II Tim. 3:1, 5 - "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. . . Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."

II Pet. 2:1, 17-19 - ""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. . . These are wells without water, [The thirsty world goes to them to drink, but they do not satisfy.] clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever. For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage."

2. They <u>sound</u> good - Rom. 16:17-18

3. They minister in the "name of Jesus" - Mt. 7:22-23

(The cultist will be zealous, confident, claim to be sole repositories of truth, and apparently "religious")

"Cursed be he that doeth the work of the LORD deceitfully" (Jer. 48:10).

What Satan says is false; therefore, God's people must be able to detect error. Satan's co-workers are:

<u>F</u> ake
<u>A</u> ppealing
<u>L</u> iars
<u>S</u> eductive
<u>E</u> nticing

God gave you a pastor (Eph. 4:11-12) to equip you so that you will not sway in the winds of Satan's false teachings (Eph.4:14)

What is a religious cult?

Definition: *A religious cult is a unified, organized group of people who differ significantly from Biblical Christianity; rally around and dogmatically support a man or the unquestioned teachings of a man or men; claim sole possession of the truth; either deny cardinal doctrines of Scripture and/or twist Scripture to make minor issues major dogma and dividing issues; emphasizes external conformity to man made rules; erodes Christian liberty & individuality; and promotes an arrogant, exclusivistic, isolationist, spirit.*

What is a Cult in simple terms?

In a nutshell, the definition of a cult can be summarized by a concise *"mathematical"* formula:

"A cult is any religious group which:

(+) **ADDS** to the Scriptures
(-) **SUBTRACTS** from Christ
(x) **MULTIPLIES** salvation requirements
(÷) **DIVIDES** the church"

(Author unknown)

- ***For your sake and for the sake of the truth, you must know the marks of a Heretic****!*
  (realize the characteristics and mode of operation of a divisive false teacher)

I. ***The heretic does his work by*** **INFILTRATION** (v.1a)
(They mingle & blend with believers)

"But there were false prophets" - Here, Peter introduces a stark contrast from the true prophets (the true "holy men of god" who were moved by God's Spirit).

"There shall be" - not "there may be" or "might be", but will be. It's just a matter of time.

If they don't actually enter the doors of our church, they will certainly enter the doors of our homes via TV, radio or internet (EX: Harold Camping).

A "false teacher" is anyone who teaches a message of human invention (v. 20) and not divine Scripture given by God's Spirit.

Why would God allow false prophets or false teachers to infiltrate God's people? Answer: to test their love. Satan sends them to divide and conquer (as tares among the wheat or goats among the sheep), but God often allows such infiltration to test His people (SEE: Deut. 13:1 – 3).

II. ***The heretic does his work by*** **INDOCTRINATION** (v.1b)
(They teach divisive & false doctrines)

"Heresies" – a transliteration of the Greek word *heireseis* which refers to someone's self-willed opinion (i.e. "the will of man" – 1:21), causing the listeners to have to make a choice: a choice between two parties producing division and factions.

Schisms in the church body are always the result of men's opinions (usually over trivial fine points of doctrine) becoming more important than the "weightier matters" of God's Word.

Divisions are usually the result of men's personal opinions contesting or challenging the clear teachings of God's Word. A peculiar end-time teaching, for example, could be used as a dividing issue. A lack of clarity over what is cardinal dogma or essential doctrine usually provides fertile soil for the heretic's divisive tactics.

"Damnable heresies" - destructive divisive teachings. Such divisiveness destroys families, churches, friendships, and ultimately the one who holds to such teachings.

Jude also warned about those who would creep into churches unsuspectingly and would pervert or twist God's message of grace.

Jude 1:4
For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Even denying the Lord" - the reference is to the Lord (Master) Jesus Christ. They are so bold as to lead others (ever so seductively) into disregarding Christ's right to rule one's life. In fact, they outright contradict Christ, and foster a sense of distraction from Christ, leading to people who profess faith in Christ to forsake Him (either practically or theologically or both).

Matthew 10:33
But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

"Lord" = *despot* – supreme authority or sovereign ruler. Peter is warning about false prophets who deny the sovereign Lordship of Christ. They will deny His person and work so as to deny one's need to trust in Him and submit Him. They overtly or covertly attack Him so as to exploit and ruin others.

In Deut. 32:5-6, God says that He bought Israel, yet they rejected the God who bought them and lived corruptly.

Deuteronomy 32:5-6
They have corrupted themselves, their spot *is* not *the spot* of his children: *they are* a perverse and crooked generation. Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? *is* not he thy father *that* hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?

Note: The word **"bought"** *(agorazo)* is different than the word **"redeemed"** (*lutrao*).

Here, Peter is not speaking of redeemed people, but of people who could have been redeemed since the price for their redemption was paid for them by His shed blood. However, due to unbelief, they could not benefit by His gracious provision for them.

The price for their release was given by Christ, but they rejected Him and His finished work; so they will perish in their sin.

"False teachers. . . denying the Lord that bought them" - A proof text against the notion of limited atonement (the "L" in Calvinism's "TULIP").

The word "bought" (*agorazo*) is a term of the marketplace or the ancient "agora." The word is used literally of buying food at a market place (Mt. 14:15). Here the word speaks of spiritually paying a price so as to purchase someone. The price was Christ's blood shed at Calvary (cp. 1 Cor. 6:20, 7:23; Rev. 5:9, 14:3-4).

This verse does prove one very important theological point and that being: Christ's death is sufficient for all (even for false teachers who will end up perishing), but His death is only efficient for those who repent and believe on Christ.

Those who hold a "limited atonement" view would ask: Did Christ die for the sins of the non-elect? If He did, is not that extra "un-used" suffering a waste and is His work on the cross a failure as far as the lost are concerned?

Answer: Because Christ is God and therefore infinite, His death was infinite. He had to die an infinite death to satisfy His infinite holiness. Jesus would have to suffer as much in becoming a sin offering to atone for just Adam's sin, as He did for the whole world? It is the all-encompassing quality of His sacrifice that appeased the wrath of God. When you think of Christ dying for sin, it is improper to merely think of Him as dying for sins (plural) but better to understand that He died for sin as a whole!

***His death is sufficient for all men, but is only efficient for those who believe** (See: Chafer)

The Bible teaches that Christ died for all:

This, of course, does not mean that all are saved (universalism), but that all have the same opportunity to be saved. The payment has been made, whether or not it is accepted, imputed, or benefitted by.

1) *I John 2:1-2 - "He is the propitiation for <u>our sins</u>; and <u>not for ours only</u>, but also for the sins of the <u>whole world</u>."*

2) *I Timothy 2:4 - "Who will have <u>all men to be saved</u> and come unto the knowledge of the truth"*

3) *I Timothy 2:6 - "Who gave Himself <u>a ransom for all</u>"*

4) *I Timothy 4:10 - "Who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe" (Christ's death is <u>sufficient</u> for all, but only <u>efficient</u> for those who believe)*

5) *Hebrews 2:9 - "Christ...tasted death for <u>every man</u>"*

6) *Titus 2:11 - "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared <u>to all men</u>"*

7) *II Peter 2:1 - "False teachers . . . even denying the Lord that <u>bought them</u>"*

8) God offers salvation to **"<u>all</u>"** (Is. 53:6; Mt. 11:28; Rom. 3:22; 5:18; Acts 17:30; II Pet. 3:9)

9) God offers salvation to the **"<u>world</u>"** (Jn. 1:29, 3:16-17; II Cor. 5:18-20; I Jn. 4:14)

10) God offers salvation to the **"<u>whosoevers</u>"** (Jn. 3:16; Rom. 10:13; Rev. 22:17) ("Whosoever" occurs 110 times in the New Testament)

"The death of Christ is like some benefactor paying the tuition of all students in all schools everywhere. If that could be true, what should we be telling students? The good news that their tuition are paid. *Christ died for all. What should we be telling the world?" (Ryrie, p. 323)

So Christ's atonement is <u>not</u> limited in its <u>provision</u> but in its <u>application</u>.

His provision is enough for all, but His provision will only be applied to His elect or to those who believe (depending on which perspective we are looking at our salvation from).

"Bring upon <u>themselves"</u> - they will have no one to blame for their eternal destruction but themselves. (they will not be able to blame others or even God, since God made adequate provision for them).

"Swift <u>destruction</u>" – the false teachers spread <u>destructive</u> heresies and now they experience <u>destructive</u> hell-fire! They reap exactly what they sowed.

Note: When their destruction comes, it will come suddenly, unexpectedly, and <u>swiftly</u>! Destruction may not come immediately, but will come inevitably and when it does, it will be inescapable, as it will suddenly devour Christ's adversaries.

III. ***The heretic does his work by*** **INSTIGATION** (v.2)
(They gather a cultic following and shame the Truth's reputation)

A. They instigate others to FOLLOW their ways of deceit (v.2a)

The sad thing about heretics is this: they never "do it alone." They always acquire a following. They instigate others to follow their same pattern of heretical thinking, teaching, and living.

"Many" (not a few) end up imitating these influential heretics.

"Pernicious" – the same word as "lasciviousness" – Mk. 7:22; 2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 4:19).

The word means to be without restraint or to have no self-control, resulting in shameless conduct. Such indecent lifestyles characterized the "wantonness" (same word as here) of Sodom & Gomorrah (2 Pet. 2:18).

Any teaching that breeds "license" or gives people the idea that they can be a "Christian" and live any way they want to, is a heresy.

B. They instigate others to REJECT Christ's way of truth (v.2b)

"By reason of whom" – because of the false teaching ("destructive heresies") which resulted in false living ("pernicious ways"), they brought about a false opinion in the minds of others (spectators of Christianity).

"The way of truth" – the proper path or road the truth should lead one to is rejected because of a bad testimony.

"Evil spoken of" – lit. to blaspheme. Evil teaching which results in evil living always leads to evil speaking on the part of the enemies of Christ. They are looking for a reason to reject Christ and His Word, and these false teachers give that reason to them.

"The world mocks and scoffs at the Gospel of Jesus Christ because of nominal Christians who do not follow the Lord they claim, and have been unmasked as hypocritical people" (MacArthur, Bible note, p. 1925).

The reputation of Christ and His truth is injured by the hypocrisy of the false teachers.

The heretics literally give Christianity a "black eye" (a bad testimony). Their teachings and lifestyles create a stench in the nostrils of the observing world. (As David did, when he high-handedly sinned by committing adultery and arranging a murder. He gave the enemies of God cause to blaspheme).

2 Samuel 12:14
Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also *that is* born unto thee shall surely die.

IV. ***The heretic does his work by*** **EXPLOITATION** (v.3a)
(They cleverly extract money from God's people)

"Through covetousness" – an idolatrous desire to have more; a greediness (the word comes from *pleon* – "more" and *echo* – "to have." It means to want more than you should have. Selfish greed.

"Feigned words" - *plastois logois* – *Plastos* primarily denotes "formed, molded" (from *plasso* – to mold; English – "plastic"). Then, metaphorically, "made up, fabricated" (Vines, p. 233).

The heretic will mold or shape his words in such a way that he seems very believable; he is very convincing. But his goal is converts for personal gain.

"Make merchandise of you" - related to our English word "emporium," which refers to a "trading place" or a house of merchandise. The root *poros* referred to a journey or the travel of a businessman who sought to search far and wide to exploit his potential customers.

Here, Peter is referring to heretics who seek to draw away disciples after themselves for filthy lucre's sake.

Conclusion: The heretic will come to his end by **inevitable CONDEMNATION** (v.3b)

"A long time lingereth not" – It may seem like the heretic is getting away with his heresies for a long time, but his judgment is not standing idle. In other words, his judgment is coming (as a matter of a fact, it is already on its way).

"Their damnation (destruction – same as v. 1) **slumbereth not" –** Their destruction will not sleep; it will stay awake to swallow them up in the end.

God's destruction of the heretic is not napping. He neither slumbers nor sleeps and neither does His judgment.

"Peter is personifying destruction as if destruction were an executioner who is fully awake and alert, ready to act" (MacArthur, p. 1925).

His axe is ready to fall and when it does, it will fall quickly.

How to escape the heretic's snare:

1) Be walking close to Christ
   (the wolves can't get you, if you are next to the shepherd).

2) Know the truth
   (the better you know the truth, the better you will detect a lie).

John 8:32
And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

"Reserved for Judgment"

2 Peter 2:3b-9
3/1/09

Introduction: Our Lord is zealous for the truth. He punishes liars and false teachers (v.1-3a)

- **God spares the righteous, but not the wicked!**

3 examples of God's faithfulness to judge evil doers:

I. ***The example of the*** **Fallen Angels** (v.4)
(The Angels that sinned were judged by their FALL into chains of darkness)



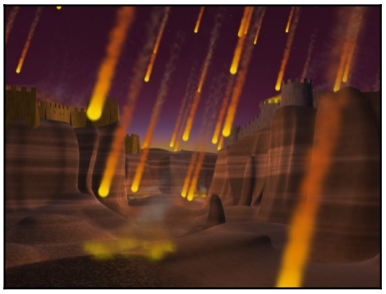
II. ***The example of the*** **Flooded World** (v.5)
(The ancient world was judged by the FLOOD which covered the earth)

Noah was delivered by God's grace



III. ***The example of the*** **Filthy Sodomites** (v.6-8)
(The twin cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were judged by the FIRE which fell from God)

Lot was delivered by God's grace



Conclusion: v.9 - (Are you reserved for judgment or preserved from it?)

"Reserved for Judgment"

2 Peter 2:3b-9
3/1/09

Introduction: Our Lord is zealous for the truth. He punishes liars and false teachers (v.1-3a)

v. 4
"For" – Peter ties verses 4 – 9 to his previous statements regarding the judgment that is coming upon the heretical false teachers (v. 1-3).

He had promised that they would "bring upon themselves swift destruction" (v. 1), and that "their damnation slumbereth not" (v. 3).

The point is: The wicked will not get away with their wickedness. Peter now gives three examples of the just judgment of God.

Verses 4 – 9 give evidence or proof that the Lord will carry out His sentence against the false teachers . . . (Hiebert, p. 95). He will act against them as He has always done.

One aspect of God's faithfulness is that He always acts consistently with who He is and with how He has acted in the past. He never changes and neither does His response and attitude towards sin.

God's past judgments are grounds for His future action" (Neyrey, cited by Rogers, p. 586).

God will be consistent with His past actions. He judged then, He will judge in the future. He condemned sin in ages past, He will condemn sin in eternity future.

"As the apostle gives an overview of three Old Testament examples, he highlights the <u>height</u> of God's wrath (in the case of fallen angels), the <u>breadth</u> of God's wrath (in the case of the ancient world at the time of the flood), and the <u>depth</u> of God's wrath (in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah). In other words, there are no creatures too <u>lofty</u>, too <u>numerous</u>, or too <u>base</u> to escape divine judgment" (MacArthur, p. 84).

"Peter's three examples, cited in chronological order, establish that neither rank, strength, nor numbers shield rebellious evil from God's vengeance." (Hiebert, p. 96).

The point: The wicked will not go unpunished; no one gets away with sin. Payday – Someday!

- **God spares the righteous, but not the wicked!**

3 examples of God's faithfulness to judge evil doers:

I. ***The example of the*** **Fallen Angels** (v.4)
(The Angels that sinned were judged by their FALL into chains of darkness)

The fall of Satan and his angels is described in Isaiah 14:12-21; Ezekiel 28:12-19; Luke 10:18; and Revelation 12:3-9).

Isaiah 14:12-15
How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

Luke 10:18
And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

Revelation 12:3-9
And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and *to* his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days. And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

The angels sinned just one time and they were not spared God's judgment.

"Hell" = *tartarus* (not *hades*). *Tartarus* was a subterranean abyss. Here it is pictured as a dark pit, a place of confinement, an inescapable trap or jail cell.

"The word *tartarus* was used in Hellenistic Judaism and used in the book of Enoch (1 Enoch 20:2) in connection with fallen angels; it is the angel Uriel who rules (over) Tartarus" (Rogers, p. 585).

Here, Tartarus is not a noun but an Aorist participle showing not a place of confinement but a state of confinement. Fallen angels are right now pictured as trapped and jailed: shackled in darkness awaiting the impending eternal wrath of God.

"To be reserved unto judgment" – fallen angels are presently not experiencing "everlasting fire" (Mt. 26:4) (which has been prepared for them) or "the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:10) – but they will be sent there at the end of this age.

They are being kept or guarded for judgment; they have reservations with Gehenna. And they know with certainty that their day of torment is approaching. They "tremble" at their coming doom (James 2:19). Their utter terror and fear of the Judge, Jesus Christ, is evident in Matthew 8:28-29 –

And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way. And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

Jude also described the judgment of fallen angels in connection with Sodom and Gomorrah when he wrote:

Jude 1:6-7
And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Many believe that Peter and Jude are describing demons which "moved out of their proper sphere of existence and behavior – 'their proper abode.' Jude 6 is a reference to the events of Genesis 6:1-4 in which certain fallen angels possessed mortal men and then cohabited with women. . . a clear violation of the boundaries God had set for them" (MacArthur, p. 86).

II. ***The example of the*** **Flooded World** (v.5)
(The ancient world was judged by the FLOOD which covered the earth)

God **"spared not the old world" -** the ancient antediluvian world – a world characterized by continual evil.

Genesis 6:5-8
And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. 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. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

Evil minds & hearts (6:5)

- "Imagination" - sinful motives; intent or inclination
- "Only evil" - God or good was never in the people's thoughts
- "Continually" - lit. all the day long
- "Every imagination" – Every conception formed in the minds of men had a sinful, selfish, motive. Something devious was always at work in their brains.

Perversion & Corruption (6:11)

- "Corrupt"- to pervert; to take something that is good and make it good for nothing; life was in ruins; God's intention for man was destroyed.
- "Corrupt before God" - as man looked at society, it might have looked okay. But as God viewed it, it was rotten.
- Note the corruption was universal - "All flesh" (v. 12)
- Note: The corruption of TV. Actions we would never dream of doing of watching in real life, we gleefully watch on TV.

  Via TV, our children are introduced to every form of evil and perversion:
  --Murder
  --Rape
  --Adultery
  --Homosexuality & lesbianism
  --Cannibalism
  --Every form of violence

Violence (v.11b, 13)

- "Violence" - to act vehemently out of rage
- The word depicts the personal abuse, bloodshed, and disrespect for others prevalent in Noah's day (v. 11, 13)

- **"The earth was filled with violence" –** A statement repeated in v. 13 for emphasis.
- Along with moral corruption came violence toward others. Wherever there is sin there will be violence; you can't have one without the other. Many in our day assume that they can sin privately just as long as they don't hurt anyone, it will be okay. However, no one sins without hurting others. Eventually what is in the heart will work its way out in public.
- Just as violence filled the earth prior to God's past judgment by the flood, so violence will fill the earth prior to God's future judgment by fire.

"The eighth person" - i.e. one of eight people who were spared. These included Noah's wife and his three sons and their wives.

A. Noah was just (righteous)
He did what was right. He was moral; honest; truthful; (the abundant wickedness of Noah's day did not alter his convictions and lifestyle).

B. Noah was perfect (blameless)
No one could discredit him as a man of God. His testimony was impeccable.

C. Noah walked with God
He, like Enoch his great-grandfather (Gen. 5:22, 24), knew the meaning of fellowshipping with God.
His life was "in sync" with God. He abode with his Creator; he communed with his God.

D. Noah obeyed God
--"And God said (6:13) . . . Thus did Noah (6:22)
--"And the LORD said (7:1) . . . And Noah did according unto all" (7:5)

Heb.11:7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

The work was preparing an ark. A 450 foot long, 75 feet broad, and 45 feet high barge (SEE Ryrie's note on Gen. 6:15).

A. Noah's labor was motivated by faith
(Although Noah had never seen rain nor heard of a flood, he believed God)
We "walk by faith not by sight"

B. Noah's labor was propelled by fear
(Noah feared God's word and respected God's power)
EX: of O.T. Passover in Egypt. The people who feared God applied the blood.

C. Noah's labor saved his family (the animal world, and succeeding generations; you and I would not be here today if it were not for Noah!)

"Noah. . . a preacher of righteousness" - We all know Noah to be a builder of the ark, but he was also a herald of God's standards of righteousness.

"Preacher" - a herald; someone who announces a message for a superior without addition or subtraction.

"Of righteousness" - Noah preached not what the populace wanted to hear, but what was truth!

His message described a righteous God, who was about to destroy an unrighteous world by divine righteous indignation.

*NOTE: Noah's message went out in the power of the Holy Spirit during a time when the Spirit was striving with men (Gen. 6:3).

Peter said: the same Holy Spirit that quickened Christ (I Pet. 3:18), preached (heralded) to those living in Noah's day (who from Peter's day and perspective are "spirits in prison). They were, however, alive and disobedient in Noah's day when the Spirit (via Noah) preached (v. 19-20)

"Flood" = *kataklusmos* (cataclysmic) a deluge; a universal flood.

"Flood" - "The Genesis account, along with current geological evidence, indicates that the Flood truly was cataclysmic in every sense" (MacArthur, p. 88).

Genesis 7:11
The flood waters would come from two directions: underneath and above.

"The fountains (springs) **of the great deep" –** All of the subterranean waters would be brought up by global quakes.

The sequence of this verse indicates that the earth's crust breaks up first, then the heavens drop their water. This is interesting because the volcanic explosions due to the fractured earth would have sent magma and dust into the atmosphere, along with gigantic sprays of water, gas, and air – all penetrating the canopy and triggering its downpour (MacArthur note).

"The windows of heaven" – God here paints a picture of the sky being, as it were, closed up in a vast store of moisture and now (for the first time in history), the canopy unleashes its H20 as the windows open up and the rain comes pouring through.

Dr. Joseph Dillow has calculated how much water vapor it would be physically possible to suspend above the atmosphere as a blanket around the earth. He has suggested that it would be the water vapor equivalent of about 12 meters (40 feet) thickness of liquid water. He calculated that such a quantity of water would be sufficient to generate 40 days and 40 nights of torrential rainfall; whereas if these waters above had been clouds, then the moisture in the current atmosphere, if precipitated to earth as rainfall, would be only the equivalent of less than five centimeters (two inches) thickness of liquid water hardly enough to sustain 40 days and 40 nights of rainfall at the time of the Flood.

Therefore, it seems clear that the reference in Genesis 7:11 to the "windows of heaven being opened" is a reference to the collapse of this water vapor canopy, which somehow became unstable and fell as rain, the eyewitnesses describing the event as the "windows of heaven being opened". Some have suggested that when the fountains of the great deep broke open, presumably as volcanic eruptions, the dust generated by these eruptions would have spread up into the water vapor canopy, causing the water vapor to nucleate with dust particles and form water droplets that then fell as rain.

Excerpt from The Answers Book, Revised Edition, by Ken Ham, Andrew Snelling and Carl Wieland, published by Master Books, 1992. Supplied by Answers in Genesis

7:13
"Three wives" – No polygamy in this family!

7:16
"And the Lord shut him in" – God Himself closed the door and sealed it water tight.

The Bible speaks of another door, which God will shut in the future.

Mt. 25:10-13 - And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.
11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.
12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.
13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

7:19
"All the high hills. . . were covered" – a universal flood

Note: Since several mountains today rise over 20 thousand feet above seal level, it is evident that these mountains did not emerge until during and/or after the flood came. Perhaps those mountains were formed when God shook the earth and broke up the depths (7:11).

7:20
The water emerged 22 ½ feet above the tops of the highest mountains.

7:21-23
Note **<u>one</u>** single air-breathing living organism survived the flood.

7:23
The flood washed the earth clean, so that not a trace of the wicked or their wickedness would be found (A. Ross, p. 190).

Have you ever seen the catastrophic effects of merely a small local flood? (ILLUS: the washed-out road in the desert of Israel in 1996).

III. ***The example of the*** **Filthy Sodomites** (v.6-8)
(The twin cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were judged by the FIRE which fell from God)

v. 6
The twin cities of Sodom & Gomorrah, known for their homosexuality (Gen. 19), were turned into burnt ashes and covered with mountains of salt, preserved as it were as a memorial to remind future generations of God's judgment of sin.

Genesis 19:24
"The LORD . . . from the LORD" – two different references to *Yahweh*. Two distinct persons are in view. The Lord Jesus is the first reference; God the Father is the second.

"Brimstone and fire" – Fire and brimstone (sulfur) is God's most severe form of judgment (cp. Rev. 20:10; 21:8).

Ryrie suggests: "Possibly an earthquake occurred and lightning ignited the gases that were released, causing a rain of fire and smoke."

The details of how God accomplished the destruction of Sodom are not given. But we know this for sure:

1) The judgment fell from above. (Today, the Sodom Mountains bear evidence of a catastrophic sudden raining of sulfur and salt from above. The eerie Sodom Mountains look like something from the sky was dropped onto the earth in a moment).

2) The judgment involved sulfur, asphalt, and salt. All of which abound in that area to this day. The Dead Sea is dead due to the judgment of God. There is no place in the entire world like the Sodom Mountains of salt.

v. 25
All of the property, people, and produce of Sodom and its surrounding cities were reduced to sudden ruin, buried under millions of tons of salt.

"More than twenty times in Scripture these cities are used as an example to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter. . . God used them and their holocaust to send an unmistakable warning to future generations of rebellious sinners – namely, that depraved people cannot pursue ungodliness and also escape God's vengeance and everlasting judgment (cf. 3:7, 10; Matt. 25:41; Rom. 1:18, 2:5, 8; Eph. 5:6; 1 Thess. 2:16; 2 Thess. 1:8; Heb. 10:26-27; Rev. 6:17)." (MacArthur, p. 89).

v. 7
If it were not for this verse, one might wonder if Lot was truly a righteous man.

Just as God delivered righteous Noah (v. 5), He delivered righteous Lot (v. 7). And just as He (the same day of their rescue) delivered them, He will deliver His saints via Rapture when Jesus Christ returns.

Luke 17:26-30
And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

"Vexed" - oppressed; worn out or troubled greatly. It means to be distressed or to experience fatigue of soul.

Lot's righteous soul was wearied to the point where he was sick and tired of seeing and hearing Sodom's unbridled wickedness. He was worn out by it.

If we are righteous, we will become tired of sin as well. It will weary us to see and hear that which is anti-God, anti-moral and anti-natural.

"Filthy conversation" - indecent conduct or debauchery of lifestyle.

The Sodomites of today want their lifestyle to be viewed as decent, even "normal" behavior, but it has been and will always be viewed by the righteous as "filthy"!

While we love the Sodomite, we loath the sodomy. We pray for the homosexual but will never accept his sexuality or view it as acceptable or an alternative lifestyle.

What are the moral characteristics of the Sodomites as revealed in Genesis 19?

The Sodomites had…

1. *A nocturnal love for the night time (v.1-4a)*
(When the sun goes down, the wicked rise up to do wickedness)

The Sodomites had…

2. *A orgiastic coalition of numerous people coming together for a joint venture* **in wickedness (v.4)**

The Sodomites had…

3. *A disrespect for people's right to privacy (v.4-5a)*

The Sodomites had…

4. **A lustful, self-centeredness which seeks to fulfill one's distorted passions at** all cost (v.5)

The Sodomites had…

5. *A disregard for rebuke (v.6-9a)*
(They don't want to hear the truth about their wickedness)

The Sodomites had…

6. *A forceful, violent reaction against those who get in the way of their agenda (v.9b)*

The Sodomites had…

7. *A relentless pursuit to indulge in perversion despite physical ailments (that* **came as a result of sexual wickedness) (v.9b-11)**

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT…
HOMOSEXUALITY

The Christian's attitude toward homosexuals ought to be love and pity.

1. Homosexuality is contrary to GOD'S DESIGN for SEX and MARRIAGE (Gen. 2:18-25; 4:1)

2. Homosexuality led to the DESTRUCTION of an ENTIRE SOCIETY (Gen. 19:1-29)

3. Homosexuality was a CAPITAL OFFENCE in ancient Israel and was considered an *"ABOMINATION"* by God (Lev. 18:22, 20:13; Deut. 23:17; cp. I Kings 14:24, 15:12, 22:46; II Kings 23:7; I Tim. 1:10)

4. Homosexuality is an OBSESSIVE behavior often directly associated with VICIOUSNESS and VIOLENCE toward others (Judges 19:22-30)

5. Homosexuality is the result of willfully REJECTING a Biblical KNOWLEDGE of GOD (Romans 1:18-25, 28)

6. Homosexuality is an UNNATURAL PERVERSION of sexual PASSION (Romans 1:26-27)
7. Homosexuality requites (rewards) its deviant participants with LETHAL CONSEQUENCES (guilt, bodily injury, communicable diseases and viruses, eternal condemnation) (Romans 1:27b; I Cor. 6:9-10)

8. Homosexuality is a sin that can be FORGIVEN and FORSAKEN (I Corinthians 6:9-11)

v. 8

"In seeing and hearing" – The Sodomites always shove their sin in your face so that you "see" it and they squeal so loud so that you "hear" them. But don't let all the noise fool you; they are still a small minority of our present world population.

"Vexed" - a different Greek word than in verse 7. The world means "tormented" or "tortured." When Lot saw so much as a quick glimpse of their lifestyle or heard even a snippet of their godless propaganda, his righteous soul was literally tortured by their lawless ("*anomos*") behavior.

Conclusion: v.9 - (Are you reserved for judgment or preserved from it?)

Verses 4 – 8 forma conditional statement, and verse 9 gives the conclusion.

Here's the point: If God judge3d the fallen angels and if God judged the world of Noah's day with a flood, and if God judged Sodom and Gomorrah in Lot's day, then He will certainly judge the wicked who are alive today at His determined time in the future.

The Lord knows full well what techniques to use to keep His godly ones from giving themselves to solicitations to evil, and He knows full well how to keep under punishment the unjust as they head toward God's day of judgment.

"To be punished" = lit. while being punished (present, passive participle). The point is this: Judgment is coming and punishment is already underway. God's wrath is already upon the unbeliever (Jn. 3:36).

He restrains His children from evil, and He retains the devil's kids for His wrath.

Are you reserved for judgment or preserved from judgment?

Are you spared or spared not?

God's desire is to spare you from His wrath –

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.

"The Condemnation of Those Who Despise Authority"

(2 Peter 2:10-12)

3/8/09

Introduction:

What are the Symptoms of those who despise Authority?
In what way does rebellion manifest itself?

I. **Sexual Immorality** (v.10a)
("Flesh…the lust of uncleanness")

II. **Daring Defiance** (v.10b)
("presumptuous")

III. **Arrogant Self-will** (v.10c)
("selfwilled")

IV. **Verbal Blasphemy** (v.10d-11)
("not afraid to speak evil of dignities")

V. **Irrational Animal Behavior** (v.12)
("natural brute beasts")

"The Condemnation of Those Who Despise Authority"

(2 Peter 2:10-12)

3/8/09

Introduction:

Read verse 10.

2 Peter chapter two is describing the coming judgment of God on anyone who teaches that which is false (particularly God's condemnation of religious false teachers – v. 1).

Note: Every time we open our mouth, we are teaching (we are importing information that will either help or hinder the hearer; it will either build up or tear down; it will either bring the hearer into truth and thus closer to God or bring the hearer into error and consequently father from God). "By your words, you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned."

"Even denying the Lord that bought them" – what happens when people deny the Lord? When they deny his existence or His right to rule in their lives? What is the reason for such a notion as to deny God?

The motive of evolution

What caused man to think up such a theory?

Basic answer: Sinful man does not want to be accountable to a Creator God.

Fallen man wants to make a way to leave God out of the origin of life, so that he does not have to acknowledge the Creator's authority and glorify Him. Evolution is so readily accepted simply because it gives man the "luxury" of keeping the concept of God out of his life and conscience (Jn. 3:19-20).

If a Creator exists, these are some of the resultant consequences (consequences that a sinful man does not want to acknowledge):

1) I am known by the Creator.
2) I am inferior to the superior Creator.
3) I am responsible to the Creator.
4) I will be judged (held accountable) by the Creator.
5) I should live for the glory and purpose of the Creator.
6) I am not the master of my life.
7) I cannot live any way I please.

See: Romans 1:18-32 -

1) The real reason for evolution - V. 18 - "Men hold (hold down, suppress) the truth in unrighteousness."

2) The inexcusableness of evolution - V. 19-20 - Creation clearly points to a Creator (and His power and authority).

3) The end result of evolution - V. 21-32

a) Empty lives and blind eyes (v. 21)

b) Pride and delusion (v. 22)

c) Idolatry (materialism) (v. 27)

d) Immorality (v. 24-32)

If there is no God, then there are:

(1) No absolutes

(2) No moral standards

(3) No boundaries

(4) No shame or embarrassment for sin

(5) No fear of judgment

In verses In 2 Peter 2:4 – 9, Peter gave three examples of the surety of God's judgment:

1) The angels that sinned (who fell from heaven) (v. 4)
2) The world of Noah's day (which was flooded by a universal deluge) (v. 5)
3) The cities of Sodom Gomorrah (which were destroyed by fire) (v. 6-8)

"Peter's three examples, cited in chronological order, establish that neither rank, strength, nor numbers shield rebellious evil from God's vengeance." (Hiebert, p. 96).

The point: The wicked will not go unpunished; no one gets away with sin. Payday – Someday!

The philosophy pervading the world today is pure humanism (man is the measure of all things).

--The world says "Assert yourself"
--God says "Submit yourself"
--The world says "Do what you want"
--God says "Do what your Lord wants"
--The world says "Follow your heart"
--God says "Obey my will"

God commands submission to authority:

- To God

  James 4:7
  Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

- To Government

  1 Peter 2:13
  Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;

- To Pastoral Leadership

  Hebrews 13:17
  Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.

- To Husband's Authority

  Colossians 3:18
  Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. (cp. Eph. 5:22)

- To Parents' Authority

  Ephesians 6:2-3
  Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

- To Each Other

  1 Peter 5:5
  Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

The spirit of our days displays this attitude: Nobody is going to lord it over me; no one is going to tell me what to do. I will submit to no one."

Rebellion, anti-law, and insubordination are signs that we are living in the very Last Days of this age. It is being pumped into our children via cartoons and the media in general.

Is this spirit in you?

If you want to see how American family culture has rapidly changed over the last 50 years, simply compare the family of "Leave It To Beaver" (1957) with the style of family life on your modern sitcom.

There exists a systematic dismantling of all authority structures in society today. On T.V. for example authorities are:

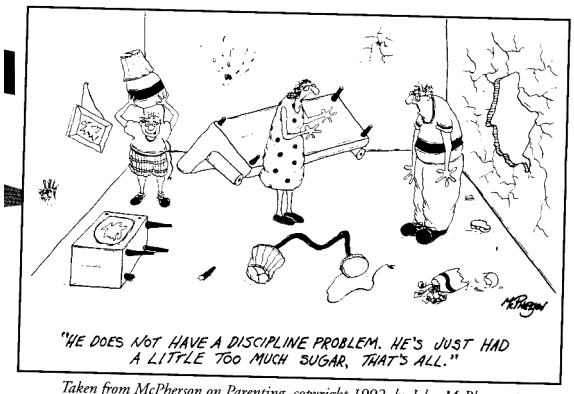
1) Made fun of (the Simpsons)
2) Ridiculed
3) Distrusted

The norm on T.V. is not the stable family ("Little house on the prairie" is a thing of the past); The typical family is not pictured with a husband lovingly leading his wife & children, or a wife respecting her husband or children honoring their parents, but a dysfunctional husband, a wife cheating on her husband and kids sneaking and conniving to get their own way. Most shows involving parents & children depict the parents as inept, (they just don't understand as their children do); In these films the child just has to "follow his/her own heart" and in the end it always turns our right for the child and the parents come around and see that the child was right all along. Every role is twisted in today's movies.

God is a God of <u>order</u>.

Just as the universe, the human body, every detail in creation has a proper <u>order & structure</u>.

So do all relationships have order. There is order in the Trinity (I Cor 11:3);
1Co 11:3 But I would have you know,
that the head of every man is Christ;
and the head of the woman is the man;
and the head of Christ is God.



Taken from McPherson on Parenting, copyright 1992, by John McPherson. Used by permission.

Not a superiority of essence, but a difference in function.

And God created the animal realm & human realm with order.

Even in the Angelic Realm, there is order & rank
(Michael, Gabriel, Seraphim, Cherubim, the Heavenly Host) (even in the demon realm there exists rank & order: *Eph 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places)*

The most beautiful & magnificent of all angels (Lucifer) was dissatisfied with his place under God, and fell by Pride (Isaiah 14:12-15)

Note: Lucifer's 5 "I wills"
Lucifer thought within his heart, "I will exalt myself in regards to:
God's Heaven
God's Angelic Realm
God's Congregation
God's Shekinah Clouds
God's Glory"

Lu 10:18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

1Ti 3:6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

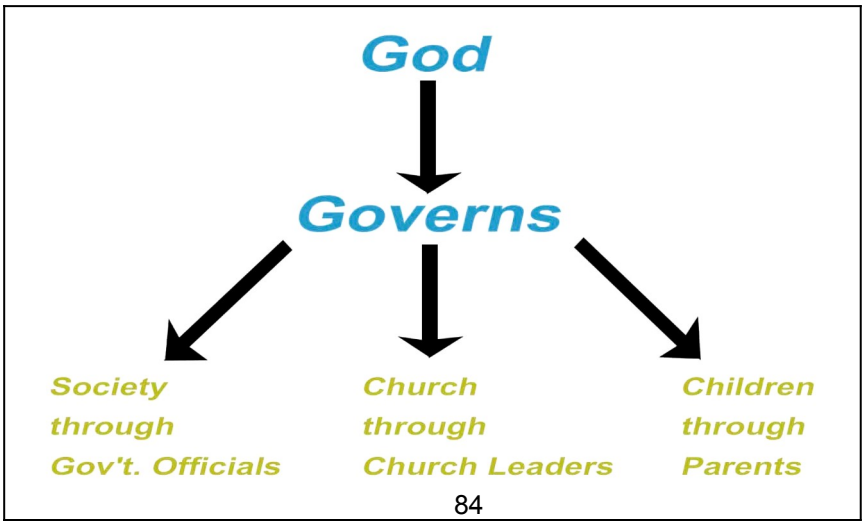
All of life is structured around a "chain of responsibility"

Three basic divinely established institutions to provide structure (order) and safety (protection) to society:

1) The Home (I Cor. 7:2ff; Eph. 5:22-6:4; I Cor.11:3)

2) The Government (Rom. 13:1-f)

3) The Church (Heb. 13:7, 17, 24; I Peter 5:1-5)



These institutions involve submission and authority.

"Authority" is a word Rebels hate

Society has programmed the generation we live in to distrust and disrespect authority.

- Due to Misuse (abuse of power)
- Due to Misunderstanding (of God's ways)

V.10
"Despise government" – despise lordship (*kuriotetos*) or authority.

The word "despise" means to "think down upon" (to have a low or not a high opinion of someone).

To have a habitual attitude of "thinking down" or "against" something, with the result that it is ignored (Hiebert, p. 108).

What we have here is a despising of the power and authority of the Lord.

Peter's second epistle is an eschatological letter describing the trouble and characteristics of the Last Days.

v. 10
"But chiefly them" = especially those

The unjust have reservations with the Day of Judgment (v. 9), but especially those unjust people who have the traits (characteristics) of verses 10-22.

What God is about to describe are the characteristics of people who have reservations with the hottest wrath of God.

What are the Symptoms of those who despise Authority?

In what way does rebellion manifest itself?

I. Sexual Immorality (v.10a)
("Flesh…the lust of uncleanness")

"<u>Walk after</u> the flesh"

Those who despise authority "follow a certain course, a course described as 'after the flesh'. . . They are eager followers, not true leaders, following the lead of their 'flesh' rather than the Spirit of God" (Hiebert, p. 107).

"Walk after <u>the flesh</u>" – to conduct one's life with the motivation of satisfying fleshly appetites ("The phrase. . . suggests sodomy" – Green, cited by Rogers, p. 586).

"In the lust of uncleanness" - dirty lusts or lusts which pollute the body and soul (evidently sexual sin is in view, although there are many other lusts which pollute as well).

There is a connection between despising authority and sexual immorality. Where you have one, you will have the other.

America's general rejection of God (and His authority) has opened the flood gates of sexual perversions, which pollute a people and a country (cp. Rom. 1:20f – for the connection between a rejection of God and sexual sin).

II. Daring Defiance (v.10b)
("presumptuous")

"Presumptuous" - to dare in the sense of not dreading or shunning through fear (Vine, p. 144).

Here, it means to have no fear of the authority, so as to shamelessly and irreverently defy the authority (while daring them to do something about it).

The word "presumptuous" here describes the person who is brazen, headstrong, a "dare devil"; a reckless daring that defies God and man (Mayor; Green, cited by Rogers, p. 586).

III. Arrogant Self-will (v.10c)
("selfwilled")

"Self-willed" – *authades* – self-pleasing (*autos* – self; and *hedomai* – to please).

The word denotes one who, dominated by self-interest, and inconsiderate of others, arrogantly asserts his own will (Vine, p. 559).

One whose mind is so made up that he is going to get what he wants, that no one can deter him from it.

Their mind is made up to have their own way, not matter what it may cost them or others.

IV. Verbal Blasphemy (v.10d-11)
("not afraid to speak evil of dignities")

"Dignities" - lit. glorious ones (angelic beings, celestial beings).

They fearlessly deny or mock supernatural entities (this text may apply to glorious dignities in the natural realm; i.e. people of importance).

v. 11
Those who are insubordinate to authority and who speak evil of persons worthy of glory actually go beyond what even angels would do.

Angelic beings, which are superior in strength and ability, would not even bring a slanderous judgment before the Lord.

Angels, who have superior power and might, do not even rail on, defame, or blaspheme people in front of God's throne.

Jude follows Peter's words precisely when he writes:

Jude 1:8-10
Likewise also these *filthy* dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

V. Irrational Animal Behavior (v.12)
("natural brute beasts")

v. 12
"Natural" – mere creatures of instinct (they sin without even thinking about the consequences; their life is in "auto-pilot," headed for destruction).

"They are comparable to beasts that have no rational capability, operating solely on self-indulgence and unthinking passion. Animals are born as creatures of instinct, meaning that their responses to stimuli are preprogrammed" (MacArthur, p. 99).

"Brute beasts" – irrational animals; unthinking or unreasoning animals.

These are people who blaspheme realities that they cannot disprove; they in ignorance speak evil of supernatural realities that they don't know exist.

These ignorant animals will captured and destroyed by their own rottenness; their own moral decay will devastate them.

Their own sin will entrap them and destroy them.

Conclusion:

An "AUTHORITY" is someone with a position of <u>oversight</u>.

Authority means: "The right to rule; the power to act, decide, command, and judge…It is the right to set policy" (Fugate)

Note: such authority is not without controls or limit. Every authority is ultimately under God's authority

Psalm 47:2
For the Lord most high *is* terrible; *he is* a great King over all the earth.

Psalm 83:18
That *men* may know that thou, whose name alone *is* Jehovah, *art* the most high over all the earth.

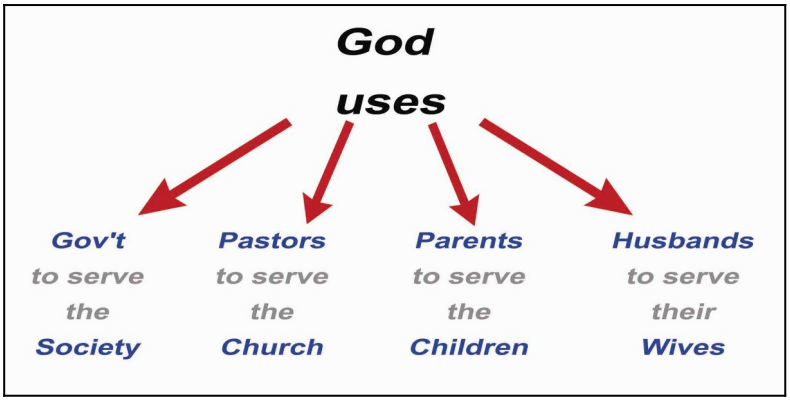
Psalm 115:3
But our God *is* in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.

The position of authority is ultimately given by <u>God</u>. (Romans 13:1)

The word translated “ordained” means to put into place; to appoint; to institute.

Authorities are God’s TOOLS to get His job done; They are mediators in a sense.

This position of authority is one of <u>service</u> (an "authority" is a servant) (Rom. 13:4) (For their well being)



This position of authority is to provide <u>leadership</u>, <u>training</u>, and/or <u>protection</u> for the well being of the one(s) served.

Without Authority you have NO:

1) Order (no structure; no chain of command)
2) Direction (each does what is right in his/her own eyes)
3) Protection (each is out for their own survival)

The one who holds such a position of authority is <u>responsible</u> to God and will answer to God. (cp. Heb. 13:17)

Whether that authority is a guardian, foster parent, adopted parents, or step parents.

The one who is expected to submit to the authority will also be <u>accountable</u> to God for how he/she responded to the authority.

Note: It is sometimes necessary for authorities to utilize force to restrain rebellion against authority and to protect those you are responsible for. *(Examples: Gov’t. may use handcuffs, & prisons; A Biblical Church which seeks holiness in the body of believers may have to exercise church discipline; A parent may have to chastise the children)*

*** All of God's children have a responsibility to respect authority**

There are times when it is right to break the law.

When is it okay?

*When man's law conflicts with God's law. [when government imposes a law that will violate a Biblical conviction]

Three Biblical examples of when Christians can disobey government:

1. When it interferes with your prayer life (Dan. 6)
2. When it interferes with your worship (Dan. 3)
3. When it interferes with your witnessing (Acts 4:19-20)

"We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29)
Examples of situations when it is right to disobey the law:

- When the law forbids evangelism
- church attendance
- Bible reading and prayer
- Child discipline

None of us will have a right submissive heart to authority unless we first submit to God's authority in our lives.

Does God have the right to tell me what to do?

Yes, because He made you and (if you are a Christian),
He redeemed you.

The Lord Has OWNERSHIP and RIGHTS to your entire Life
(I Cor. 6:19b-20)

V. 19b

You can't say, "It's my life, my body, and I will live it anyway I want."

Many don't come to Christ because they don't want to give up ownership rights.

"Ye are not your own" - If you are saved, you don't own yourself. You don't belong to yourself. You belong to the One who made you and redeemed you (ILLUS: The "Little Red Boat" story)

V. 20

"Ye are bought" - bought at the market place (as a slave in the days of ancient Rome).

"Ye are bought with a price" - Christ's blood (Acts 20:18; Heb. 9:12; I Peter 1:18; Rev. 5:9).

"Therefore" - Drawing a conclusion.

Since God lives in us and owns us, we are obligated to live for His glory (I Cor. 10:31) (i.e. that God would be well thought of by how you live).

If you love the Lord, you will do that which pleases Him.

In the last days, "men will be lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God."

We must conduct our lives in a way that pleases God. Are you more interested in God's pleasure than your own?

"To Glorify God" is the goal of the way we live.

"Body. . . spirit" - It is not just our body or spirit, but both that belong to God.

You cannot make a dichotomy of your life. He gets all of us!

It all starts at full surrender to God
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."

The Bottom Line is this: It takes FAITH to submit to Authority. Faith that God will work the results out for your good and for His glory.

"Living Like a Wild Animal"

2 Peter 2:10-16
3/15/09

Introduction:

"But these, as natural brute beasts…"

- ***Don't live like a brute beast!***

What are some of the behavioral traits of animalism?

I. **Their <u>pride</u> resists <u>authority</u>** (v.10-11)
(They "despise government (authority)..speak evil of dignities)

II. **Their <u>mouth</u> speaks <u>ignorance</u>** (v.12)
(They "speak evil of the things they understand not")

III. **Their <u>fun</u> is wild <u>partying</u>** (v.13a)
(They "count it pleasure to riot in the day time")

IV. **Their <u>appearance</u> is <u>deceitful</u>** (v.13b, 14b)
(They are "sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you")

V. **Their <u>eyes</u> are <u>adulterous</u>** (v.14a)
(They have "eyes full of adultery")

VI. **Their <u>time</u> is consumed with <u>sinning</u>** (v.14c)
(They "cannot cease from sin")

VII. **Their <u>heart</u> is <u>greedy</u>** (v.14d-15)
(They have a "heart they have exercised with covetous practices")

VIII. **Their <u>mind</u> is <u>madness</u>** (v.16)
(When rebuked, they still don't get it; "the dumb donkey speaking…forbad the madness")

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God commands submission to authority:

- To God

  James 4:7
  Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

- To Government

  1 Peter 2:13
  Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme;

- To Pastoral Leadership

  Hebrews 13:17
  Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.

- To Husband's Authority

  Colossians 3:18
  Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. (cp. Eph. 5:22)

- To Parents' Authority

  Ephesians 6:2-3
  Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

- To Each Other

  1 Peter 5:5
  Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

The spirit of our days displays this attitude: Nobody is going to lord it over me; no one is going to tell me what to do. I will submit to no one."

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There exists a systematic dismantling of all authority structures in society today. On T.V. for example authorities are:

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(They "count it pleasure to riot in the day time")

"Shall receive the reward of unrighteousness" – "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23)

Their own corruption will be their temporal and eternal destruction.

Sin carries with it its own destruction (destructive power).

"Count it pleasure" - their idea of a good time or their idea of fun is riotous partying. They are always looking for some form of entertainment (which usually involves the carnal behavior of drinking, dancing, and immoral music).

"Riot" – indulgent wild partying; "daytime debauchery was frowned on even in degenerate Roman society" (Green, Kelly; cited by Rogers, p. 586).

Most sin happens in the night under the veil of darkness (ex: drunkenness – 1 Thes. 5:7); but some people are so wicked that they do it in broad daylight.

IV. Their <u>appearance</u> is <u>deceitful</u> (v.13b, 14b)
(They are "sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you")

v. 13b
"Spots" – *spilos* akin to "to spill"). The word refers to a stain or moral stain (Eph. 5:27).

"Blemish" – that which is shameful; a moral disgrace. God wants His children to be without blemish (Eph. 5:27).

While stained and blemished with sin, these false teachers used their influence to lead people astray. They pretended to be Christians and crept into the churches seeking to lure people away from Christ.

"Sporting themselves with their own deceivings" – carousing or indulging even among God's people with guile or deception so as to gain some selfishly motivated pleasure. Plain and simple hypocrites, who sneak in among God's people with an agenda.

How is it that one can profess salvation, serve the Lord, go to bible school, teach Bible classes, witness to others of Christ, pray in public, etc., and then apostacize, leave church, abandon his Christian principles, and embrace the world?

Answer: He/she was a hypocrite (who played a part for a time, but wasn't really the person he/she portrayed).

Matthew 23:
Note the phrase repeated seven times: *"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"* (v. 13, 14, 15, 23, 25, 27, 29)

The word ***"woe"*** occurs 8 times in this chapter, expressing the woeful, horrible, miserable fate that awaits the hypocrite.

". . . The hypocrite's hope shall <u>perish</u>" (Job 8:13).

When asked, "Why don't you get saved?" - many respond "Because there are too many hypocrites claiming to be saved." When asked "Where do hypocrites go when they die?" they answer, "Hell." The question now is, "Why do you want to go to hell and be with them forever??"

The word ***"hypocrites"*** *(hypokritai)* means one who answers or speaks out from underneath a covering; the word was used of actors who pretended to be someone they were not. These Greek and Roman stage actors would speak behind large masks and alter their voice to conceal their real identity and to match the person they pretended to be.

Hypocrisy is totally the opposite of the nature of God. It is a lie, while God is <u>truth</u>; it is fake, while God is <u>real</u> and <u>genuine</u>; it is deceitful, while God is <u>trustworthy</u>.

One is never more like the devil [who can disguise himself as an angel of light (II Cor. 11:14)] than when one pretends to be something he/she is not.

Someone once said to D.L. Moody, "I saw one of <u>your</u> converts in a bar drunk on liquor!" Moody responded, "He must be one of 'mine'; he certainly is not one of Christ's converts."

If you are a religious hypocrite, one day your "mask" will be removed; you can't wear it forever.

The real You will eventually be known (when the situation and circumstances are right; when the temptation is overwhelming; when the pressure is turned on).

Take of your masks now yourself, so God does not have to do it for you later!

ILLUS: Aesop's fable of a wolf that disguised itself as a sheep
(MacArthur, <u>Matthew, Volume I</u>, p. 353)

God is interested in the heart, not mere external, insincere displays of piety.

Phony "spiritual" practices cannot fool the Lord.

"You are what you really are when you are all alone."

What you do when no one is watching you reveals your true character.

Too many today, like the ancient Pharisees love "*the praise of men more than the praise of God"*

Christianity is not theatrics, it is not an act, it's not a game of pretending; it's to be a real, genuine relationship with God that results in real, genuine works for God.

In a world of facades, fake appearances, false impressions, deceitful image, masks, artificiality, we can make our greatest impact by just simple being REAL (genuine)!

V. Their eyes are adulterous (v.14a)
(They have "eyes full of adultery")

"Eyes full of adultery" – "their eyes are always looking for a woman with whom to commit adultery" (Bauchham, cited by Rogers, p. 587).

They have become so obsessed with sex that every time they look at a woman, they have perverted thoughts

Matthew 5:27-29
Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

Every act of adultery started out as a "heart problem" (Mk. 7:21 - "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders.")

Real sin flows from and takes place first in the heart (or thoughts) of man.

"In his heart" - Since people are not animals, we have an aspect of our nature that goes deeper than our carnal flesh. People sin against their body by committing sexual sin (I Cor. 6:18) and sin against their "spirit" when they entertain evil thoughts.

Christian, remember, both your "body" and your "spirit" are God's (I Cor. 6:20)

Satan today is placing an overemphasis on sex to cause people to become obsessed with it. Once he can obsess a person with such thoughts, he can then provide a setting at the wrong place and at the wrong time to tempt that individual to experiment and gratify that obsession that he has caused.

Immoral sexual lust is <u>not</u> a biological need (like the need for food and sleep), but a perverted obsession.

In a child's life, sexual lust does not exist until fuel is supplied; books are read, pictures are seen, etc. The more fuel you feed a passion, the more it grows.

VI. Their <u>time</u> is consumed with <u>sinning</u> (v.14c)
(They "cannot cease from sin")

"Cannot cease from sin" - to sin without pausing, unable to stop sinning.

Their lives are characterized by unrepentant sin. They are addicted to sin with no power to break out of it.

A vital relationship with Christ is the only way to experience victory over a life dominated by sin.

Having God's Spirit (in regeneration) and then being filled with God's Spirit (in sanctification) is the key to victory over continual sin. (SEE Romans 7 – 8).

"Beguiling unstable souls" – enticing the lives of people who have no solid foundation. They literally use bait to trap or ensnare those who lack a solid moral and/or spiritual foundation.

They look for those without a firm ground under them, so as to unsettle them in their walk with the Lord. They trick them for selfish advantage.

"They preyed on the spiritually weak (Ja. 1:6), convincing them to believe doctrinal lies and enticing them into debauched lifestyles. . . like fishermen, they lured or tricked their victims to believe their deceptions" (MacArthur, p. 101).

VII. Their <u>heart</u> is <u>greedy</u> (v.14d-15)

(They have a "heart they have exercised with covetous practices")

v. 14
They have a "heart," but it's not a heart that gives; rather it's a heart that seeks to gain more and more.

They have a greedy heart which seeks to acquire more than is needed (with no desire to bless others with the gain, but to indulge in more and more pleasure and carnality).

"Exercised" – the word is used of bodily exercise or physical training. Here, Peter is describing people whose heart has been trained or developed into a selfish, greedy, warehouse stock-piled with worldly goods.

They are never satisfied, but are always looking for more.

They are busy stock-piling treasures upon the earth.

Matthew 6:19-21
Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

> He means: Don't have a lifestyle of hoarding treasure (Heb. 13:5 - *"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."*). Don't make it your life's ambition. If wealth comes your way, praise God for it and use it for God's glory, but don't give yourself greedily to acquiring it and don't glory in the money (Jer. 9:23 - *"Let not the rich man glory in his riches"*).
>
> We are stewards of our earthly "treasures" (money) -- not owners. All we have ultimately belongs to Him, We simply manage what He has entrusted to us.
>
> Perhaps one reason why many people continually struggle to "make ends meet," is that they are not faithful stewards of what God gave them. He gives you little because He cannot trust you with much (Luke 16:10-11 - *"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?")*
>
> It's not wrong to have possessions; it's wrong when those possessions have you!

"The foundational truth that underlies the commandments not to steal or covet is the right of personal property" (MacArthur, p. 410).

To honestly earn and save is wise and good, but it is wrong when earning and saving become the preoccupation of our lives!

"Moths" - attack rich clothing

"Rust" - attacks precious metals, cars

Thieves" - attack jewelry, amusements products (Ex: TV, VCR, boom boxes, etc.)

The point: Nothing material in this life is permanent! It will either be eaten, corrupted, or stolen. (or if you die, left behind). SEE: I Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19

Be a Giver (Mt. 19:21 - *"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me."*)

(Luke 12:33 - "*See that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth")*

--Support your Lord's work!
--Help a brother in need!
--Invest in the Gospel ministry!
--Realize that there is a cause that is greater than your own.

When we get to Heaven and look back over our lives,s I'm sure we will grieve over what could have been. What we could have done!

I have found that a person who unselfishly invests in God's work, not only has the guaranteed assurance of rewards in Heaven but the rewards are also received in this life!

Prov. 3:9-10 - *"Honor the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."*

Luke 6:38 - *"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again."*

II Cor. 9:6 - *"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."*

"Cursed children" – children of the devil who are accused (by God) because of their sin of covetousness (which is idolatry).

(This is not saying that their children are cursed, but that they are cursed children due to their selfish greed.)

v. 15
They were familiar (at the very least) with the right path and then have "forsaken" it).

They abandoned the straight path; they left the right road.

Somehow they veered off of God's way because of their following after the way of greed and covetousness.

They were introduced to Christ and then got distracted by their lust for money and material things.

"Bosor" – perhaps a play on words, because the word *basar (BSR)* is the Hebrew word for "flesh."

Balaam was literally the son of the flesh (a carnal man).

"The wages of unrighteousness" - there is nothing wrong with "wages," just as there is nothing inherently wrong with money. However, wages earned through unrighteousness or injustice is cursed money.

Here, Peter is describing money earned by fraud or by unethical or immoral means.

The story is of a Moabite king named Balak, who hired the so-called prophet Balaam so that he would pronounce a curse upon the people of Israel (Num. 22-23). King's Balak's desire was to have Balaam weaken Israel so that he could conquer and destroy them.

Balak offered Balaam great sums of money and positions of honor to curse the people of Israel; but every time he did, blessing came out of the mouth of Balaam. He could not curse those whom God had not cursed (Num. 23:8).

VIII. Their <u>mind</u> is <u>madness</u> (v.16)

(When rebuked, they still don't get it; "the dumb donkey speaking…forbad the madness")

Balaam was bribed by the king, and his love for money caused him to go down the road of following the pagan entourage until he was stopped by the Angel of the Lord, who would have killed Balaam were it not for the donkey who saved his life. God then allows the dumb donkey to speak and rebuke the mad prophet for his lawless behavior (*para nomia*) (Num. 22:21).

He was rebuked for his refusal to heed God's leading in his life and was hindered from receiving the promised reward.

"Madness" – *paraphronia* – lit. beside one's own mind. In other words, Balaam was so greedy that he was "beside himself."

His love of money had caused him to act irrationally (cf. 2 Cor. 11:23). In the end he would suffer the ultimate penalty of death (Num. 31:8). (MacArthur, p. 103).

The Religious Apostate

2 Peter 2:17-22
4/26/09

Introduction:

What are the characteristics of a religious apostate?

I. *A Religious Apostate* **Advertises Much, but Delivers Nothing** (v.17)

II. *A Religious Apostate* **Impresses with His Words, while Luring others into Sin** (v.18)

III. *A Religious Apostate* **Promises Freedom, but Lives as a Slave** (v.19)

IV. *A Religious Apostate* **Possesses Full Knowledge of Christ, but Lacks True Faith in Christ** (v.20a)

V. *A Religious Apostate* **Knows the Truth, but Turns from It to his own Peril** (v.20b-21)

VI. *A Religious Apostate* **Does What his Nature Dictates** (v. 22)

The Religious Apostate

2 Peter 2:17-22
4/26/09

Introduction:

Simon came to “believe” under false pretense. He believed intellectually as demons do (Ja. 2:19), yet was never released from his bitter poison and chains of sin (cp. Acts 8:13 & 23).

Sometimes the unreal can look very much like the real. EX: counterfeit, phony money.

Satan tried to slip a counterfeit into the Samaritan church. Simon looked good externally (see v. 13). He had Philip fooled. Philip was convinced that Simon was saved, so he baptized him.

There are 3 things about one who is saved: 1) he believes 2) he obeys & 3) he continues. and Simon had all three! He "believed", was baptized in obedience, and continued.

Simon looked good (like Judas). From all outward appearances he seemed real. V. 13 - he was always hanging around with the preacher (Philip), and was an attentive observer.

What were your motives in coming to God for salvation?

Some make a profession of faith for the following wrong reasons:

1) to please someone (ex. girlfriend)
2) to get someone off your back (ex. pressure from a soulwinner)
3) to see what you can get out of it. This amounts to <u>using God</u>, making His salvation like pagan magic.

Some use God for the following <u>selfish</u> reasons:

--fortune (financial gain) (thinking that "gain is godliness")

--fame (use Christianity to make a name for themselves)

--power (ILLUS: Ron Stravel - a Satanic cult leader we met in 1984, who wanted to be baptized, sot hat he might link up with God so that he would have power over Satan and demons)

God warns us of the dangers of apostasy in the last days.

1 Timothy 4:1
Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

2 Thessalonians 2:3
Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

Basically, a religious apostate does not stand where he used to stand. He does not believe what he used to profess. The look of his outcome is uglier than the appearance of his pre-conversion state.

Peter in verses 17 – 22 continues his warning regarding false teachers and their departure (apostasy) from their professed faith.

1. **Their <u>pride</u> resists <u>authority</u>** (v.10-11)
   (They "despise government (authority)..speak evil of dignities)

2. **Their <u>mouth</u> speaks <u>ignorance</u>** (v.12)
   (They "speak evil of the things they understand not")

3. **Their <u>fun</u> is wild <u>partying</u>** (v.13a)
   (They "count it pleasure to riot in the day time")

4. **Their <u>appearance</u> is <u>deceitful</u>** (v.13b, 14b)
   (They are "sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you")

5. **Their <u>eyes</u> are <u>adulterous</u>** (v.14a)
   (They have "eyes full of adultery")

6. **Their <u>time</u> is consumed with <u>sinning</u>** (v.14c)
   (They "cannot cease from sin")

7. **Their <u>heart</u> is <u>greedy</u>** (v.14d-15)
   (They have a "heart they have exercised with covetous practices")

8. **Their <u>mind</u> is <u>madness</u>** (v.16)
   (When rebuked, they still don't get it; "the dumb donkey speaking…forbad the madness")

"Three main features have always characterized the ministry style of false teachers. First, they are authoritarian (Jer. 5:31), invariably ruling over their churches in a domineering fashion (cf. 3 John 9-10), and strongly denouncing any who question their authority. To make matters worse, they almost always lack formal training or reputable ordination, operating beyond any legitimate biblical or theological accountability.

"Second, false teachers minister in a man-centered way (Jer. 23:16, 26; Ezek. 13:2), pandering to what they think people want to hear and accept (cf. Isa. 30:10; 2 Tim. 4:3-4). As a result, they preach their own visions (Lam. 2:14; Ezek. 13:9; Zech. 10:2; Col. 2:18) of health wealth, prosperity, and false peace (Jer. 6:14; 23:17; Ezek. 13:10, 16). . .

"Third, they treat the historic, Scripture-based doctrines of the church with contempt (cf. Jer. 6:16). Instead of proclaiming biblical orthodoxy, they promote their own self-styled novelties, methods, and doctrines." (MacArthur, p. 103-104).

What are the characteristics of a religious apostate?

I. *A Religious Apostate* **Advertises Much, but Delivers Nothing** (v.17)

The thirsty come to them to drink refreshing water to quench their dry, parched souls, only to find that these false teachers are **"wells without water"** – or waterless springs.

So many within professing Christianity, who have a reputation for helping sinners, do nothing to meet the spiritual needs of the lost who come to them and their churches to drink.

They are in need of the "Living Water"—Jesus Christ—but do not find him in many denominations who have so many distractions and substitutes for the Lord, that the spiritual needs of the lost, thirsty souls go unmet.

Are you a "well without water"? Does Christ dwell in you? If not, He desires to dos o today!

Paul further describes the false teachers as **"clouds that are carried with a tempest."**

Here are clouds that blow through without delivering the needed rain. Picture an ancient farmer in Israel, who longed for some rain to help his dry and thirsty field, and gray skies appear on the horizon. He gets his hopes up anticipating a needed soaking, only to see a misty cloud blow through while delivering absolutely nothing.

"Jude 12 . . . promise of refreshing rain but instead are blowing away without leaving a drop." (Hiebert, p. 123).

Two key lessons:

1) You can't give to others what you yourself do not possess.

2) Some will wear a religious label of professing Christ, yet do not have Him, and therefore can't truly offer Him to others.

These teachers produce "disillusionment. . . great expectations which they do not fulfill. . . when the weary traveler came to them seeking refreshment. . . (Hiebert, p. 123).

What is on reserve for such false teachers? The same black, gloomy darkness which they offered others will be their fate for all of eternity.

God has sovereignly reserved the gloom of darkness for those who chose to live in darkness in this life. They wanted darkness for a lifetime, and God will give I to them for all eternity! Can you imagine existing inescapable darkness forever and ever! For those who reject the light of the world, their lot will be the darkness they wanted!

"The black darkness mentioned here refers to hell—the place of eternal punishment where both fire (Matt. 13:42, 25:41) and darkness (Matt. 8:12; 22:13) coexist." (MacArthur, p. 104-105).

"1 Peter 1:4 pictures the heavenly inheritance of the faithful children of God as firmly preserved for them." (Hiebert, p. 124).

II. *A Religious Apostate* **Impresses with His Words, while Luring others into Sin** (v.18)

They speak big, unnaturally swollen verbiage to impress their listeners with their ability to articulate. Like the empty speeches of politicians, they speak much but say little.

People are so impressed by <u>how</u> they speak that they really are not paying attention to <u>what</u> they speak, and end up being led astray by their verbal manipulation.

Eloquent verbosity was their "weapon to ensnare the unwary and licentiousness was the bait on the hook" (Green, cited by Rogers, p. 587).

Their appeal is to the "lusts of the flesh." They entice with an appeal to fleshly appetites. They are smooth talkers who literally can talk someone into sensual, unrestrained, immoral living.

"They posed as the heralds of that true liberty which a deeper understanding of the new life offered, and they assured those who submitting to their leadership that they would conduct them into a life unhindered by restraints. The freedom they offered was a freedom from the obligation to serve Christ and grow in Him in the way set out in 1:3-11.) ((Wheaton, quoted by Hiebert, p. 126) They advocated an antinomianism which insisted that Christians had been freed from the Law and its unnecessary restrictions, leaving them to follow the promptings and desires of their own being." (Hiebert, p. 126).

"They do not care about bringing the truth to people's minds; instead, they target people's lusts—offering a carnal, feelings-oriented message that feeds the sensual instincts of its hearers. Often such teachers possess a personal charm and charismatic appeal that other people, especially vulnerable women, find attractive (cf. 2 Tim. 3:1-6; 4:3-4). " (MacArthur, p. 105).

Ladies, look out for such smooth talkers. I recall a man who came to our church years ago, who through his smooth talking seduced a woman who had recently professed faith in Christ. He was run over by a subway train in what appeared to be a suicide.

Who do they hunt for? Answer: Those who have just escaped from others who held them in some sort of bondage! People used to being held in bondage are more susceptible to it. The seductress hunts for the "precious life." The young person, the new convert, those who are just on the road toward Christ.

"Healthy Christian living comes when God's commands are seen as the kerbstones on His highway of love, the hedge encompassing His garden of grace" (Green, quoted by Hiebert, p. 126). We should embrace God's standards as being good for us, not something to escape from.

III. *A Religious Apostate* **Promises Freedom, but Lives as a Slave** (v.19)

They promise that they have the desire and power to free people from corruption, yet they themselves are slaves to corruption.

There is a "contradiction between their talk and their walk" (Hiebert, p. 127).

You can't successfully free someone from something that you yourself are addicted to.

The blind cannot lead the blind, and the corrupt cannot free others from corruption. The answer is: You get freed from moral corruption and you will have the power to help others get out of theirs.

Peter ends the verse with a proverbial statement: Whatever conquers you, controls you; whatever defeats you, enslaves you; whatever it is that you give in to, becomes a ruling force in your life! When you choose a sin, you do not merely choose an act, you choose a master!

"Sew a thought, reap an act…Sew an act, reap a habit…Sew a habit, reap a character… Sew a character, reap a destiny."

"It is in accord with the teaching of Jesus, 'Every one that committeth sin is the bondservant of sin' (John 8:34), and also with the teaching of Paul (Rom. 6:16; 1 Cor. 6:12b). Barclay quotes the Stoic philosopher Seneca as saying, 'To be enslaved to oneself is the heaviest of all servitudes'." (Hiebert, p. 128).

IV. *A Religious Apostate* **Possesses Full Knowledge of Christ, but Lacks True Faith in Christ** (v.20a)

"Entangled therein" – "Entangled (emplakentes) may be another fishing metaphor, using the image of fish effectively caught in the meshes of a net, unable to free themselves." (Hiebert, p. 130).

To be re-tied up into the web of the world's corruption after having escaped this web earlier in life leaves the entangled creature in a greater state of bondage than previously experienced.

Why is this so?

1) To come into direct knowledge about Christ but to refuse to know Him personally, brings on God's judgment.

2) There tends to be <u>less desire</u> the second time around. The incentive or motivation is not there. You've been there and tried that and feel that it didn't "work." You found that you were not satisfied with knowing about Christ, but thought that you came to Him for real and were self-deceived. Head knowledge does not equal heart knowledge. To0 know about Him is not the same as to know Him.

They are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning.

This sad reality reminds me of the parable of Jesus in Matthew 12:43-45.

Matthew 12:43-45
When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth *it* empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

NOTE: *"I will return into <u>my</u> house"* (v. 44). The house never was turned over to anyone else; it was still the devil's property.

Whose house are you?
Had this man invited Christ into his life, had he surrendered to Christ to take charge of his life, the evil spirit and his evil companions could not have entered the man. A man indwelt by the Spirit of Christ (Ro. 8:9) cannot also be indwelt by a demon.

"It is not enough to clean house; we must also invite in the right tenant" (Wiersbe, p. 44).
Jesus Christ is knocking! (Rev. 3:20).

V. *A Religious Apostate* **Knows the Truth, but Turns from It to his own Peril** (v.20b-21)

Why is it better never to have known the path or road of righteousness than to have known it and to turn from it? Answer: Heightened accountability and condemnation.

SEE Luke 12:42-48.

Luke 12:47-48
And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

There are more terrible degrees of punishment in hell for those who knew the truth, but rejected it and lived hypocritically.

Luke 20:46-47
Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; Which devour widows' houses, and for a shew make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.

James 3:1
My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

Regarding Judas Iscariot, the Lord Jesus said:

Matthew 26:24
The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.

VI. *A Religious Apostate* **Does What his Nature Dictates** (v. 22)

Nothing is quite as pathetic as a sick dog vomiting all over the living room carpet and ten going back to lick it all up again. (Proverbs 26:11)

You can clean up a pig, get it all squeaky clean, but the moment you release it to the back yard, it heads right for the sloppy mud pit again.

Both dogs and pigs are unclean animals (by this I mean, they were not kosher food for the Jews).

Why does a dog return to its vomit and a pig to its mud? Because it is a dog and it is a pig. That is the nature of the animal.

Unless God changes our nature and puts His Holy Spirit in us, we will be right back to the filth of the old, former life.

Pigs love filth, slime and mud. It is their nature to do so. The pig was washed, but its nature was not changed. You can through social programs clean up people's environment, but unless there is a real inner change, the people will live the way they always have (ILLUS: the renovation of "Mount Pleasant").

Where is He?

2 Peter 3:1-9
5/3/09

Introduction: vv.1-4 – The Scoffers say: "Where is He?"

- ***Christ's apparent delay does not nullify His promise to return for Judgment!***

I. God judged the world in the Past; He'll do it again (v.5-7)
(His consistency guarantees the Future Judgment)

II. God is not Time-bound nor is He under Time Constraints (v.8)
(His timetable anticipates the Future Judgment)

III. God's apparent delay gives Sinners Time to Repent (v.9)
(His mercy waits for the Future Judgment)

Where is He?

2 Peter 3:1-9
5/3/09

Introduction: vv.1-4 – The Scoffers say: "Where is He?"

v. 1
"This second letter" - a follow-up to 1 Peter.

"I stir up" – to awaken as you would shake someone who is sleeping to awaken them

"Your pure minds" - unmixed. Peter is speaking to the minds of God's people, because God's principles are for God's people.

"By way of remembrance" – Why repeat?

1) Many truths are so important that they need repeating

2) Our minds are prone toward forgetfulness

   See Peter's reminders in 2 Peter 1:12-15

"This second epistle. . . I stir up. . . remembrance" – Remembrance about what? The Lord's return

In Peter's previous epistle he had taught God's people to live honorable lives so that God would be glorified on the day of His "visitation" –

1 Peter 2:12
Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

He also had offered encouragement to suffering saints based on Christ's return, when His "glory shall be revealed" (1 Pet. 4:13).

To pastors, Peter spoke of the chief Shepherd's appearing, at which time His rewards (crowns) would be given out (1 Peter 5:4).

The word "rapture" is a derivative of the Latin word "*rapere*" (meaning rapid). This word occurs in the Latin translation of I Thessalonians 4:7, which translates the Greek expression "caught up."

Although the Bible contains many references to the Rapture, there are four key passages which describe this momentous event.

1) **Matthew 24:22, 31, 40-42** - The Rapture is a time when Christ will **REMOVE** His elect saints *(The Rapture = **Deliverance** from divine wrath)*

2) **John 14:1-3** - The Rapture is a time when Christ will **RECEIVE** His Elect saints *(The Rapture = **Reception** into Christ's arms)*

3) **I Corinthians 15:50-58** - The Rapture is a time when Christ will **RENEW** (resurrect) His elect saints *(The Rapture = **Transformation** from corruptible mortality)*

4) **I Thessalonians 4:13-18** - The rapture is a time when Christ will **REUNITE** His elect saints *(The Rapture = **Reunion** with the dead in Christ)*

After the rapture, God's wrath!

SEE: Isaiah 2:10-12, 17-21; 13:6-13; Amos 5:18-20.
Every reference to the Day of the Lord describes unparalleled terror and judgment, not congruous with a major portion of the early stages of the 7-year Tribulation.

The Day of the Lord will be:

1) A day when only the Lord will be exalted (not the Antichrist) (Is. 2:17)
2) A day of desperation (Is. 2:19)
3) A day when God shakes the earth (Is. 2:21)
4) A day of fainting hands and melting hearts (Is. 13:7)
5) A day of shocking pain (Is. 13:8)
6) A day of signs in the sky (Is. 13:10)
7) A day of no deliverance (Ezek. 7:19)
8) A day of destruction (Joel 1:15)
9) A day of torment (Joel 2:1-6)
10) A day of no escape (Amos 5:18-19)
11) A day of darkness (Amos 5:20)
12) A day of judgment on the heathen (Gentiles) (Obad. 15)
13) A day of wrath (Zeph. 1:15)
14) A day of no hope (Zeph. 1:17)
15) A day of cosmic disturbances (Zech. 14:6-7)

V. 2

"The holy prophets and . . . us the apostles" – Both the Old & New Testament recipients of divine revelation were to be heeded.

Our authority is also God's Word, as given by His prophets and apostles.

v. 3

"In the last days" - one of the signs of the last days will be the existence of abundant scoffers (mockers) regarding the Lord's return. In an attempt to discourage thoughts regarding Christ's return, Satan will energize and motivate those who belong to him so that they will spread a propaganda to discourage the faith of others. These false teachers will literally deny the Lord who bought them (2:1). And more specifically, they will deny His impending return.

What is a "scoffer"? He is one who mocks or makes fun of someone or something. In this case, they will ridicule rapture teaching and they will poke fun at the Scripture's teaching regarding the Day of the Lord judgment.

Why will scoffers scoff or mockers mock the concept of the Lord's return for judgment? Answer: Such a concept gets in the way of **"their own lusts."** They want to live with the goal of gratifying their own selfish, lustful appetites. Therefore they deny truth and ignore Scriptural teaching to the point of attempting to make it look ridiculous so that such teaching does not become a threat to satisfying their perverted lusts and worldly desires.

Jude also warned of End Time scoffers –

Jude 1:17-19
But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

--Expect opposition to eschatological teaching

--Expect numerous denials of Rapture & Wrath teaching

--Expect people to laugh at the concept of the second coming of Christ

v. 4

What is the specific content of the scoffer?

"Where is the promise of His coming?" – What has become of His so-called promise to return?

With skepticism they will ask: "Do you really believe that stuff about Christ coming in the clouds, removing His people from the earth, and then destroying the earth by fire?"

"Since the fathers fell asleep" - What fathers? The Jewish patriarchs – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the prophets.

This appeal to the patriarchs seems to imply that the scoffers will be aware of the Old Testament. Also, their appeal to "creation" (*ktisis*) indicates that they at least profess to believe in Intelligent Design and a form of theism.

Could these scoffers be Jewish, Muslim, or professing Christians? Whoever they are, they at least had a belief in creationism. Perhaps they grew up in a Christian home, but rejected Biblical End-Times teaching.

"All things continue" - all things remain on a natural, constant unbroken consistency. "All things continue as they have" . . . "They maintain that god's promise is unreliable and God's universe a stable, unchanging system where events like the *parousia* just do not happen" (Green, cited by Rogers, p. 588).

- ***Christ's apparent delay does not nullify His promise to return for Judgment!***

I. God judged the world in the Past; He'll do it again (v.5-7)
(His consistency guarantees the Future Judgment)

v. 5

"They willingly are ignorant of" – they volitionally choose to ignore certain historical reality that demonstrates God's judgment in the past.

Willful ignorance is a sad reminder of man's depravity and of his desire to stick his head in the sand and to ignore certain facts that fly in the face of his pursuit of the selfish gratification of lusts.

"Men love darkness rather than light…"

To ignore a fact does not alter that fact!

They deliberately shut their eyes to the Scriptural evidence of the Noaic flood. They also deliberately remain blind to the geological evidence of a past catastrophic universal deluge by water.

"By the Word of God" – God created by His powerful Word. When He created the earth He did so with a vapor canopy which surrounded the earth, producing a green house effect. This water canopy was then broken up by God, producing the flood of Noah's day.

To deny that the flood occurred is to deny one of the clearest, most well-documented declarations of Scripture.

To deny it is to deny the validity of the host of other Scriptures which refer to it (Job 12:15, 22:16; Ps. 29:10, 104:6-9; Is. 54:9), including the Words of Jesus Christ (Mt. 24:37-39; Lk. 17:26-27) and several other New Testament writers (Heb . 11:7; I Pet. 3:20; II Pet. 2:5, 3:5-6).

(There are over 270 flood stories told in cultures all over the earth. [MacArthur note])

Genesis 7:11
The flood waters would come from two directions: underneath and above.

"The fountains (springs) **of the great deep" –** All of the subterranean waters would be brought up by global quakes.

The sequence of this verse indicates that the earth's crust breaks up first, then the heavens drop their water. This is interesting because the volcanic explosions due to the fractured earth would have sent magma and dust into the atmosphere, along with gigantic sprays of water, gas, and air – all penetrating the canopy and triggering its downpour (MacArthur note).

"The windows of heaven" – God here paints a picture of the sky being, as it were, closed up in a vast store of moisture and now (for the first time in history), the canopy unleashes its H20 as the windows open up and the rain comes pouring through.

Dr. Joseph Dillow has calculated how much water vapor it would be physically possible to suspend above the atmosphere as a blanket around the earth. He has suggested that it would be the water vapor equivalent of about 12 meters (40 feet) thickness of liquid water. He calculated that such a quantity of water would be sufficient to generate 40 days and 40 nights of torrential rainfall; whereas if these waters above had been clouds, then the moisture in the current atmosphere, if precipitated to earth as rainfall, would be only the equivalent of less than five centimeters (two inches) thickness of liquid water hardly enough to sustain 40 days and 40 nights of rainfall at the time of the Flood.

Therefore, it seems clear that the reference in Genesis 7:11 to the "windows of heaven being opened" is a reference to the collapse of this water vapor canopy, which somehow became unstable and fell as rain, the eyewitnesses describing the event as the "windows of heaven being opened". Some have suggested that when the fountains of the great deep broke open, presumably as volcanic eruptions, the dust generated by these eruptions would have spread up into the water vapor canopy, causing the water vapor to nucleate with dust particles and form water droplets that then fell as rain.

Excerpt from The Answers Book, Revised Edition, by Ken Ham, Andrew Snelling and Carl Wieland, published by Master Books, 1992.
Supplied by Answers in Genesis

v. 6
The first time God judged the world was by water; the next time will be by fire! (v. 7)

God always removes and protects His people first!

Luke 17:26-30
And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

v. 7
"By the same word" – The same powerful Word of God that created all things is sustaining all things (providing a consistency and order). But God will one day give the word, and the present order will be interrupted as God intervenes for judgment.

"Kept in store" – Things have been saved and spared God's supernatural intervention but are pre-destined for the outpouring of God's wrath.

"Reserved unto fire" – See verse 10.

Zephaniah 1:18
Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD'S wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

Revelation 18:8
Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

Just like O.T. Babylon was proud and judged for it, so will eschatalogical Babylon be (SEE: Jeremiah 50:29-34).

"...In one day" - the destruction of material Babylon will <u>not</u> be a process but she will be destroyed like Sodom and Gomorreh (Is. 13:19ff).

In one day, Material Babylon will be stripped of those things she boasted in (namely, life, happiness, and food).

"Death" - corresponds to "I am no widow" (v. 7)
"Mourning" - corresponds to "shall see no sorrow"
"Famine" - corresponds to "lived deliciously"

"Burned with <u>fire</u>" - when God judged the earth the first time, it was with <u>water</u> (the flood); when God judges the second time, it will be by <u>fire</u>.

II. God is not Time-bound nor is He under Time Constraints (v.8)
(His timetable anticipates the Future Judgment)

Notice that Peter does not say that one day equal a thousand years nor that a thousand years equals one day (some have used this thinking to substantiate the day-0age theory of creation, or the amillennialist's interpretation of the reference to the thousand year reign of Christ.

Rather, Peter draws a comparison, using the adverb "as" showing that with God, a thousand years are like a day and vice-versa.

The Lord's apparent delay does not nullify His promise to return for judgment. He is not in Heaven looking at His watch or clock, wondering when He should finally judge the earth. The time table has already been pre-determined.

You see, what seems like a long time to us is not a long time to God.

God is Eternal *(The Timelessness of God)*

1) "Eternal" refers to the fact that God exists endlessly. He is without beginning or end; ut has existed in eternity past and will exist in eternity future.

2) The attribute of "eternity" is closely associated with God's attribute of "self-existence." "If God exists endlessly, then He never came into existence nor was He ever caused to come into existence. He had no starting point and will have no ending point.

God is called…

1) *El Olam* (the everlasting God) (Gen. 21:33)

2) *Alpha and Omega* (Rev. 1:11; 21:6; 22:13)

3) *I AM* (Exod. 3:14)

4) *The Ancient of Days* (Dan. 7:9, 13, 22)
(Note: God is viewed with white hair, depicting His ancientness)

Scriptural Statements of God's Eternal Nature

1) *"From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God"* (Ps. 90:2)

2) *"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy. . ."* (Is. 57:15)

3) *"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms"* (Deut. 33:27)

4) Creation manifests God's *"eternal power and Godhead"* (Rom. 1:20)

5) *"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."* (I Tim. 1:17)

6) *"The everlasting God"* (Gen. 21:33)

7) *"Thy throne is established of old: Thou art from everlasting"*
(Ps. 93:2)

8) *"Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding."*

9) *"Art Thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One?"* (Hab. 1:12)

10) *". . . According to the commandment of the everlasting God"* (Rom. 16:26)

Special Features of God's Eternal Nature

1) God is in no way bound or limited by time.

"One day is with the Lord as [just like] a thousand years and a thousand years as one day" (II Pet. 3:8).

2) God's existence cannot be measured by time. He always was and He always will be. He exists independently of time.

Before God created the sun, moon, and the orbit of the earth (features by which we measure time), He existed; and after *"time shall be no more"* and the constellations no more give us time measurements (since they will be done away with - Is. 60:19), He will exist as eternity goes on.

God is the Author of time; His existence cannot be measured by time.

III. God's apparent delay gives Sinners Time to Repent (v.9)
(His mercy waits for the Future Judgment)

"The Lord is not slow to full his promise as some count slowness" (ESV)

God does not measure speed the way we do.

He could say, "Behold I come quickly" or "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" and then wait 2,000 years!

Do not view his delay in coming as if He was powerless to come or as if He was unwilling to come.

His apparent delay reflects His patient and merciful heart, which desires that none perish but that all come to repentance and salvation (SEE v. 15).

He is perhaps waiting for YOU to repent and put your faith in Christ. Had He come prior to today, some in this audience would have missed the rapture and would have been engulfed in God's wrath.

If He has delayed His coming, it could be for you!

The "Day of the Lord" Shall Come!

2 Peter 3:10-13

5/24/09

Introduction: vv.3-9

Note the emphasis: "Seeing (v.11)…Looking (v.12)…look (v.13&14)"

- ***The impending Day of the Lord should <u>change the believer's outlook</u> toward life on earth and the future***

The impending "Day of the Lord" should produce…

I. **A <u>Vigilant</u> outlook for the Return of Jesus Christ** (v.10a)
("…as a thief in the night")

The impending "Day of the Lord" should produce…

II. **A <u>Certain</u> outlook for God's Coming Judgment** (v.10b)
("…<u>will</u> come…<u>shall</u> pass away…elements <u>shall</u> melt…")

The impending "Day of the Lord" should produce…

III. **A <u>Sober</u> outlook toward the world and its material goods** (v.11a)
("Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved…")

The impending "Day of the Lord" should produce…

IV. **A <u>Conscientious</u> outlook at our personal Lives and Lifestyles** (v.11b - 12)
("What manner of persons ought ye to be…")

The impending "Day of the Lord" should produce…

V. **An <u>Optimistic</u> outlook toward our future abode with God and righteousness** (v.13)
("we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth…")

The "Day of the Lord" Shall Come!

2 Peter 3:10-13

5/24/09

Introduction: vv.3-9

v. 3

"In the last days" - one of the signs of the last days will be the existence of abundant scoffers (mockers) regarding the Lord's return. In an attempt to discourage thoughts regarding Christ's return, Satan will energize and motivate those who belong to him so that they will spread a propaganda to discourage the faith of others. These false teachers will literally deny the Lord who bought them (2:1). And more specifically, they will deny His impending return.

Jude also warned of End Time scoffers –

Jude 1:17-19

But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

--Expect opposition to eschatological teaching

--Expect numerous denials of Rapture & Wrath teaching

--Expect people to laugh at the concept of the second coming of Christ

v. 4

What is the specific content of the scoffer?

"Where is the promise of His coming?" – What has become of His so-called promise to return?

With skepticism they will ask: "Do you really believe that stuff about Christ coming in the clouds, removing His people from the earth, and then destroying the earth by fire?"

Peter gives us several reasons for the Lord's apparent delay:

1. God judged the world in the Past; He'll do it again (v.5-7)

2. God is not Time-bound nor is He under Time Constraints (v.8)

3. God's apparent delay gives Sinners Time to Repent (v.9)

Although the lost, misguided, deluded world will not expect Christ's return, and religious scoffers will even mock such a concept, Jesus is coming again and judgment day for planet earth shall come.

Notice the repeated words emphasizing the future certainty of this event: "will" (v. 10). . . "shall" . . . "shall" . . . "shall" . . . "shall" (v. 11) . . . "shall" . . . "shall" (v. 12)

Our response is to "look" for such promises to be fulfilled! -- "seeing" (v. 11) . . . "looking" (v. 12) . . . "look" (v. 13-14)

- ***The impending Day of the Lord should change the believer's outlook toward life on earth and the future***

The impending "Day of the Lord" should produce…

I. A Vigilant outlook for the Return of Jesus Christ (v.10a)
("…as a thief in the night")

v. 10

The **"Day of the Lord"** is linked in this context to Christ's "coming" (v. 4).

The order of God's key end-time events: First, the Rapture, then God's wrath.

The timing of the Day of the Lord coincides with the timing of the Rapture (the Rapture involving the rapid removal of God's people and the resurrection of the just will occur on the same day as the commencement of the Day of the Lord).

Note: the connection between the "Rapture" (1 Thes. 4:13-18) and the "Day of the Lord" (1 Thes. 5:1-2).

1 Thessalonians 5:2
For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.
While the unregenerate world will be caught off guard (by surprise), God's people will not. We will be spiritually awake and alert at His coming.

1 Thessalonians 5:4
But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

Believers will not be caught by surprise.
Believers will not be caught in the dark.

Those in darkness will be saying "Peace and safety" (v. 3), not fearing the impending wrath of God.

The "Day of the Lord" – 3 ideas:

1) A Day known only by the Lord – the Day of the Lord will initiate a time known only by God.
   Matthew 24:36
   But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

2) A Day (or time period) in which only the Lord is exalted (Man's day and the times of the Gentiles will be over) (Is. 2:11, 17)

3) A Day of the Lord's wrath and judgment upon the earth (because of man's sin)

"As a Thief in the night" - (New Yorkers can understand the concept of thieves coming in the night)

--A thief does not announce his arrival
--A thief generally does his work while others are sleeping or distracted

Matthew 24:42-44
Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.
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.
Revelation 16:15
Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

"The picture (of a 'thief in the night') conveys the clear warning that the Day of the Lord will come suddenly and unexpectedly, resulting in surprise and irreparable loss for the unprepared" (Hiebert, p. 158-9).

The impending "Day of the Lord" should produce…

II. A <u>Certain</u> outlook for God's Coming Judgment (v.10b)
("…<u>will</u> come…<u>shall</u> pass away…elements <u>shall</u> melt…")

Some things in life may or may not take place; God's wrath falling on planet earth is not a "maybe"; it's a certainty!

"…<u>will</u> come…<u>shall</u> pass away…elements <u>shall</u> melt…"

"In the which" – the Day of the Lord will involve more than the disintegration of sky, space and earth (it will involve all of the Trumpet and Bowl judgments described in Rev. 8-19). However, "in the which" time period of the Day of the Lord (i.e. sometime during the "Day of the Lord"), God will fulfill this verse!

"The heavens" = sky and outer space, as Jesus said:

Luke 21:33-36
Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

"Pass away" – to go by or go away (the word speaks of the physical movement of planets) –

Just as John wrote regarding the loosing of the sixth seal:

Revelation 6:13-14
And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.
Just as Jesus said:

Matthew 24:29
Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

"With a great noise" - (*hroizedon*) with a hissing or whizzing sound, as an arrow or ball that rips through the air or with a crackling sound as the roar of a flame

"The elements" – "Things arranged in a row; the letters of the alphabet, or the elements of nature. Here it clearly means physical elements (Bigg). It could refer to the elements of earth, air, fire and water, or the heavenly bodies such as sun, moon and stars (Green). Or it may refer to the atomic particles that are the basic structure of nature" (cited by Rogers, p. 589).

If atomic dissolution is meant, God is referring to the elements of physical life becoming "unglued," which would involve the separation of protons, neutrons, and electrons from each other. Such a melting of physical life is described in Zech. 14:12 –

Zechariah 14:12
And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.

"Melt" – (*luo*) to loosen, to disintegrate. The word is used of breaking up a structure, as well as of dissolving a compound into its elements (Mayor, cited by Rogers, p. 589).

So the elements or building blocks of life will disintegrate and literally melt in the intense heat.

Whereas God judged the earth by water (the Flood) the first time, He will judge by fire the second time He judges the earth (2 Pet. 3:6-7).

The **"earth" –** (*ge*) the planet and physical life on it (supernaturally protected will be those sealed with God's mark [Rev. 7] and some of the animal realm).

"The works" – (*erga*) the accomplishments and achievements of man (all buildings, all structures, all vehicles, tools, toys, bridges, boats, utensils, materials, and manufactured goods).

One of the ways or means which God will use to burn up the earth with its works is through major <u>earthquakes</u>.

Revelation 16:18
And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.
"Mystery Babylon" will burn at this time –

Revelation 18:8-11
Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more:

"The Day of the Lord" –

SEE: Isaiah 2:10-12, 17-21; 13:6-13; Amos 5:18-20.
Every reference to the Day of the Lord describes unparalleled terror and judgment, not congruous with a major portion of the early stages of the 7-year Tribulation.

The Day of the Lord will be:
1) A day when only the Lord will be exalted (not the Antichrist) (Is. 2:17)
2) A day of desperation (Is. 2:19)
3) A day when God shakes the earth (Is. 2:21)
4) A day of fainting hands and melting hearts (Is. 13:7)
5) A day of shocking pain (Is. 13:8)
6) A day of signs in the sky (Is. 13:10)
7) A day of no deliverance (Ezek. 7:19)
8) A day of destruction (Joel 1:15)
9) A day of torment (Joel 2:1-6)
10) A day of no escape (Amos 5:18-19)
11) A day of darkness (Amos 5:20)
12) A day of judgment on the heathen (Gentiles) (Obad. 15)
13) A day of wrath (Zeph. 1:15)
14) A day of no hope (Zeph. 1:17)
15) A day of cosmic disturbances (Zech. 14:6-7)

Zephaniah 1:14-18
The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, A day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the LORD: and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD'S wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

The impending "Day of the Lord" should produce…

III. A <u>Sober</u> outlook toward the world and its material goods (v.11a)
("Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved…")

v. 11

"All these things shall be dissolved" – All these material things shall be disintegrated. They shall melt into worthless elements.

You can't have "stuff" forever! Don't live for "stuff." There is nothing wrong with having "stuff," but don't let the "stuff" have you! No material thing is an end in and of itself, but is a means to an end. Use it for God's glory alone! But don't abuse it as if it were an idol.

1 Corinthians 7:31
And they that use this world, as not abusing *it*: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

You can't take it with you! Although the Pharaohs of ancient Egypt were buried with their treasures, they never lived again to enjoy them. I have never seen a u-haul following a funeral processional.

Remember the words of Jesus when He said:

Matthew 6:19-20
Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

> **V. 19**
> The words ***"lay up"*** (thesaurizo) and ***"treasures"*** (thesauros) come from the same Greek root. Our English word "thesaurus" refers to a treasury of words.
>
> ***"Lay not up"*** - Don't treasure up; don't stock up; don't live for the vain accumulation of riches.
>
> He means: Don't have a lifestyle of hoarding treasure (Heb. 13:5 - *"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."*). Don't make it your life's ambition. If wealth comes your way, praise God for it and use it for God's glory, but don't give yourself greedily to acquiring it and don't glory in the money (Jer. 9:23 - *"Let not the rich man glory in his riches"*).
>
> We are <u>stewards</u> of our earthly "treasures" (money) -- <u>not owners</u>. All we have ultimately belongs to Him, We simply <u>manage</u> what He has entrusted to us.

Col. 3:1-2 - *"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."*

The best investment is eternal. The smartest investor is the one who gives his life (his time, talents, and treasure) for the cause of Jesus Christ.

The dividends you earn can't be ripped off, nor can they be taxed by the IRS!

When we get to Heaven and look back over our lives,s I'm sure we will grieve over what could have been. What we could have done!

HYMN: "Must I go and empty-handed? Must I meet my Savior so??

The impending "Day of the Lord" should produce…

IV. A <u>Conscientious</u> outlook at our personal Lives and Lifestyles (v.11b - 12)
("What manner of persons ought ye to be…")

"What manner of persons ought ye to be" – what sort of Christian should you become in light of the temporal nature of this world's system and goods?

"Holy conversation" – set-apart conduct; pure living; sanctified lifestyle. The believer's way of life should be marked by holiness.

"Godliness" – a life of respect and reverence for God and eternal matters.

Whereas Holy Conduct refers to outward behavior, the term Godliness refers to the inward attitude.

v. 12

"Looking for" = anxiously awaiting; looking forward to with expectancy

"Hasting" = to be eager for something to happen with speed and acceleration

"Coming" - "'The coming' translates the familiar term *parousia*, which literally means "the presence." In the New Testament it does not primarily describe a place or event. Instead, the term emphasizes the personal, bodily arrival of Jesus Christ. Some commentators equate the day of God with the "day of the Lord," but they are not synonymous expressions. The day of God refers to the eternal state when God will have permanently subdued all of His enemies (cf. Ps. 110:1; Acts 2:33-35; 1 Cor. 15:28; Phil. 2:10-11, 3:21; Heb. 10:13)." (MacArthur, p. 129).

"The Day of God" – Question: Is this describing the same period as the Day of the Lord, or is it the ultimate time of God's judgment when He sends down fire at the end of the Millennium?

Revelation 20:9
And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

"Elements shall <u>melt</u>" – to be made liquid

The impending "Day of the Lord" should produce…

V. An <u>Optimistic</u> outlook toward our future abode with God and righteousness (v.13)
("we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth…")

v. 13

"According to His promise" – Where is His promise recorded?

Isaiah 65:17
For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.

Isaiah 60:21
Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.

"New" = not *neos*, meaning new in time (as a new creation, new in existence), but *kainos*, meaning new in <u>quality</u> or "<u>fresh</u>" (as contrasted to the "worn out" or "marred through age," with no trace of the effects which sin and evil wrought upon the old. (Hiebert, p. 165).

SEE Revelation 21:1-5

***Keep your eyes on your <u>future inheritance</u>!**

A <u>NEW</u> City (v. 1, 2, 5)

V. 1

God promises to "<u>create</u>" (bara) new heavens and a new earth (Is. 65:17); and to "<u>make</u>" (asa) them to "remain" (forever) (Is. 66:22).

The word "create" normally means to create something out of <u>nothing</u>, as God did with the first heavens and earth (Gen. 1:1; Heb. 11:3).

The O.T. describes the earth as "<u>abiding forever</u>"

Eccl. 1:4 - "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever."

Ps. 119:90 - "Thy faithfulness is unto all generations: thou hast established the earth, and it abideth."

Ps. 104:5 - "Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever."

Question: God on the one hand says that He will make a new heaven and new earth (Rev. 21:1), and on the other hand He says that the present earth will remain forever.

How can God, make a new one, yet keep the existing one? Answer: He will totally ("from scratch") create a brand new earth, and He will remove (not destroy or annihilate) this present globe, and replace it with a new earth.

God will renovate, remodel or reconstruct the earth's surface (via fire - II Pet. 3:10-13) for the millennial kingdom (Rev. 20:1-10; Is. 40:3-4).

However, God will remove and replace the existing earth for the eternal state.

Proofs that this present globe (earth) will be removed (geographically) to make way for the new earth.

1) Rev. 21:1 - "Passed away" - to go away; to depart (NOTE: God never says that the earth will annihilate into nothingness but that it will go away).

2) Rev. 20:11 - "Fled away" - to run away (in distance)

3) Jesus promise: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Mt. 24:35; cp. Mk. 13:31: Lk. 21:33; Mt. 5:18). "Pass away" = to go away

4) Heb. 4:26 - 28 - "...the removing of those things that are shaken..." "Removing" = metathesis - Meta = to change; "tithemi" = position (where something is placed. Hence the earth will have a change of location. It will be removed beyond view (Is. 65:17); it will be a useless uninhabited planet, light years removed from the new creation.

In light of the removal of this planet, are you wise to lay up treasures on earth? Are the things of this world good investments when you have the complete picture in mind? (II Pet. 3:10-13)

V. 5

"I make all things new" - Just as God does for the Christian (II Cor. 5:17 - "...All things become new"), He will do for creation.

A HOLY City (v. 2a)

"The Holy City" (cp. 21:10) - the set apart city; the city of spotless purity. A city like no other. A city "whose builder and maker is God!" (cp. Heb. 11:10).

Jesus Christ has been preparing such a dwelling place since His ascension (Jn. 14:2). In this city there will be no defilement or sinful people (21:27).

"Coming down from God" - only God can create a perfect city. Man's attempts have been utter failures. There will be no corruption in that city!

A BEAUTIFUL City (v. 2b)

"Prepared" = to make ready - "I go to prepare a place for you" (Jn. 14:2)

"Adorned" = Greek "Kosmeo" (Eng. cosmetics) - to make orderly; to put in order; to decorate; to make beautiful or attractive.

In Bible days, Jewish custom was as follows: "In preparation for the marriage and the arrival of the groom the bride was bathed and oiled, perfumed, her hair fixed, and was adorned with her wedding garment" (Reinecker, p. 859).

"As a bride adorned for her husband" - To think that God loves us so much that he has prepared a dwelling place for us so beautiful that it will satisfy every aspiration, and will surpass every imagination we ever had.

This heavenly city will be the sum total of our every heart's desire and then some.

More beautiful than the most majestic mountain. More sparkling than the water of the freshest spring or most invigorating water fall. More serene than the most calm and most peaceful lakes. More clean than the most remote land in the world.

The heavenly city will be the most beautiful sight we ever set eyes on.

The sight had such an impact on John that he spends two chapters (Rev. 21:1-22:5) and a total of 32 verses describing it.

A GOD - INDWELT City (v. 3)

"Tabernacle" - a dwelling place where everyone is under the same roof.

We will forever be in the direct presence of God.

The heavenly city will be a place of intimate closeness to God ("He will dwell with them" (like Adam had before the fall).

The heavenly city will be a place of abiding relationship with God ("They shall be his people")

The heavenly city will be a place of personal fellowship with God ("God himself shall be with them" - the presence of God the Father will be our joy forever - Ps. 16:11).

A JOY-FILLED City (v. 4-5)

"No more death" - "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (I Cor. 15:26).

"Shall wipe away all tears" - lit. every tear (singular) - God is concerned about each individual tear that is shed for righteousness sake . Tears shed in the tribulation will be wiped away by the hand of God (Rev. 7:17).

Tears, sorrow, and crying are usually the results of death and pain. Because death and pain will be no more, neither will the expressions of such exist. As the prophet said, "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces" (Is. 25:8).

"Crying" - Ps. 30:5 - "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning"

For the believer, crying is temporary - it is joy that will be eternal!

"The former things are passed away" - Those that inhabit the new heavenly city will not even remember the former life on earth. God says: "...And the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Is. 65:17).

V. 5

"These words are true and faithful" = "True" - God promise is not lie. This is one thing God can never do (Heb. 6:18; Titus 1:2)

"Faithful" - God's promise is true it is worthy of your faith (trust). Without a doubt, He will certainly do all that He has promised. God's guarantee of eternal life is something you can rest upon.

"How Will Jesus Find Us When He Comes?"

2 Peter 3:14-18

7/12/09

May He find us with:

I. **A <u>Peace</u> with Christ** (v 14a)

II. **A <u>Spotless</u> Character** (v. 14b)

III. **A <u>Blameless</u> reputation** (v. 14c)

IV. **A <u>Patient</u> Expectation** (v. 15)

V. **An <u>Accurate</u> Bible Interpretation** (v. 16)

VI. **An <u>Unwavering</u> Christian Walk** (v. 17)

VII. **A <u>Maturing</u> Spiritual Life** (v. 18)

"How Will Jesus Find Us When He Comes?"

2 Peter 3:14-18

7/12/09

Introduction:

In the Last Days, many will scoff at the concept of the return of Christ and of God's wrath to follow (v. 3-4).

v. 4

"Where is the promise of His coming?" – What has become of His so-called promise to return?

With skepticism they will ask: "Do you really believe that stuff about Christ coming in the clouds, removing His people from the earth, and then destroying the earth by fire?"

Peter gives us several reasons for the Lord's apparent delay:

1. God judged the world in the Past; He'll do it again (v.5-7)

2. God is not Time-bound nor is He under Time Constraints (v.8)

3. God's apparent delay gives Sinners Time to Repent (v.9)

Although the lost, misguided, deluded world will not expect Christ's return, and religious scoffers will even mock such a concept, Jesus is coming again and judgment day for planet earth shall come.

v. 14

"Beloved" – Peter is addressing God's people – those in a love relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

"Seeing that ye look for such things" – What things is the believer looking for? The return of Christ, the Day of the Lord's wrath on an unbelieving world, and "the new heavens and the new earth" (v. 13).

In light of Christ's impending return and of the soon fulfillment of Bible prophecy, there is a call for personal spiritual <u>diligence</u>! Conscientious allegiance to certain principles of character and behavior is the crying need of the hour!

"Found in Him" - Christ will find us, in the sense of knowing where we are, but the question is: What will be our spiritual condition <u>when</u> He finds us?

May He find us with:

I. A <u>Peace</u> with Christ (v 14a)

"In peace" – Two aspects of peace between the believer and God are mentioned in the Bible:

1) Peace <u>with</u> God (our judicial standing of righteousness; we are no longer at war with God, and God is no longer at war with the sinner)

2) The peace <u>of</u> God (the removal of fear and apprehension relating to all of the worldly turmoil and trouble to exist and weigh upon the believer in the Last Days)

II. A <u>Spotless</u> Character (v. 14b)

"Without spot" – Stains that defile or dirty our hearts.

Make it your goal to be "unspotted by the world."

Things that leave blemishes on our souls include: worldly lusts for vanity, filthy lucre, illicit sexual and sensual pleasures.

You see, your character matters to God. Your inner thoughts and motives reflect your character.

Are we conscientious of how clean we are on the inside?

III. A Blameless reputation (v. 14c)

"Blameless" – This world refers to our reputation. We should be conscientious that no one can point the finger at us and have reason to question our integrity. Leave no room for people to find fault with your faith and conduct.

"Blameless" - Your testimony is vital because you are a commercial for Christ by everything you say and do. Man does look at the outward appearance!

IV. A Patient Expectation (v. 15)

"The longsuffering of God" – Refers to His patient waiting before judging the world in the Day of the Lord's Wrath!

Why no return of Christ yet? God is giving men time for repentance that they might obtain salvation!

Just as He waiting in Noah's day before He unleashed the flood, so God is waiting today before He unleashes the fire!

"Even as" – "Peter insists that there is complete harmony between his teachings and those of Paul. . . He (also) acknowledges Paul's official equality with himself" (Hiebert, p. 170-71).

"Even as our beloved brother Paul. . . hath written" – What was Paul's main topic of choice in all of his letters? Salvation! (particularly – justification by faith)

"The wisdom given unto him" – Paul did not write his epistles from his own thinking and worldview; but like Solomon of old, God gave him divine revelation and wisdom to write the very words and concepts of God!

V. An Accurate Bible Interpretation (v. 16)

What are the rules of hermeneutics?

4 Essential Principles (rules) of Interpretation:

1. Read the Bible literally (normally, plainly)
   (The Literal Principle)

2. Understand the context (of the verses you are studying)
   (The Contextual Principle)

3. Consistently follow rules of grammar (as you study)
   (The Grammatical Principle)

4. compare Scripture with Scripture (as you study)
   (The Theological Principle)

"Hard to be understood" – Difficult to understand; Holy Spirit illumination is a prerequisite to comprehending God's Word.

"Some things (relating to salvation/deliverance) **hard to be understood" –** What are some of these difficult concepts for the world to grasp?

1) Justification by faith alone (apart from the works of the law)

2) Imputed righteousness

3) Eternal security

4) The Rapture and details relating to the believers' resurrection and transformation

"Unlearned and unstable" – Addresses some professing believers who, being void of God's Holy Spirit, are:

--Ignorant of the Scriptures and sound principles of Bible interpretation

--Not anchored to firm convictions relating to the Scripture (they are always coming up with new ideas which deceive others)

"Wrest" (*strebloo*) – to twist, to torture. The figurative sense seems to flow from the notion of twisting or warping. The result is then false and distorted (Rogers, p. 589).

"It is their repeated practice to take Paul's statements and twist and torture them, like poor victims on the rack, to force them to say what they want them to say" (Hiebert, p. 174).

"If the false teachers were already doing this in Peter's day, we need not be surprised at the twisted exegesis of the cults in our own day." (Hiebert, p. 174).

"As they do also the other Scriptures" – "Other" (*loipas*) – meaning other "of the same category" (Acts 2:37; Rom. 1:13; 2 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 2:13; Phil. 4:3).

This statement reveals two things:

1) Those who twist one part of God's Word inevitably twist other parts of God's Word as well

2) Paul's epistles are on equal par with the rest of God's written Word! His written words are just as inspired as the words of Moses or the Gospels of Jesus Christ.

"Unto their own destruction" – the end result of those who (for whatever motive or reason) twist God's Scriptures is their own spiritual ruin! The false teachers will perish in the Lake of fire!

VI. An <u>Unwavering</u> Christian Walk (v. 17)

"Seeing ye know these things before" – Advance warning should prevent spiritual deception, distraction, and destruction!

"Led away. . . fall" – It's always <u>distraction</u> from the truth, then <u>destruction</u> by falling off the straight and narrow!

It's a blessing to see someone still standing firm on his/her convictions after years of trials and tests.

VII. A Maturing Spiritual Life (v. 18)

In contrast to the distraction and derailment described in verse 17, God exhorts us through Peter to continue to **"grow in grace."**

To grow is to mature; to become stronger in our faith and convictions.

The appeal of these last words of this epistle (which are vital, final words) is that we exercise our wills and determine to take steps necessary to increase our spiritual maturity.

What steps do we take to ensure our continued growth?

1) Keeps yourself immersed in God's Word on a daily basis

2) Keep yourself in fellowship with other believers who will encourage your spiritual growth

3) Keep yourself in prayer and frequent communion with the Lord Jesus Christ

--To grow in **"grace"** means to increase in your knowledge and experience of God's unmerited kindness and favor.

--To grow in **"the knowledge"** of our Lord and Savior means to know about Him through His Word and to know Him by prayer.

- Jesus Christ is personal ("our")
- Jesus Christ is sovereign ("Lord")
- Jesus Christ is Deliverer ("Savior)
- Jesus Christ is to be glorified both in time and in eternity! ("now and forever")

It's all about Christ's glory!

When Jesus returns, will He find us bringing glory to Him?

. . . How will He find you?