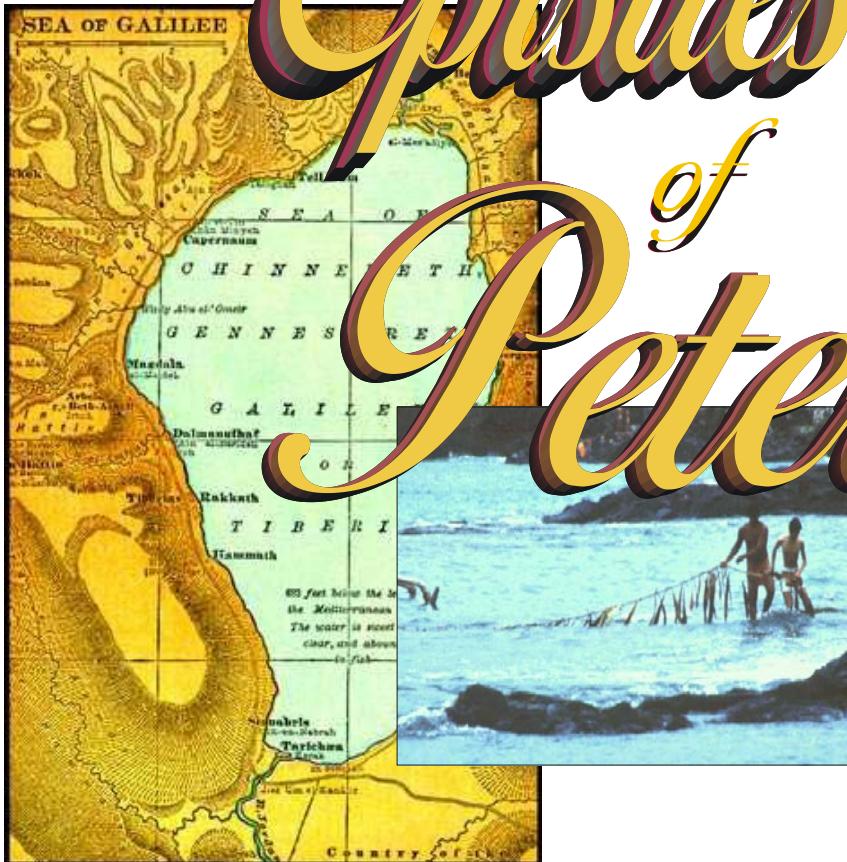


Study Guide

The Epistles of Peter



by Ted Stewart

SUNSET
International Bible Institute



**THE
EPISTLES
of
1, 2 PETER**



**INTRODUCTORY
NEW TESTAMENT
STUDIES**

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Epistles of Peter Study Guide

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without the written permission of the publisher except in the case of brief
quotations within critical articles and reviews, including translation.

DISCLAIMER

The textbook used with this course was selected because we consider it one of the best and because of its readability. The book, "*Commentary on 1 & 2 Peter*" by Guy N. Woods is a good and trustworthy book. As with all books there may be some things with which you and I would not agree. The principle, "use what is good and discard what is not good" applies to all textbooks used with our courses. Please be wise enough to discard any and all teaching which does not correspond with biblical teaching.

Instructions and Requirements Level II Students (Non-Transferable)

Each lesson is built around the instruction on either the VHS tape, DVD, CD, or audio cassette tape. Listen to the lecture on the tape as you follow along in the course Study Guide book.

Tests:

There is a Self Exam at the end of each lesson. Begin each lesson by previewing these Self Exams.

There will be two (2) tests to complete for this course. The mid-term test is to be done at the end of lesson six (6), the final test will be after lesson twelve (12). **(90% of your grade)**

Reading:

Read 1& 2 Peter and Jude three (3) times during the course of this study.

Memory Work:

Memory work will be done on the honor system. You are asked to write your verses from memory on your test in the presence of the administrator. After you have completed the test, and turned it in, correct the memory work with a different colored pen. **Or you may quote them to the administrator** during the course, he will keep track of the verses completed and report them to us. Please be diligent in doing your memory work. All memory work must be completed to pass this course. You will have twenty (20) verses to memorize. **(10% of your grade)**

Due by the second test: (9 verses)

1 Peter 1:3-4, 18-19, 22-23; 1 Peter 2:5, 9-10

Due by final test: (11 verses)

1 Peter 4:7-9, 15-16, 17-19; 2 Peter 2:1-2; 3:9

ASSIGNMENTS:

- All the Self Exams in the Study Guide must be completed to pass this course.
- All the memory verses assigned must be completed, either written or quoted. Nine (9) due for the mid-term, (lessons 1-6), and eleven (11) are required for the final test, (lessons 7-12).
- Level II must obtain a 70% or better **on each test** to pass this course.
- All assignments **must be completed and turned in** at the time of the final to pass the course.

Instructions and Requirements Level III Students (Transferable)

Each lesson is built around the instruction on either the VHS tape, DVD, CD, or audio cassette tape. Listen to the lecture on the tape as you follow along in the course Study Guide book.

Reading:

You are required to read the books of **I & II Peter** four (4) times during this study. Do at least one reading in a modern version (NIV, New Century Version, etc.) One book is required; **Commentary on I & II Peter**, by: Guy N. Woods, Gospel Advocate, Publisher. The section covering the Epistles of I & II Peter must be read in their entirety and a three (3) page evaluation of this reading is to be submitted with your Final Exam. (**10% of your grade**)

Memory verses:

Memory work will be done on the honor system. You are asked to write your verses from memory on your test in the presence of the administrator. After you have completed and turned in your test, correct the verses with a different colored pen, **or you may quote them to the administrator** during the course and he will keep track of the verses completed and report them to us. Please be diligent in doing your memory work. All memory work must be completed to pass this course. You will have forty-four (44) verses to memorize. **Please indicate which version of the Bible you are using in your memorization if written out!** (**10% of your grade**).

Due by the mid-term: (20 verses)

1 Peter 1:3-4, 8-12, 18-19, 22-23; 2:5, 9-10, 21-23; 4:15-16, 19

Due by the final exam: (24 verses)

1 Peter 4:7-11; 5:6-9, 12; 2 Peter 1:1-11; 2:1-2; 3:9

Test:

Self Exams: All Self Exam questions are to be answered at the end of each lesson to pass this course. There will be two major tests to complete for this course. The **Mid-term** test is to be done at the end of lesson six (6) and the **Final** will be at the end of the study, after lesson twelve (12). **Each test** must be passed with a 70% or better to pass this course. (**This will be 80% of your grade**).

All assignments **must be completed and turned in** at the time of the final exam to pass this course. Your total average grade for the course **must equal 70%** or above to pass this course.

Grading:

Tests:	80%
Reading & Evaluation:	10%
Memory work:	10%
TOTAL	100%

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Recommended Commentaries

(For further study)

1. Barclay, Wm. **Daily Study Bible**. Westminister Press.
2. Bigg, Charles. **International Critical Commentary**.
3. Erdman, Charles. **General Epistles**. Westminister Press
4. Hart, JHA. **Expository Greek Testament, Vol. V.**
5. Kelcy, Ramond. **Living Word Commentary, Peter's Epistles** A.C.U. Press.
6. Lenski, R.C.H. **Peter, John & Jude**. Augsburg Press.
7. Selwyn, E.G. **Macmillan Commentaries, 1 Peter**.
8. Stibb, Alan. **Tyndale Bible Commentary, 1st Ep. Gen. of Peter** Erdmans.
9. Woods, Guy. **Commentary on NT Epistles, Vol. VII. Peter, John and Jude**. Gospel Advocate Company.

LESSON ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLES

INTRODUCTION:

While there's life , there's hope!" That ancient Roman saying is still quoted today and, like most adages, it has an element of truth but no guarantee of certainty. It is not the *fact* of life that determines hope, but the *faith* of life. A Christian believer has a "living hope" (1 Peter 1:3, NASB) because his faith and hope are in God (1 Peter 1:21). This "living hope" is a major theme of Peter's first letter. He is saying to all believers, "be hopeful!" That "living hope" is founded upon the "amazing" grace of God. The overall theme of this first epistle of Peter is found in chapter 5 verse 12, "*I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.*"

Before we study the details of this fascinating letter, let us get acquainted with the man who wrote it, the people to whom he sent it, and the particular situation that prompted him to write.

LESSON TEXT: All the Scriptures in the notes.

LESSON AIM: To get an overview of the writer, recipients and circumstances concerning the writing of First Peter.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Discover who the writer is and learn something about his character, personality and relationship to the people to whom the letter is written.
 2. Learn of the background, situation and purpose of First Peter.
 3. Memorize the 12 point outline of the epistle and note the overall theme of the letter.
-

GETTING TO KNOW PETER THE MAN

A. Peter – the Family Man

1. His brother – Andrew (John 1:35-42).
2. His father – "son of Jonah" (Matthew 16:17).
3. His mother-in-law: supported by Peter in his house (Matthew 8:14-15).
4. His wife (1 Corinthians 9:5).

B. Peter – the Fisherman

1. Commercial fishing (Luke 5:1-10).
2. Partnership with James and John (Luke 5:2, 10).

C. Peter – the Learning Disciple

1. Disciple of John the Baptist as was his brother Andrew (John 1:35-42).
2. Introduced to Jesus by John the Baptist through his brother Andrew.
3. Called, along with Andrew, James and John to be “fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19).
4. Later, along with 11 others was named to be an apostle (Luke 6:12-16).

D. Peter – the Working Apostle of Jesus Christ

1. Peter’s great qualities.
 - a. His conviction, perception and understanding (Matthew 16:16).
“... thou are the Christ, the Son of God.”
 - b. His impetuous nature. He makes statements that he should not. Peter the rock, became Simon-Satan (Matthew 16:21-26).
2. Peter’s great weaknesses.
 - a. Peter is the one who is predicted to be sifted like wheat. In Luke 22:31 -35, Jesus said, “Satan is going to sift you like wheat, Peter. But when you recover, strengthen your brethren.”
 - b. The night of His betrayal Peter denied Jesus three times.
 - c. Peter’s return to fishing (John 21:3).
 - d. Miraculous drought of fishes (John 21:4-6, 11).
 - e. Peter swims to the Messiah (John 21:7).
 - f. Peter’s statement concerning his love for his Lord (John 21:15-17).
 - 1) Jesus’ three-fold question.
 - 2) Peter’s three-fold confession.
 - 3) Peter’s reinstatement.
3. Peter’s death predicted by Jesus (John 21:18-23). Historical tradition: Peter died crucified upside down in Rome at the hand of Nero.

FIRST PETER – A LETTER OF GRACE IN THE MIDST OF SUFFERING

A. The Background of First Peter

1. Date written: 65 A.D. We can see the historical background for this:
 - a. Because Peter died about three years later – 67 A.D.
 - b. He writes a letter here preparing Christians for suffering.
 - c. Peter was getting ready to go through the most excruciating suffering that a person could experience.
 - d. He wrote this letter preparing them for the terrible trial that they would soon have to endure.
2. So he wrote a letter of grace in the midst of suffering.

B. Place Where the Letter was Written

1. Literal Babylon.
 - a. No reason to interpret a passage figuratively in a literal context. A passage should be interpreted literally unless the type of literature, context or other weighty evidence indicates otherwise.
 - b. Babylon is said to have been a large city with a good-size Jewish population during the first century. (The city was not actually destroyed and deserted until the end of the third century).
2. Spiritual or symbolical Babylon (Rome).
 - a. Babylon means Rome in Revelation 17:1-5, 9, 18.
 - b. Peter would not have wanted to identify his location if he were being persecuted.
 - c. Historical tradition places Peter in Rome at the end of his life. “That Peter, as well as Paul, was put to death in Rome under Nero is the unanimous testimony of Christian tradition” Bruce, *N.T. History*, p. 403; Eusebius, pp. 64, 65 and p. 80.

C. Situation and Purpose of the Letter

1. Immediate persecution, however, it would not be severe if they do what is good (1 Peter 3:13-14).
2. More severe persecution is on the horizon (1 Peter 4:12-19).
 - a. Nero will soon burn Rome and blame the Christians.
 - b. Christians will be covered with pitch and burned alive to give light to his garden at night.
 - c. A general persecution against Christians will ensue all over the Empire and will be heightened in the time of Domitian and his successors.
 - d. The Roman war against the Jews will bring reprisals against Jewish Christians scattered throughout the Empire.
3. The keynote of the letter is “Grace” and “Suffering.”
 - a. The idea of suffering appears 26 times in 5 chapters. (1:6,11; 2:12, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24; 3:9, 13, 14, 17, 18; 4:1, 4, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19; 5:1, 8, 9, 10)
 - b. Peter wrote to suffering Christians to encourage them to rely upon the **grace** of God in order to find strength and perseverance to live for God while suffering.
 - 1) Rejoice in salvation in spite of trials (1:2, 5-7, 10, 13).
 - 2) Christians called for this purpose – to follow in the steps of Christ (2:19-21).
 - 3) If you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed (3:7, 14).
 - 4) Stand in the true grace of God (5:12). Grace is used 10 times in this epistle.
 - c. Grace is presented in several different ways.
 - 1) **As a privilege** and a blessing that we enjoy right now while we suffer.
 - 2) **As a gift** to share with other people even while we are suffering.

- 3) **As a standard** of how to treat the people who are causing you to suffer.
- 4) **As a hope** to those who are suffering.

SUMMARY:

The word “grace” is used in every chapter of 1 Peter: 1:2, 10, 13; 2:19 (“thank worthy”), 20 (“acceptable”); 3:7; 4:10; 5:5, 10, 12. Grace is God’s generous favor to undeserving sinners and needy saints. When we depend on God’s grace, we can endure suffering and turn trials into triumphs. It is grace alone that saves us (Ephesians 2:8-10). Whatever begins with God’s grace will always lead to glory (Psalm 84:11; 1 Peter 5:10).

As we study 1 Peter, we will see three themes of suffering, grace, and glory uniting to form an encouraging message for believers experiencing times of trial and persecution. These themes are summarized in 1 Peter 5:10, a verse we would do well to memorize.

OUTLINE OF FIRST PETER:

“The People of God’s Grace in the Midst of Suffering.”

- A. GRACEFUL HEIRS (1:1-16).
 1. Heirs of eternal life.
 2. Heirs of an inheritance.
- B. GRACEFUL CHILDREN (1:17 – 2:3).
- C. GRACEFUL PRIESTS (2:4-10).
- D. GRACEFUL CITIZENS (2:11-17).
- E. GRACEFUL SERVANTS (2:18-25).
- F. GRACEFUL SPOUSES (3:1-7).
- G. GRACEFUL NEIGHBORS (3:8-12).
- H. GRACEFUL REVOLUTIONARIES (3:13-16).
- I. GRACEFUL SUFFERERS (3:17 – 4:6).
- J. GRACEFUL STEWARDS (4:7-19).
- K. GRACEFUL SHEPHERDS (5:1-4).
- L. GRACEFUL SHEEP (5:5-14).

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ONE:

1. Describe the writer of this epistle by giving four identifying marks of the writer.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

2. Give the date of the writing of First Peter:_____

3. Give some of the background of the letter as to its purpose and the situation that existed at the time._____

4. What is the “keynote” of First Peter?

5. List four ways grace is presented in this letter.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

LESSON TWO

GRACEFUL HEIRS

INTRODUCTION:

Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, believers have been “begotten again” to a living hope, and that hope includes the glory of God. But, what do we mean by “the glory of God?”

The glory of God means the sum total of all that God is and does. “Glory” is not a separate attribute or characteristic of God, such as His holiness, wisdom, or mercy. He is glorious in wisdom and power, so that everything He thinks and does is marked by glory.

Christians are “graceful” heirs of God’s glory. Notice here in 1 Peter 1:3ff, he says, *“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade.”* Let’s examine the inheritance which Christians have in Christ Jesus.

LESSON TEXT: 1 Peter 1:1-12

LESSON AIM: Man’s glory simply does not last, but God’s glory is eternal and He has determined to share His glory with us. In this section the Christian is assured of an inheritance reserved in heaven.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Discover that God’s people are considered as exiled people looking forward to going home.
 2. Learn that we are God’s chosen people as a result of our obedience to the gospel.
 3. See that being God’s people we have a glorious inheritance that is imperishable and assured by and because of faith in Jesus Christ.
-

GOD’S GRACEFUL HEIRS (1:1-12)

A. Christians Are Exiled Heirs

1. An exile is a foreigner who has been expelled from his own homeland. *“To God’s elect, strangers in the world, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia . . .”*
 - a. Some think they are the Jews (including Christians) who were scattered from Jerusalem and Judea.

- b. These countries of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia are in modern Turkey.
- c. They are Christians who are called strangers because their citizenship is in heaven. In Philippians 3:20, Paul said, *Our citizenship is in heaven.*
- 2. These are Gentiles and Jews – people who are now a part of the kingdom of God.
 - a. They have been born again, are children of God.
 - b. As children they are heirs.
 - c. They are strangers because they are wandering in a strange land (this world). They are headed toward their Canaan land, and that is heaven itself. This figure is likely taken from Abraham's journeys.

B. Christians Are People Chosen by God

- 1. The fact of being chosen (v. 2). “*. . . who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood.*” There are four parts here involved in being a chosen child of God:
 - a. **Foreknowledge** of God. There is the foreknowledge of God. Cf. Ephesians 1:4.
 - b. **Sanctification** through the Holy Spirit. The Spirit sanctifies in two different ways.
 - 1) It sanctifies through the word of God.
 - 2) Through obedience to the word of God, when we obey the gospel.
The Bible says that the Holy Spirit comes into us and dwells in us and sanctifies us in that sense. To sanctify means to set apart.
 - c. **Obedience** to the gospel. When we hear the gospel preached we must obey the gospel. What does it mean to obey the gospel?
 - 1) First of all we are commanded to believe that Jesus is the Son of God.
 - 2) Secondly, one must repent. In Acts 2:38 it says, “*Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.*”
 - 3) Thirdly, one must be baptized in the name of Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.
 - d. **The sprinkling by His blood.**

NOTE: Jesus Christ is our Savior. He is the one who died on the cross. He is the one who shed His blood. And it is that blood that washes away our sins. And consequently, when by God's plan we hear the gospel revealed by the Spirit and we obey it, then Christ saves us. Then the blood is applied. In Romans 6:3-4 it says we are baptized into the death of Christ. And so when we are baptized we reach the blood of Jesus that He shed to wash away our sins. It is not any effort that we have done that brings our salvation to us. It is not our obedience that earns our salvation. It is the merit of Christ's death upon the cross when He shed

His blood. That is what brings us salvation. And that is the way we become chosen children of God and at the same time chosen heirs of God. And that is when the rebirth takes place.

2. The basis of God's choosing. "*He did this in his great mercy.*"
 a. The reason Peter is praising God. Why were we saved in this matter?
 Because of the grace of God, the mercy of God.
 b. The grace, his gift; the mercy that prompted the giving of that gift.
 Ephesians 2:8 – "*For by grace are you saved through faith. And this not of yourselves—it is the gift of God—not of works lest any man should boast.*"
 c. The gracious gift prohibits boasting.
 1) Jesus Christ is the one who lived the perfect life for us.
 2) Jesus Christ is the one who died for us.
 3) Jesus Christ is the one who was raised for us and ascended to the right hand of God on high. He sits there as our mediator and as our Savior.

C. Christians Are God's Glorious Heirs (vs. 4-10)

1. An **imperishable inheritance**. We are not just chosen heirs and scattered heirs. We are newborn heirs and we are glorious heirs because of the inheritance that God has prepared for us.
 - a. It cannot be destroyed.
 - b. It is reserved in heaven. It is a heavenly inheritance that will last forever.
 - c. It will not spoil. Now not only will it not perish, it will not spoil.
 - d. It will not fade away. It will not perish. It will not be spoiled and it will not fade away.

NOTE:

Untouched by death.

Immortality assured.

Unstained by evil – Purity possessed.

Unimpaired by time – Beauty displayed.

NOTE: Do you see the relationship here of grace to suffering? If you have that kind of grace awaiting you, that kind of a living hope in your heart, then you will be willing to suffer. You will be willing to endure hardship. You will be willing to sacrifice, to serve your Lord Jesus so that one day you will get that inheritance.

2. An **unconquerable joy** (v. 5). We are going to be joyful heirs as we await that inheritance. "*Who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. And in this you greatly rejoice though now for a little while you may have to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.*"
 a. Because we are protected by the power of God – shielded!

- b. Because our salvation that is coming is so far superior that it does not even compare to the suffering we now go through in this life. Cf. Romans 8:18; 1 Corinthians 15.
- 3. An **on-going preparation** for the inheritance (vs. 6-7).
 - a. Trials are designed to meet needs, – *if needs be* indicates that there are times when Christians need to go through trials.
 - b. Trials are varied. Peter used the word “manifold,” which literally means “variegated, many-colored.” Same word used in 1 Peter 4:10 to describe God’s grace.
 - c. Trials are not easy. Trials produce “heaviness.” The word means “to experience grief or pain.”
 - d. Trials are controlled by God – *for a season*. When God permits His children to go through the furnace, He keeps His eye on the clock and His hand on the thermostat.

NOTE: In verse 7 it says, “*These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.*” This shows that trials act as a furnace to refine our faith, to make our faith purer and stronger. When difficulties come, when times of suffering come, faith is put to the test. When faith is put to the test it will either get weaker or stronger. If you rely on the grace of God during these times, if you will look to God for strength and help, your faith will grow stronger and then your faith will be more valuable than gold itself because it ultimately will bring you the end of your faith, and that is the salvation of your souls.

- 4. An **eternal harvest** (vs. 8-9). “*Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your soul.*”
- a. Suffering is a means of strengthening your faith.
- b. Ultimately your faith will end in fulfillment when your reward comes when Jesus Christ is revealed.
- 5. Three things that give us assurance that our hope of a future inheritance is steadfast and sure:
 - a. Predicted by the prophets.
 - 1) The coming of Jesus Christ.
 - 2) His sufferings on the cross.
 - 3) His resurrection.
 - 4) His final coming.
 - 5) Our reward.
 - b. Preached by the apostles.
 - c. Ministered to by the angels. The angels attend these things and watch about our salvation. In Hebrews 1:14 it says that “*He has sent forth the*

angels as ministers and servants of those who will inherit salvation." Even angels are going to see that we get our reward one day. We have to remain faithful.

SUMMARY:

As we study 1 Peter, we will see how the themes of suffering, grace, and glory unite to form an encouraging message for believers experiencing times of trial and persecution. These themes are summarized in 1 Peter 5:10.

An Old Testament believer called God “the Hope of Israel” (Jeremiah 14:8). A New Testament believer affirms that Jesus Christ is his hope (1 Timothy 1:1; Colossians 1:27). The unsaved sinner is “without hope” (Ephesians 2:12); and if he dies without Christ, he will be without hope forever. The Italian poet, Dante, in his *Divine Comedy*, put this inscription over the world of the dead: “Abandon all hope, you who enter here!”

This does not reflect Peter’s understanding. He assures us that through the grace God has extended to His people, there is every reason to live in hope in all situations.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWO:

1. Explain to whom the book of 1 Peter is written and give your reasons for this answer.

2. Give four things involved in the fact that Christians are chosen by God.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

3. What is the basis of God's choosing?

4. List four characteristics of the promised imperishable inheritance.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

5. Give four truths about trials in verses 6-7.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

6. List three things that give us assurance that our hope of a future inheritance is steadfast and sure.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

LESSON THREE

GRACEFUL CHILDREN OF GOD

INTRODUCTION:

 In the first section of this chapter, Peter emphasized “walking in hope;” but now his emphasis is “walking in holiness.” The two go together, for “*Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure*” (1 John 3:3).

It is not easy to live in this world and maintain a holy walk. The anti-God atmosphere around us that the Bible calls “the world” is always pressing against us, trying to force us to conform.

Outlook determines outcome; attitude determines action. The contrast is illustrated in the lives of Abraham and Lot (Genesis 12-13; Hebrews 11:8-16). Abraham had his eyes of faith on that heavenly city, so he had no interest in the world’s real estate. But Lot, who had tasted the pleasures of the world in Egypt, gradually moved toward Sodom. Abraham brought blessing to his home, but Lot brought judgment. Outlook determined outcome.

LESSON TEXT: I Peter 1:13-2:7

LESSON AIM: To see the character and position of the child of God and the power by which both of these are accomplished.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn that God’s children (heirs) must be characterized by holy living.
 2. See that the motivation means and power of accomplishing holy lives is the powerful and enduring word of God.
 3. Discover that God’s people are made to be priests and are built upon the foundation stone of Jesus Christ and along with Jesus are built into a spiritual house in which they perform the duties of their priesthood.
-

GRACEFUL CHILDREN OF GOD

A. Heirs Are Redeemed, Obedient Children (v. 13)

You have to be a child of God to get the inheritance because the inheritance is for the family (Romans 8:17).

Obedient children of holiness. The requirements:

1. Having a mind that is straight and clear.
 - a. Obedience begins in the mind. “*Prepare your minds for action.*” In the original language it means to tie tightly a robe around you.

- b. Self-controlled. “*Be self-controlled and set your hope fully on the grace to be given you.*”
- c. You must be alert, have your mind clear so that you can think and set your mind on your hope, the hope of the grace that is coming to you.

NOTE: Here you see the tie-in between our inheritance and our being children. To be children of God, we have to keep our mind and our eyes and our thoughts on our hope, our future inheritance. Then, when we have our minds all prepared, clear, alert, set on that one goal of heaven, that will affect our entire life. It is when we get our minds off heaven, it is when we get our minds on earthly things, on things of the world, that then we lose sight of our goal. And as a result we get sidetracked and do not do the will of God. And so in order to be obedient children, you first of all have to get your mind straight and clear.

- 2. Looking at our heavenly Father and imitating Him (v. 15). “*Just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy because I am holy.’*”

 - a. Imitate God in His holiness.
 - b. As obedient children – do not conform to the evil desires of the world.

B. Heirs Are Redeemed Sons of Respect. “*Since you call on a Father who judges each man’s work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*”

- 1. Redeemed from a vain manner of life in the past.
- 2. Redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus Christ.
 - The price of redemption (v. 19).
 - a. Not perishable gold or silver.
 - b. Precious blood of the Lamb (Jesus) (vs. 20-21). “*He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through Him you believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and glorified Him, and so your faith and hope are in God.*”
 - c. By His resurrection He has given us a reason to believe that His blood can redeem us, that there is power in His blood to free us from every evil way.
- 3. Redeemed to live a life of holiness.

C. Heirs Are Purified Children of Love (vs. 22-23). “*Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.*”

- 1. The means of being purified – obedience to the truth.
 - a. The blood of Jesus Christ purifies us from all sin.

- b. Obedience to the gospel is a requirement for purification.
- 2. The **outcome** of purification – **love** for one another. We have been purified for a sincere love of our brothers.
 - a. This word “sincere” literally means in the original language “not hypocritical” or “unhypocritical.”
 - b. A hypocrite in Greek meant a play actor.
 - c. Obedience to the gospel causes one to be born again into the family.
 - d. We have brotherly relationships as well as a relationship with the Father.
- 3. There are two kinds of love talked about here: love for brethren, which is a friendship type of love; and then an agape love, to love one another fervently from the heart.
 - a. Both of these kinds of love are commanded.
 - b. The agape love that is spoken of and commanded here is a love that we give even if our brother does not deserve it.
 - 1) Fervent love means “a stretched-out” love.
 - 2) A love that agonizes, a love that suffers.

NOTE: The character of salvation’s love.

- 1. The nature of this love – it is *AGAPE* love.
- 2. The character of this love – it is *unfeigned* love.
- 3. The degree of this love – it is *fervent* love.
- 4. The source of this love – *out of a pure heart*.
- 5. The reason for this love – *purified* souls.
- 6. Definitions:
 - 1) *Unfeigned* – sincere.
 - 2) *Corruptible seed* refers to physical birth.
 - 3) *Incorruptible seed* refers to a spiritual birth.
 - 4) *Abideth* (enduring, NIV) comes from the Greek *MENONTO* which means: *continues constant and unchanging*.

D. Heirs Are Begotten by the Powerful and Enduring Word of God (vs. 23-35)

- 1. God’s word regenerates – new birth.
- 2. God’s word motivates – new love.
- 3. God’s word is imperishable.
 - a. It is the same word spoken by Isaiah.
 - b. It is still being spoken by Peter.
 - c. It is living and enduring. Cf. Matthew 24:35.

E. Heirs Are Newborn Children of Christian Growth (2:1-3). “*Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.*”

- 1. A different figure is used here for God’s word.

- a. God's word was seed when it was planted in our hearts and produced a plant, which is a Christian plant.
- b. God's word is like milk that a newborn baby craves and needs for proper growth.
- c. It is the means by which Christians grow up in their salvation.
- 2. Things which Christians are to purge out of their lives.
 - a. Malice – wickedness in general.
 - b. Deceit – craftiness, using devious words and actions to get what we want.
 - c. Hypocrisy.
 - d. Envy
 - e. Slander of every kind.

SUMMARY:

If these attitudes and actions are in our lives, we will lose our appetite for the pure word of God. If we stop feeding on the word, we stop growing, and we stop enjoying (“tasting”) the grace that we find in the Lord. When Christians are growing in the word, they are peacemakers, not troublemakers, and they promote the unity of the church.

GRACEFUL PRIESTS OF GOD

“As you come to Him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to Him—you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (vs. 4-5)

A. A Holy Priesthood (2:4-9)

- 1. Priests of God – not just sons.
- 2. The work of priests.
 - a. Offer sacrifices in praise and glory to God.
 - b. Priests also represented the rest of the people to God and taught people about God.
- 3. These are the two chief responsibilities we have as priests of God.
 - a. To **offer up spiritual sacrifices** to God.
 - b. To **represent God to the world** and to teach the world about God.
- 4. Exactly how we are priests.
 - a. First of all, a priest is one who works in a temple. He burns incense in the temple. He makes sacrifices to God in the temple. His chief work is in the temple.
 - b. Christians have a temple. “*You also like living stones are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood*” (v. 5).
 - c. Christians are not only priests, they also together form the temple in which they work.

- d. It is the church of our Lord, which is the house of our God.
Cf. 1 Timothy 3:15.
- e. We are like living stones that are built up into a spiritual house.

B. A Spiritual House (vs. 6-7)

- 1. A house build upon the foundation stone – Jesus (vs. 6-7).
 - a. In Matthew chapter 21:42-46, Jesus tells us this stone is Jesus Himself.
 - b. The Jews and the leaders of the Jews who were the builders, rejected Jesus as their stone.
- 2. Predicted and promised by Jesus. When Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, “*Upon this rock I will build my church,*” that rock was the rock Peter had just confessed. “*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*” And when men build on that rock, indeed, they will never be disappointed as the Scripture here says.
- 3. The rock identified by Peter in Acts 4:11. “*There is no other name given among men by which they must be saved.*” And he talked about the rock that was rejected by men but chosen by God. That rock is Jesus Christ. And here we find Peter again saying, “Jesus is the rock.”

SUMMARY:

This is the temple in which we as priests work. What are we to do in that temple? Well, notice in verse 5, we are to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God. In our next lesson, we will look at this more and see more how we serve as priests and then enter into other phases of the people of God’s grace.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON THREE:

1. There are five things said about “Graceful Children of God” which serve as an outline of 1:13 through 2:3. List these five things.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____

2. In 1:22 children of God have been purified by what means? With what outcome?
The means: _____
The outcome: _____

3. There are three things said about the powerful and enduring word of God. Give these three things.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____

4. What two figures are used in this lesson to refer to the word of God?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____

5. What are five things the Christian is to purge from his life?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____

6. What two figures does Peter use in reference to Christians in 2:4-9?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____

7. The spiritual house in 2:6-7 is built upon what foundation _____, predicted and promised by _____, and _____ by Peter in Acts 4:11.

LESSON FOUR

GRACEFUL CITIZENS

INTRODUCTION:

he central section of Peter's letter (1 Peter 2:11-3:12) emphasizes *submission* in the life of a believer. This is certainly not a popular topic in this day of lawlessness and the quest for "personal fulfillment," but it is an important one. Peter applied the theme of submission to the life of a believer as a citizen (2:11-17), a worker (2:18-25), a marriage partner (3:1-7), and a member of the Christian assembly (3:8-12).

Submission does not mean slavery or subjugation but simply the recognition of God's authority in our lives. God has established the home, human government, and the church, and He has the right to tell us how these institutions should be run. God wants each of us to exercise authority; but before we can *exercise* authority, we must be *under* authority. Satan's offer to our first parents was freedom without authority, but they ended up losing both freedom and authority. The prodigal son in Luke 15 found his freedom when he yielded to his father's will.

LESSON TEXT: 1 Peter 2:4-25

LESSON AIM: To understand the Christian's relationship to worldly associates both by God's word and Christ's example.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. See the principles of Christianity applied to all relationships in the life of the believer.
 2. Understand that Christians are citizens of three different areas of their living – heavenly, national and worldly.
 3. Learn of and see the power of Christian submission.
-

REVIEW:

GRACEFUL PRIESTS OF GOD

"As you come to Him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to Him—you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (2:4-5).

A. A Holy Priesthood (2:4-9)

B. A Spiritual House (vs. 6-7)

C. A Royal Priesthood (v. 9)

“You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.”

1. A priesthood that belongs to a king. All Christians make up the “royal priesthood.”
2. For the purpose of being a light to the world, of telling others about the God that you worship.
3. Not only priests of God, we are kings and princes, heirs to the throne itself. In Revelation 1:5 it says, *“Jesus is the ruler of the kings on earth.”* And in verse 6 it says, *“He has made us to be a kingdom and priest to His God and Father.”*

D. A Chosen Priesthood (v. 10)

“Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”

GRACEFUL CITIZENS (2:13-17)

A. Citizens in Three Different Senses

1. Citizens of heaven because our citizenship is there and we belong to the kingdom of heaven. That is a **spiritual citizenship**.
2. Citizens in some particular nation. That is a **national citizenship**.
3. Citizens of the world. Even though I am of one nation and you may be a citizen of another nation, we are in the same world together. That is a **worldly citizenship**.
4. Peter gives us instructions in all three of these areas:
 - a. In our heavenly citizenship.
 - b. In our national citizenship.
 - c. In our worldly citizenship.

B. Citizens of Heaven – Heavenly Citizenship (vs. 11-12)

“Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us.”

1. Called “aliens and strangers in the world.”
 - a. Heavenly citizenship.
 - b. Wandering on this earth temporarily until we get home to our Canaan land where our inheritance really is.

- c. Like the Israelites. Now while we are headed toward Canaan land, what do we need to do?
- 2. To war against the lusts that war against the soul (v. 11).
 - a. Israelites serve as an example – all but two fell in the wilderness.
 - b. They sinned and fell in the wilderness. They did not maintain their faith and trust in God.
 - c. The way to fight this war against lust is first of all by abstaining from it.
 - d. Consider Joseph’s experience in the house of Potiphar in Egypt.
 - 1) Tempted by Potiphar’s wife.
 - 2) He ran from her presence.
 - 3) He refused to sin against God and against his master.
 - e. God will provide a means of escape (1 Corinthians 10:13).
- 3. Live lives which refute false accusations by the ungodly (v. 12). “*Positively live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us.*”
 - a. The “good lives” here comes from a word that means “excellent” or “beautiful.”
 - b. The purpose is so they will glorify God on the day He visits us.
 - 1) The visitation of God can either be for salvation or it can mean for judgment and punishment.
 - 2) Since they are to glorify God on that day, obviously they are talking of their conversion.

C. Citizens of Some Nation – National Citizenship (vs. 13-16)

“Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men.”

- 1. Our first duty to our nation’s government is submission.
 - a. Submit to their laws just as He wants us to submit to His laws in heaven.
 - b. A Christian should be a good citizen, a law abiding citizen, not one who breaks the law or transgresses the ordinances of his country.
 - c. The power of submission – the principle of grace.
- 2. The nations responsibility and duty to its citizens.
 - a. To punish evil doers.
 - b. To praise those who do what is right.
- 3. Two reasons for submission to government.
 - a. It is right because God has commanded it.
 - b. The powers that be are ordained of God (Romans 13:1-2).

D. Citizens of the World – World Citizens (v. 17)

“Show proper respect to everyone. Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king.”

1. We should love all men just as God loves all men and loved the world so much He gave His only begotten Son.
2. First Timothy 2:4 – “*God desires that all men be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth.*”

GRACEFUL SERVANTS (2:18-25)

A. Submission with Respect (v. 18). “*Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect.*”

1. The word “slave” (Greek: OIKETAI) means “house servants.” It could be an employee.
2. This principle can be limited by another principle. Acts 5:29 – “*We must obey God rather than man.*”
 - a. If the government makes a law that would cause you to disobey God’s law, God’s law is to have the priority.
 - b. That is the only time that you can disobey a law of the government.
 - c. The same would be true if your boss told you to do something that is wrong, then you have to obey God first rather than your boss.
3. Goodness or badness of a master/employee not a determining factor.
“*...not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh*” (v.18).
4. The stated reason: It is commendable (v. 19). “*For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God.*”
 - a. This word “commendable” (Greek: XARIS) is everywhere else translated “grace.”
 - b. A new standard for conduct. It is a standard of grace.
5. The example of Jesus (vs. 21-25).
 - a. We have been called to suffer just as Jesus suffered.
 - b. The natural thing to do is to lash back, to avenge yourself, to get even, to do something back to him as he did to you.
 - 1) The way the world operates.
 - 2) It is a system of justice. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.
 - c. The principle of Christianity is, “You hurt me, I will do something good back to you.” Cf. Matthew 5:38-42.
 - d. Jesus Christ is a perfect example.
 - 1) When He died on the cross, He did not deserve to die.
 - 2) He was bearing our sins in His body. He was suffering for you and me. He was showing grace. John 15:13 says, “*Greater love has no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends.*”
 - 3) In Romans 5:8 it says, “*One will hardly die for a righteous man. But God loved us in that Christ died while we were yet sinners and*

while we were enemies of God.”

- 4) In Romans chapter 12 it says, “*We are not to avenge ourselves. We are to leave vengeance in the hands of God.*”
- 5) The most likely result will be that you will change the person that you help.

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTES:

Peter’s reasons for servitude and subjection.

- A. Christ’s own example of patient endurance of wrong.
 1. Though sinless He suffered as a sinner.
 2. He endured the agonies and death inflicted by unjust and unfeeling men.
 3. He did this without reviling His enemies (1 Peter 2:23).
- B. Christ’s express command that His people should restrain from retaliation (Matthew 5:38-48).
- C. The consciousness of enjoying a higher, a spiritual liberty.
- D. The hope and prospect of liberation.
- E. The desire to adorn the gospel of Christ in a favorable manner.

STUDY NOTES:

1. Graceful Servants (2:18-25).
 - a. Graceful duties toward masters (vs. 18-20).
 - 1) Submission to good and evil masters (v. 18).
 - 2) Respect to good and evil masters (vs. 18).
 - 3) Patient endurance (v. 19).
 - a) When suffering unjustly.
 - b) When suffering for conscience toward God.
 - 4) Graceful suffering (v. 20).
 - a) Not when suffering for doing evil.
 - b) When suffering for doing right.
 - c) When suffering with patient endurance.
 - b. Graceful example of the “suffering Servant” (vs. 21-25).
 - 1) His “footprints” of suffering (v. 21).
 - a) The purpose of Christians includes suffering.
 - b) The footprints of Christ’s example leads the way.
 - 2) His innocence while suffering (v. 22).
 - a) He committed no sin.
 - b) He spoke no guile (deceit).
 - 3) His patient endurance (v. 23).
 - a) He did not revile in return.
 - b) He did not utter threats.
 - c) He trusted the Righteous Judge.
 - 4) His vicarious suffering (v. 24).
 - a) He bore our sins in His body on the cross.
 - b) He died that we might die to sin.
 - c) He died that we might live to righteousness.
 - d) He was wounded that we might be healed.

- 5) His victorious accomplishment: straying sheep have returned to the Shepherd of souls (v. 25)

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FOUR:

1. Christians are to submit themselves to whom and what is the motivation for this submission? _____

2. Civil rulers are ordained by and are ministers of whom? _____

3. From verse 14 what are two purposes of civil government?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
4. Two types of masters as to character in this text are the _____ and the _____
5. In this text Jesus left us an example of what? _____

6. How did Jesus respond when He suffered wrongfully? _____

7. In following Jesus' example the Christian is to commit himself to _____
8. Give the three main points in this lesson.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
9. In what three senses is a Christian a citizen?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____

LESSON FIVE

GRACEFUL SPOUSES AND NEIGHBORS

INTRODUCTION:

Jn this study of 1st Peter, we are seeing that God teaches the Christian how to conduct himself in all relations of life. BEFORE GOD, he is to be holy, even as God is holy (1 Peter 1:14-16). BEFORE THE WORLD, he is to live an honorable life, one filled with good works (1 Peter 2:11-12). AS A CITIZEN, he is to submit to civil authorities (1 Peter 2:13-17). AS A SERVANT, he is to do good, even if it means to suffer patiently the mistreatment of others (1 Peter 2:18-25).

As we come to chapter three, we find there are also certain responsibilities in our relations as husbands and wives – 1 Peter 3:1-7. In a society where “dysfunctional families” seem to be the norm, it is even more imperative that the people of God demonstrate through their families that which is the will of God, and is “honorable” (good, beautiful to behold) conduct. Our text goes a long way in describing the sort of conduct that is “honorable” for wives and husbands.

Beginning in verse 8 of the third chapter, Peter defines our duty to each other as brethren in Christ. Peter will provide motivation to fulfill our duties to one another in verses 10-12.

LESSON TEXT: 1 Peter 3:1-12

LESSON AIM: To note that Peter’s instruction concerning the Christian’s response to suffering in the marriage relationship and to neighbors is based upon the principle of grace.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. View the principle of grace in the relationship of a Christian wife to an unbelieving husband.
 2. Consider the responsibility of a believing husband as he lives with his wife as a “weaker vessel.”
 3. See the principle of grace at work in the relationship of neighbors.
-

GRACEFUL WIVES

A. The Basic Responsibility of a Christian Wife Toward Her Husband

1. To be submissive.

- a. As the church submits to the Lord (Ephesians 5:23).
 - b. Even to husbands who are not Christians. The purpose of this is to try to win some of them to Christ.
 - c. A wife should give her husband respectful submission even though he does not deserve to be respected.
2. The word “likewise” or “in the same way” refers back to the discussion in the previous chapter.
- a. In which the principle of submission has already been applied to:
 - 1) Our responsibility to governmental authorities.
 - 2) The servant’s relationship to his master.
 - b. This would suggest that the same principles discussed earlier hold true to wives in their relationship with husbands.
 - 1) I.e., to submit not only to the good, but also to the harsh (1 Peter 2:18).
 - 2) If a wife suffers wrong from her husband when she is doing good, it is commendable before God if she bear that mistreatment patiently (1 Peter 2:19).
3. The value of submission is best illustrated in the case where a Christian wife is married to an unbeliever.
- a. He might be converted by her “conduct.”
 - 1) Even though he might not have previously obeyed “the” word (the gospel).
 - 2) Without “a” word (persistent nagging), he may be reached by her conduct!
 - b. The type of “conduct” likely to have that effect is described as:
 - 1) “Chaste” – that is, purity in all manner of life.
 - 2) “Accompanied by fear” – that is, reverence; which in this case.
 - a) Is manifested toward the husband,
 - b) And is an attitude consistent with the principle of “submission.”
4. So the first duty of wives as outlined by Peter is that of “submission,” even if the husband is an unbeliever.

B. Adorn Yourselves Properly (vs. 3-4)

1. It is likely that Peter’s comments are in the form of a “Hebraism.”
 - a. I.e., a Hebrew idiom (form of speech) commonly found in the Scriptures.
 - b. In this case, there is a contrast (“not this. . . but this”) for the sake of emphasis.
 - c. A good example of this is found in John 6:27.
 - 1) Jesus is not saying that it is wrong to work so we can eat.
 - 2) But that our priority in life should be to have ever-lasting life.
2. A similar emphasis by way of contrast is being made by Peter.
 - a. Do not let your emphasis be on “beauty” that relates to outward adornment.

- b. Not that it is always wrong to arrange the hair, wear gold, or put on apparel.
- c. But place your emphasis elsewhere!
- 3. Let your beauty be "*the hidden person of the heart.*"
 a. Conduct yourself so that beauty of the "inner person" shines forth.
 b. Where people notice more "who" you are rather than "what" you wear.
- 4. It is a "gentle and quiet spirit" that constitutes true inner beauty.
 a. Unlike hair, gold, and apparel, a gentle and quiet spirit is incorruptible! (2 Corinthians 4:16).
 b. It is also very precious in the sight of God (Isaiah 66:1-2).
- 5. So Christian women, let your inner beauty be your most noticeable feature!
 a. Without inner beauty, any outward beauty is like "*a ring of gold in the nose of a pig!*" (Proverbs 11:22).
 b. Parents, are we teaching this truth (by word and example) to our daughters?

C. Be "Daughters of Sarah" (vs. 5-6)

- 1. Remember, the holy women in the Old Testament who trusted in God.
 a. They adorned themselves with a gentle and quiet spirit.
 b. They were submissive to their husbands.
- 2. A case in point is that of Sarah.
 a. The response to her outward beauty.
 1) Pharaoh wanted her when she was over 65 years old.
 2) The king of the Philistines wanted her when she was over 90 years old, and long past the age of childbearing.
 b. Yet her true beauty was demonstrated by her submissive spirit (calling her husband "lord").
- 3. Christian women can become the "daughters of Sarah," provided they:
 a. "Do good" (be submissive to their husbands).
 b. "Are not afraid of any terror" (composed with a gentle and quiet spirit).

NOTE: To be considered a "daughter of Sarah" by God would be a very special honor! It can be had by any woman who heeds the words of the apostle Peter. But a failure to heed these words will result in being more like a "daughter of Jezebel." Remember, she delighted in her physical beauty and in manipulating her husband. May such never be true of women professing godliness and wearing the name of Christ!

GRACEFUL HUSBANDS

A. Considerate Husbands. "*Be considerate as you live with your wives*" (v. 7).

- 1. The KJV says "with knowledge."
- 2. Husbands are expected to know, and understand these two things:
 a. Their responsibilities in marriage (Ephesians 5:25).
 b. The nature of women, as "weaker vessels."
 1) Refers to physical strength.

- 2) Not to intellectual abilities, moral courage, or spiritual strength.
- 3. Such understanding is to govern how the husband lives with his wife – with love and thoughtfulness.

B. Respectful Husbands. “Give honor to the wife.”

- 1. The word “give” means “to assign.”
- 2. “Honor” involves the idea of that which is “precious, of high value.”
- 3. So the husband is to assign to his wife the honor of being precious and of high value in his sight.
- 4. A good reason to consider our wives in such light: they are truly “heirs together of the grace of life.”
- 5. They are sisters in Christ, and therefore worthy of the respect we give any other child of God!

C. Praying Husbands. “That your prayers may not be hindered.”

- 1. Here is good reason to heed Peter’s instruction!
- 2. The word “hindered” literally means “cut off.”
- 3. Thus the way we treat our wives may result in our access to God being cut off!
- 4. This is what happened to the Old Testament priests who divorced their wives (Malachi 2:13-14).

GRACEFUL NEIGHBORS

A. To “Be of One Mind” (NASB, “harmonious”).

- 1. That is, to be united in the same purpose, the same goal.
- 2. Jesus prayed for this kind of unity in John 17:20-21.
- 3. A church that demonstrated this “oneness of mind” is that of Jerusalem (Acts 4:32).
- 4. How can we have this “oneness of mind?”
 - a. It is attainable only to the extent that we all submit to the will of God.
 - b. Therefore, we all need to make God’s will our will, His purpose our purpose.
 - c. Even as Christ did while on earth (John 5:30).

B. To Have “Compassion for One Another” (NASB, “sympathetic”)

- 1. This means to have pity, a feeling of distress toward the ills of others.
- 2. It is that disposition which is moved by the problems of others (like sickness, hardships, etc.).
- 3. This is the attitude manifested by Jesus.
 - a. During His earthly ministry (Matthew 9:35-36).
 - b. During His heavenly ministry (Hebrews 4:15).
- 4. Such compassion can only come from a tender, loving heart.

C. To “Love as Brothers”

- 1. Literally, this means to be “brother lovers.”

2. This attribute is essential, if we are to...
 - a. Grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:7-8).
 - b. Convince the world that we are truly disciples of Jesus (John 13:35).
3. Are you a “brother lover”? If not. . .
 - a. You are not a lover of God, either! (1 John 4:20).
 - b. You do not even know God! (1 John 4:7-8).
4. Here is one way to know if you are a “brother lover.”
 - a. Ask yourself this question: “Do I even know my brother?”
 - b. If you don’t, how can you honestly say that you are a “brother lover?”

D. To “*Be Tenderhearted*” (NASB, “kindhearted”)

1. It is this kind of heart that is compassionate, capable of loving our brethren.
2. The opposite would be “cold-hearted,” where we are insensitive to the needs and feelings of others.
3. Even if we start out as “cold-hearted,” in Christ Jesus we can and must undergo a transformation, in which we develop a “tender heart” (Ephesians 4:22-24, 31-32; Colossians 3:8-10, 12).
4. Have you considered what kind of heart you have?

E. To “*Be Courteous*” (NASB, “humble in spirit”)

1. Literally, to be “friendly of mind, kind.”
 - a. Such courtesy would imply a humility of spirit.
 - b. An arrogant or proud spirit does not bother to be courteous.
2. Christians are to imitate their Lord and Savior, and not think so highly of themselves that they cannot be kind and courteous to others (Philippians 2:3-5).

F. To “*Return Blessing for Evil*”

1. When someone (e.g., a brother) does us evil, we are to respond with a blessing!
2. While this may go against “human nature,” Peter gives two reasons why we are to react in this way:
 - a. We are called to follow the example of Christ (1 Peter 3:9 with 1 Peter 2:21-23).
 - b. That we might receive a blessing from God (Luke 6:35).

NOTE: These are six duties that we have one toward another. They are part of what constitutes the Christ-like character that we are to develop as His disciples. Being saved, then, is not the end of God’s plan for us; He would have us become like His Son (cf. Romans 8:29). To motivate us in fulfilling these duties, Peter quotes from the 34th Psalm.

MOTIVATION TO FULFILL THESE DUTIES (10-12)

A. That We Might “*Love Life and See Good Days*”

1. Everyone wishes to enjoy life as they experience it from day to day.

- a. But too often, many make their own lives miserable by their own self-seeking, self-destructive attitudes.
- b. Constantly complaining, contentious, retaliating to evil with evil, they only aggravate the situation.
- 2. But David in his psalm gives the secret to loving life and seeing good days:
 - a. Refrain the tongue from evil, and lips from speaking guile (1 Peter 3:10).
 - 1) I.e., do not engage in slander, backbiting, complaining, lying, murmuring, and grumbling.
 - 2) It does not solve difficulties, but only makes them worse.
 - b. Do good, seek peace and pursue it (1 Peter 3:11).
 - 1) I.e., do the very kind of things mentioned by Peter in 1 Peter 3:8-9.
 - 2) Only then will your life be pleasant, for the qualities described by Peter...
 - a) Make the best out of difficult situations.
 - b) Make good situations even better!

B. So the Lord Will Be Open to Us (1 Peter 3:12)

- 1. Only by doing the will of God (as found in 1 Peter 3:8-9) can we ensure that . . .
 - a. His gracious eyes will watch over us.
 - b. His ears will be open to our prayers.
- 2. On the other hand, the Lord's face is against those who do evil, and He will not hear their prayers.
- 3. Consider the list of abominations found in Proverbs 6:16-19 and notice how many are the direct opposite of how we are to be.
 - a. We are to be **courteous** (humble) – but the Lord hates a proud look!
 - b. We are to be **compassionate** – but abusing the innocent is an abomination to the Lord!
 - c. We are to be **tender-hearted** – but the Lord hates a cold heart that thinks evil of others!
 - d. We are to **return good for evil** – but those who respond quickly with evil, the Lord abhors!
 - e. We are to be **of one mind** – but if we sow discord by murmuring and complaining, we are abominable in God's sight!

NOTE: So if we want the Lord to watch over us, if we want Him to heed our prayers, let us be sure to fulfill our duties to each other as brethren as outlined by Peter in verses 8-9. In so doing, we will enjoy life to its fullest, and see many good days during our pilgrimage here on earth!

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FIVE:

1. The basic responsibility of a Christian wife toward her husband is what?

2. How does the principle of suffering and grace relate to the marriage relationship?

3. In what two specific ways is the husband to manifest his responsibility to his wife?

1) _____

2) _____

4. How does a bad marriage relationship affect a person's prayer life?

5. List six things involved in being "graceful neighbors."

1) _____ 4) _____

2) _____ 5) _____

3) _____ 6) _____

6. What two things motivate the Christian to fulfill the things listed in question 5?

1) _____

2) _____

LESSON SIX

GRACEFUL REACTORS TO A HOSTILE SOCIETY

INTRODUCTION:

aving described the proper conduct of Christians in various relationships, Peter now turns more specifically to the subject of suffering. That the first recipients of this epistle were experiencing or would experience persecution is evident from 1:6; 4:12-19; 5:8-10. Now, under normal circumstances, what Peter writes in verse 13 is the rule, “*And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good?*” But there are times when Satan will make every effort to bring harm to those who try to follow the will of God (remember Job?) – cf. 1 Peter 5:8-9; Revelation 12:17. How, then, should Christians prepare themselves so that they might be victorious in overcoming whatever persecution might come their way?

A devoted Christian was facing serious surgery, and a friend visited him in the hospital to pray with him. “An interesting thing happened today,” the Christian told him. “One of the nurses looked at my chart and said, ‘Well, I guess you are preparing for the worst!’ I smiled at her and said, ‘No, I’m preparing for the best. I’m a Christian, and God has promised to work all things together for good.’ Boy, did she drop that chart and leave this room in a hurry!” Peter wrote this letter to prepare Christians for a “fiery trial” of persecution, yet his approach was optimistic and positive. “Prepare for the best!” was his message.

LESSON TEXT: 1 Peter 3:13-22

LESSON AIM: God supplies grace and power to Christians who suffer for doing what is right in a hostile society.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn that to suffer wrong for doing right will bring blessings in this life and in the life to come.
 2. See that the power for doing right involves sanctifying the Lord Jesus in your heart.
 3. Examine the contrasting examples of Jesus Christ and the Antidiluvians in suffering and its rewards.
 4. Observe the place and purpose water baptism has in salvation.
 5. Comprehend the activity of Jesus in connection with preaching to the Antidiluvians.
-

RIGHTEOUS REVOLUTIONARIES

“Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good?” The word “eager” in the Greek is “zelos.” In New Testament times a zealot was a Jewish revolutionary.

A. Graceful Sufferers for Christ (3:14,17)

1. This truth is stressed twice by Peter in this epistle.
 - a. In our text – 1 Peter 3:14.
 - b. Even more definitively in 1 Peter 4:14.
 - 1) Where he adds that the *“Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.”*
 - 2) Those who suffer for the cause of Christ are fortunate, for God is with them.
2. This reinforces what Christ taught in Matthew 5:10-12.
 - a. That those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake are blessed. *“Even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed”* (v. 14).
 - 1) Christ’s protection will be there.
 - 2) The Holy Spirit will be there to comfort and to help.
 - 3) God will use your suffering to build endurance and faith.
 - 4) He will help to make you a better person through that suffering.
 - b. In Matthew 5:10-12, two reasons are given for such blessedness:
 - 1) Your reward will be great in heaven.
 - 2) You are in the company of God’s prophets of old.
3. Certainly you are better off suffering for Christ, than suffering for evil.
 - a. As Peter writes in 1 Peter 3:17.
 - b. Suffering for evil is what WILL happen if we are not willing to stand up for Christ.
 - c. Suffering for Christ is only **temporary**, but the suffering for evil is **eternal!**
4. Do not let fear urge you to do what is wrong.
 Matthew 10:28, *“Fear not them that are able to kill the body but are not able to kill the soul. Fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell”* That is the one you should fear. And so, do not be afraid of people when they threaten you. Instead, be afraid of your Lord and do what is right. Do not do what is wrong.

B. Sanctify the Lord in Your Hearts (3:14-15)

1. Practice the lordship of Christ (3:13-15). Cf. Isaiah 8:13 – *“Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread.”*
 - a. The word “sanctify” means “to set apart.”
 - b. Thus it means to set the Lord up on the throne of your heart, to make Him the Lord and Ruler of your life.
 - 1) Ruling over your own desires.
 - 2) His will taking precedent over your own will and that of others.
2. This is the key to facing persecution without fear or without being troubled.
 1. For unless we sanctify the Lord in our hearts, we will be afraid of what

- man might do, or be troubled by what he threatens.
2. But when we make Christ and God Lord, we will not fear what man might do (Hebrews 13:5-6).

C. Always Be Ready to Give a Defense for the Reason for Your Hope (3:15)

Observe carefully what Peter is not saying.

1. He is NOT saying that we need to be ready to give an answer for EVERY question on religious matters that someone might ask.
2. Some have used this verse as a proof-text.
3. While we should certainly strive to be able to explain why we do what we do in matters of religion, that is not the point Peter is making here.

D. Be a Prepared Revolutionary

1. Always be ready to give a reason why you have the HOPE you do.
 - a. I.e., to explain the basis of your hope (your strong desire and expectation).
 - b. This implies that our desire and confidence for the future is so strong that it is observable by others.
 - c. Even in the midst of persecution, we are demonstrating joy over the hope we have. Cf. 1 Peter 1:6, 8.
2. Do so in the proper spirit.
 - a. In the spirit of MEEKNESS.
 - 1) This pertains to our attitude toward men.
 - 2) We should be humble, not arrogant or angry.
 - b. In the spirit of FEAR.
 - 1) This pertains to our attitude toward God.
 - 2) It should be reverent, not flippant.

E. Keep Your Conscience Clean (3:16)

1. Reasons to keep your conscience clean.
 - a. This together with your good conduct will likely cause your enemies to be ashamed for mistreating you.
 - b. A guilty conscience will not enable one to face the threat of death without fear and trembling.
 - c. Before we can stand before men without fear... We need to be able to stand before God without fear.
2. A golden rule of suffering (v. 17). "*It is better if it is God's will to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.*" It is better for two main reasons.
 - a. Number one, it is better because when you suffer for doing what is right, it brings **salvation to other people**.
 - b. And number two, when you suffer for doing what is right, it **leads you to a better life** than it would otherwise.

F. The Example of the Suffering Jesus Christ (v.18)

"For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit."

1. Number one, we see He did what was right because He is the just suffering for the unjust, the righteous suffering for the unrighteous (2 Corinthians 5:21; John 8:46).
2. The second aspect of this is that when Jesus suffered for doing what is right He was blessed. "*He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.*"
 - a. His body was buried, but His spirit went to Paradise. Cf. Luke 23:43 – "*Today you will be with me in Paradise.*"
 - b. Because He had suffered for doing what is right.
 - c. That is the way it is with every righteous person who suffers for doing what is right when he dies. Luke chapter 16 – the story of the rich man and Lazarus:
 - 1) The rich man died and in Hades he lifted up his eyes being **in torment**.
 - 3) Lazarus, who was a righteous man, was carried by angels to the bosom of Abraham, and he rested **in peace and comfort**.

G. The Example of the Antidiluvians (vs. 19-20a)

1. Opportunity of repentance
 - a. Christ's preaching: in the Spirit form through Noah. These spirits in prison are those who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built.
 - 1) Christ did not preach to spirits in the spirit realm.
 - He would **preach to all**, not just those who were disobedient during Noah's time.
 - Could **not have preached salvation** (Hebrews 9:27).
 - In the judgment man is judged by the **deeds done in the body, not in the spirit** (2 Corinthians 5:10).
 - 2) Christ preached to the people of Noah's time through the Holy Spirit which inspired Noah, a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter 2:5), to preach while the ark was being prepared.
 - b. God's patience: while the ark was being constructed.
2. Rejection of repentance. That to which they were disobedient: disobedience to Noah's preaching was disobedience to Christ's preaching.
3. Consequent punishment:
 - a. They were destroyed in the flood.
 - b. Now they are "spirits now in prison."
4. Suffering of Noah (v. 20b).
 - a. Noah's preaching (through the Spirit of Christ).
 - b. Noah's obedience in constructing the ark.
 - c. Noah's salvation through the water of the flood.
5. The application to Christians.
 - a. In baptism God **destroys the old sinful man** by the cross of Jesus Christ because in baptism we are united with Jesus in His death.
 - b. In the water of baptism Jesus Christ becomes our ark of safety.
 - c. When we are baptized into Christ that baptism becomes the **separation**

- of the old life from the new life** and an old covenant into a new covenant in relationship with God.
- d. Romans 6:3-4 says that: When we are baptized into Christ and baptized into His death we are **raised up to walk in newness of life**. We begin a new life just as Noah did.
 - e. Baptism is the **dividing line between our old life of sin and our new life of righteousness**. The flood was the dividing point between Noah's old life and new life.
 - f. Verse 21, "*And this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also.*"
 - g. In baptism we **are putting our trust in Jesus to save us**. In baptism we are asking God to cleanse us of sin and to cleanse our consciences, to wash us in the blood of Christ because only the blood of Jesus can save.

SUMMARY:

It is in baptism that we ask God to do that, and it is in baptism that God does it. That is when He applies the blood to our soul and washes away our sins, fills us with the Holy Spirit. And that is the reason Peter said on the day of Pentecost, "*Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.*" You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. That is the reason Paul himself was told by Ananias in Acts 22:16, "*Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling upon the name of the Lord.*" Now notice he was calling on the name of the Lord when he was baptized.

That means that when you are baptized you call upon the name of the Lord to save you. And so in that sense we are saved also by the death and suffering of Jesus Christ even in our baptism.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SIX:

1. List four good things that happen when Christians suffer for doing right.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

2. What does it mean “to sanctify” the Lord God in your life?

3. What significant command is given to every Christian in 1 Peter 3:15?

4. In our text, how did Jesus suffer for doing what was right and what was the blessing He received?

5. Show how Christ preached to the people of Noah’s time and when the preaching was/is done.

6. List six things that happen when a person is baptized.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____

LESSON SEVEN

GRACEFUL CHURCH MEMBERS

INTRODUCTION:

As true followers of the “Prince of Peace” we must remember that the Kingdom is spiritual, and therefore not expanded through carnal means – cf. John 18:36. We should keep in mind the words of our Savior: “...*for all who take the sword will perish by the sword*” (Matthew 26:52).

But this is not to say we do not have a true struggle, nor weapons with which to fight. We are engaged in a spiritual struggle, both without and within (Ephesians 6:12; 1 Peter 2:12). We have in our arsenal weapons that are “mighty in God” (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). As we enter the fourth chapter of First Peter, we see that Christians are to “arm” themselves in their service to the Lord (1 Peter 4:1).

So in one sense, there is such a thing as “The Militant Christian;” but it is important that we properly understand in what sense we are to be militant in our service to the Lord.

LESSON TEXT: 1 Peter 4:1-19

LESSON AIM: To understand how grace reacts to mockery and persecution, to fellow church members and suffering for the cause of Christ.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn that Christians must arm themselves with the attitude of Christ to be able to overcome in times of persecution and suffering.
 2. Understand how grace enables the proper relationship among fellow Christians.
 3. See that Christian strength in the midst of suffering comes from knowing who we are and whose we are.
-

THE CHRISTIAN ARMED WITH THE MIND OF CHRIST 4:1-6

A. The Power to Endure Suffering – A Willing Mind

1. This is the attitude Peter wants us to have.
2. This was the attitude of Christ Himself (1 Peter 2:21-23; 3:18). Hebrews 5:8 says that He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.

B. Reasons to Endure Suffering

1. To follow Christ's example, "*since Christ suffered for us.*"
 - a. He died for us, that we might live for righteousness (1 Peter 2:24).
 - b. Is it asking too much that we might be willing to endure hardship for His sake?
2. To please God rather than pursuing lust, "*he who suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.*"
 - a. One who endures hardship for Christ is not likely to allow sin to have dominance in his or her life.
 - b. "One who has embraced the mind of Christ, and whose life is so influenced by Him that he suffers persecution is not in danger of succumbing to the weaker temptations of the flesh. To such an individual these allurements lose their appeal. Martyrs, in the hour of persecution and death, do not toy with temptation or surrender to the seductions of the world!" – Guy N. Woods

C. The Environment of Suffering – Struggle Against Sin (vs. 2-3)

1. Major battle to be fought.
 - a. A battle between one's soul and fleshly lusts (1 Peter 2:12).
 - b. Unless we first win the battle for our own soul, we are not likely to be of much help in winning the souls of others!
 - 1) Therefore we need to remove the plank out of our own eye first (Matthew 7:3-5).
 - 2) Only by first being "spiritual" ourselves are we prepared to help others (Galatians 6:1).
 - c. Many immature Christians begin fighting a "spiritual warfare" with others too soon, and lose the "spiritual warfare" within themselves in the process!
2. Motivation for this struggle against sin.
 - a. We have wasted enough of our lifetime doing what is called "the will of the Gentiles."
 - 1) Briefly summarized in verse 3.
 - 2) What Paul calls the "works of the flesh" in Galatians 5:19-21.
 - b. Now it is time to live out the rest of our life for "the will of God." Briefly summarized in verses 7-11.

D. The Form of Suffering – Maligned by Former Companions (vs. 4-5)

1. Because we no longer join with them in their sin.
2. Unable to persuade us from our new course, they may resort to "speaking evil of you."
3. Some young Christians are troubled by this "peer pressure."
4. But when maligned.
 - a. We have reason to rejoice. Cf. Matthew 5:11-12; 1 Peter 4:13-14.
 - b. Our response is to be one of love and honorable conduct (Matthew 5:44; 1 Peter 2:12).
 - c. Who knows? Perhaps our conduct will lead one day to their glorifying God!

E. The Enduring Power While Suffering – Remember Who is Judge (v. 6)

1. We must remember who is the Judge.
 - a. God is the judge of those who are “outside” (1 Corinthians 5:12-13).
 - b. They will have to “give an account to Him who is ready to judge” (1 Peter 4:5).
2. We must therefore be willing to let God be the judge.
 - a. Leave vengeance to God (Romans 12:19).
 - b. God will apply the “justice” when necessary, we are called upon to offer His “mercy” until then.
 - 1) Through the preaching of the gospel.
 - 2) Through living lives of kindness and mercy (Romans 12:20-21).

GRACEFUL CHURCH MEMBERS (4:7-19)

A. Graceful Stewards (vs. 7-11)

1. **Prayerful stewards** (v. 7).
 - a. Need for prayer: “end of all things is at hand.”
 - b. Prerequisites for prayer.
 - 1) Sound judgment.
 - 2) Sober spirit.
2. **Loving stewards** (v.8).
 - a. Priority of love: “above all.”
 - b. Quality of love: “fervent love.”
 - c. Objects of love: “for one another.”
 - d. Power of love: “covers a multitude of sins.”
3. **Hospitable stewards** (v. 9).
 - a. Objects of hospitality: “to one another.”
 - b. Manner of hospitality: “without complaint.”
4. **Gifted stewards** (vs. 9-10).
 - a. Source of gifts: “God’s manifold grace” (v. 9).
 - b. Purpose of gifts: “serve one another” (v. 10).
5. **Humble stewards** (v. 11).
 - a. Speak God’s oracles.
 - b. Serve in God’s strength.
 - c. Seek in all things God’s glory.

B. Graceful Sufferers (vs. 12-19)

1. **Expectant sufferers:** “do not be surprised” (v. 12a).
2. **Tested sufferers:** “for your testing” (v. 12b).
3. **Joyful sufferers:** “suffering sharers will be glory sharers” (v. 13).
4. **Spirit-blessed sufferers:** “the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you” (v. 14).
5. **“Christian” sufferers** (vs. 15-16).
 - a. Suffer not as an evildoer (v. 15).
 - b. Suffer as a “Christian” (v. 16a).
 - c. Glorify God in the name “Christian” (v. 16b).
6. **Vindicated sufferers** (vs. 17-18).
 - a. Judgment begins with God’s household.
 - b. Judgment ends with greater severity for the wicked.

- c. Salvation is difficult for the righteous.
 - d. More difficult for the wicked.
7. **Committed sufferers** (v. 19).
- a. Sufferers committed to a faithful Creator.
 - b. Sufferers committed to a righteous conduct.

... if you suffer as a christian, do not be ashamed,
but praise God that you bear that name!

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SEVEN:

1. Concerning the Christian being armed with the mind of Christ in 4:1-6, list five things that are significant in the area of suffering.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
2. Two reasons the Christian is willing to suffer are:
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
3. In 4:7-11 Peter talks about “graceful stewards.” What are the five characteristics of the graceful steward?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
4. List the seven descriptions of graceful sufferers in 4:12-19.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____
 - 7) _____

LESSON EIGHT

GRACEFUL SHEPHERDS

INTRODUCTION:

At all times, but especially during persecution, the people of God need good leadership. In His Divine wisdom, the Lord saw fit to organize His church in such a way that the condition He witnessed during His earthly ministry (“like sheep having no shepherd” – Matthew 9:36) should not last for long. His plan calls for local congregations to be overseen by qualified men, known as “elders,” and whose responsibilities were to “shepherd the flock of God.”

In our text (1 Peter 5:1-4), we read of such men, and Peter’s exhortation to them. In this lesson, we shall briefly summarize what is said about elders in the Lord’s church throughout the Scriptures and consider the exhortation given by Peter to the elders in 1 Peter 5:1-4.

LESSON TEXT: 1 Peter 5:1-13

LESSON AIM: We will examine the character, limitations and work of the elders/bishops of the church and the relationship between the church and elders.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Look at Peter’s exhortation to those who are shepherds over the church of God as to the extent of their influence, the description of their work and the character of their work.
 2. See that as “graceful sheep” belonging to God, the church has the obligation to submit to the leaders of the church.
 3. See that we live in the area of grace, stand by the power of grace and wait in anticipation of God calling us to glory.
-

GRACEFUL SHEPHERDS (5:1-4)

“To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve, not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.”

A. Peter’s Exhortation to Elders (v. 1)

1. The basis for this exhortation.

- a. As coming from one who is a fellow elder.
 - 1) Peter could have “commanded” them, using his apostolic authority.
 - 2) But practicing what he will preach in verse 3, Peter chose to “exhort” them as a “fellow elder.”
- b. As coming from one who is a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory that will be revealed.
 - 1) He has certainly been an eyewitness of Christ’s suffering.
 - 2) He has also been a personal partaker of the suffering of Christ as described earlier in 1 Peter 4:13; cf. Acts 5:40-41.
 - 3) He will be a partaker of the same glory referred to later in verse 4.
- 2. The exhortation itself.
 - a. “Shepherd the flock of God.” cf. Ezekiel 34:2-14.
 - 1) To tend (pastor) the people of God; for this reason:
 - a) The elder must be *“able to teach”* (1 Timothy 3:2).
 - b) The elder must be *“able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict”* (Titus 1:9).
 - 2) As Paul told the elders of the church in Ephesus, this involves *“taking heed”* to themselves as well (Acts 20:28-30).
 - b. The extent of influence: *“which is among you.”*
 - 1) Their responsibility is for the sheep in the congregation where they serve.
 - 2) Even as Paul told the Ephesian elders: *“the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers”* (Acts 20:28).
 - 3) The concept of one or more elders (bishops, pastors) over a plurality of churches is foreign to the New Testament.
 - c. The description of work: *“serving as overseers.”*
 - 1) Here the work of elders is summarized: to oversee the flock of God.
 - 2) Peter refers to such over-sight as “serving.”
 - 3) In keeping with what is said later, the role of elder is one of a servant, not a lord.
- 3. The character of oversight:
 - a. **Not by constraint but willingly.**
 - 1) A man cannot be appointed to serve against his will.
 - 2) There is nothing wrong with *“desiring the position”* (1 Timothy 3:1).
 - 3) But the moment he loses the desire to serve willingly, he should step down, for he will not be able to serve as he ought.
 - b. **Not for dishonest gain but eagerly.**
 - 1) An elder may be financially supported for his work (1 Timothy 5:17-18).
 - 2) But the motive for service is not to be money, but an eagerness to save souls!
 - c. **Not as being lords over those entrusted to you.**
 - 1) As implied before, the oversight is a position of service, not to be

- abused by assuming a dictatorial role.
- 2) A sobering thought is that elders are “*entrusted*” with the souls under their care, and they will be called to give an account! (Hebrews 13:17).
 - d. **Being examples to the flock.**
 - 1) Just as sheep are best led, and not driven, so it is with the people of God.
 - 2) Qualified elders will have less problem getting people to follow them and submitting to their care.
 - 3) When elders do not provide examples of spirituality, the flock is more likely to rebel against their leadership.

B. Motivation to Heed this Exhortation

1. First, perhaps a subtle reminder that “**elders**” are also under authority.
 - a. There is one who is “*the Chief Shepherd*” (Jesus) who will one day appear.
 - b. One to whom they will have to give an account (Hebrews 13:17).
2. But more positively, a promise of recognition for faithful service.
 - a. “*You will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.*”
 - b. Like the “*inheritance*” reserved in heaven that “*does not fade away.*” Cf. 1 Peter 1:4.

OUTLINE:

Fellow-shepherds (5:1).

1. Peter, a fellow-elder.
2. Peter, a sharer of suffering and glory.
 - b. Elder – Shepherds (5:1).
 - c. Pastor – Shepherds (5:2).
 - d. Bishop – Shepherds – “*exercising the oversight*” (5:2).
 - e. Willing shepherds – “*not under compulsion, but voluntarily*” (5:2).
 - f. Unselfish shepherds – “*not for sordid gain*” (5:2).
 - g. Eager shepherds – “*but with eagerness*” (5:2).
 - h. Servant shepherds – “*not yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge*” (5:3).
 - I. Model shepherds – “*proving to be examples to the flock*” (5:3).
 - j. Under shepherds – “*when the Chief Shepherd appears*” (5:4).
 - k. Glorified shepherds – “*you will receive the unfading crown of glory*” (5:4).

GRACEFUL SHEEP (5:6-11)

A. Peter Had Already Enjoined Submission

1. Upon Christians in general, to government authorities (1 Peter 2:13-14).
2. Upon Christian slaves, to their masters (1 Peter 2:18).
3. Upon Christian wives, to their husbands (1 Peter 3:1).

B. Now He Enjoins Submission upon Certain Groups

1. Younger Christians, to their elders (1 Peter 5:5a).
 - a. This may be a reference to those “elders” described in verses 1-4.
 - b. Or it may refer to all older Christians.
2. Christians in general, to one another (1 Peter 5:5b; cf. Ep 5:21).

C. Defining Submission

1. The word in the Greek is *hypotasso* – (hoop-ot-as’-so).
2. Various shades of meaning include:
 - a. To arrange under, to subordinate.
 - b. To subject, put in subjection.
 - c. To subject one’s self, obey.
 - d. To submit to one’s control.
 - e. To yield to one’s admonition or advice.
 - f. To obey, be subject.
3. It was also a Greek military term meaning “to arrange [troop divisions] in a military fashion under the command of a leader.”
4. In non-military use, it is “a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden.”

D. Clothed with Humility (vs. 5-7)

1. Humility defined.
 - a. The word used by Peter is the Greek word *tapeinophrosune* (tap-i-nof-ros-oo’-nay).
 - b. It means to have a humble opinion of one’s self; lowliness of mind.
 - c. It is an important quality of that which makes up “the mind of Christ” (cf. Philippians 2:3-5).
2. Humility needed.
 - a. To preserve peace and unity in our relationships with one another.
 - b. To preserve a proper relationship with God.
 - 1) “*God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*”
 - 2) A quotation based upon Proverbs 3:34, and quoted also by James in James 4:6.
 - 3) A person with a humble spirit is highly esteemed by God (cf. Isaiah 57:15; 66:1-2).
 - c. Understanding God’s high estimation of a humble and contrite spirit.
3. Humility commanded:
 - a. “*Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God*” (1 Peter 5:6).
 - 1) That is, to submit to His providential workings in our lives.
 - 2) Even if it means enduring persecution, as was the case in Peter’s day!
 - b. “*Cast all your care upon Him*” (1 Peter 5:7).
 - 1) Do not fret or worry about things over which you have no control.
 - 2) Let your Heavenly Father be concerned about such things.
 - 3) Even as Jesus taught in Matthew 6:31-34.
4. Humility’s reward.

- a. God will give grace (show unmerited favor) to the humble (1 Peter 5:5).
- b. He will exalt the humble in due time (1 Peter 5:6).

E. Watch out for the Devil! (vs. 8-9)

- 1. We have an “adversary.”
 - a. He is called the “devil.”
 - 1) The Greek word is *diabolos* (dee-ab'-ol-os).
 - 2) Meaning “one prone to slander, slanderous, accusing falsely.”
 - b. Peter describes him as a “*roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*”
- 2) What bearing does this verse have on the doctrine of “once saved, always saved?”
- 2) If such a doctrine is true . . .
 - a) Why does Peter bother to warn Christians who cannot be “devoured?”
 - b) Why does Satan bother to seek out those whom he cannot “devour?”
 - c) Indeed, why ANY warnings (and they are legion) to Christians? See Hebrews 3:12-15.
- 3) Because there IS a very real danger of apostasy, we have such warnings!
- 2. We can defeat the “adversary.”
 - a. We need to be serious (“be sober”), and watchful (“be vigilant”) (1 Peter 5:8a; cf. Luke 21:34-36).
 - b. We need to resist the devil (1 Peter 5:9a; cf. James 4:7).
 - c. We need to remain steadfast in the faith (1 Peter 5:9b; cf. Colossians 1:21-23).
 - d. It helps to realize that we are not alone in our struggle (1 Peter 5:9c; cf. 1 Corinthians 10:13).

WE HAVE GOD’S GRACE

A. God Is “*The God of All Grace*” (v. 10)

- 1. His grace is “manifold” (1 Peter 4:10).
- 2. His gifts are varied, so He provides whatever we need in any circumstance (Hebrews 4:16).

B. We Stand in “*The True Grace of God*” (v. 12)

- 1. Our salvation is because of His grace (1 Peter 1:10).
- 2. Those who are saved have “*tasted that the Lord is gracious*” (1 Peter 2:3).

WE ARE GOING TO GLORY

A. God Has “*Called Us to His Eternal Glory*” (v. 10)

- 1. This is the purpose of our calling, to receive the glory that awaits us.
- 2. That glory involves the “. . . inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you” (1 Peter 1:4).

B. The Road to Glory May Involve Suffering

1. It is no different than what Jesus experienced (Luke 24:26).
2. And we can look forward to participating in His glory, if we are willing to suffer with Him (1 Peter 4:13-14).

OUR SUFFERING IS TEMPORARY

A. It Is Only for “a While” (v. 10)

1. Earlier, Peter had said “a little while” (1 Peter 1:6).
2. By their very nature, physical sufferings cannot last forever.

B. Note the Contrast Between Suffering and Glory

1. Suffering is for “a while,” glory is “eternal.”
2. Is not the “glory” worth the “suffering?”
3. The apostle Paul thought so (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

WITH SUFFERING COMES BLESSINGS (v. 10)

A. God Will “Perfect” the Sufferer

1. The word used by Peter means “to equip, to adjust, to fit together.”
2. God “perfects” His people using several tools.
 - a. One is the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
 - b. Gifts were given to the church toward the same end (Ephesians 4:11-16).
3. And suffering is certainly another tool (Romans 5:3-4; James 1:2-4).

B. God Will “Establish” the Faithful Sufferer

1. This means “to fix firmly, to set fast.”
2. Christians need to be steadfast in the faith (1 Peter 5:9; 2 Peter 3:17).
3. Through persecution often comes steadfastness, for the one who has endured suffering for the cause of Christ is not likely to be led away from the truth.

C. God Will “Strengthen”

1. Make one stronger.
2. Which is a normal consequence of enduring trial.

D. God Will “Settle”

1. That is, “to lay a foundation.”
2. The Lord would have us to be solid, like that house built on a rock (Matthew 7:24-27).

CONCLUSION:

1. Peter is confident that for those who remain faithful in suffering, God will bless them in the four ways listed in verse 10.
2. We too can have confidence, knowing that:
 - a. We have God’s grace.
 - b. We are going to glory.

- c. Our suffering is only temporary.
 - d. With suffering comes blessing.
3. It is with such confidence that Peter closes with:
- a. A collection of greetings, from:
 - 1) "Silvanus" – Silas, a traveling companion of Paul.
 - 2) "*She who is in Babylon, elect together with you*" – This is likely a congregation of the Lord's people.
 - a) Either in literal Babylon, located in modern day Iraq.
 - b) Or in figurative Babylon, which could be a reference to either Rome or Jerusalem.
 - 3) "*Mark my son*" – John Mark, nephew of Barnabas, and author of the gospel of Mark.
 - b. An exhortation to love: "*Greet one another with a kiss of love.*"
 - c. And a prayer for peace: "*Peace to all who are in Christ Jesus.*"

May the example of Peter's confidence and hope, as well as his actual teaching found throughout this epistle, serve to help us remain full of hope during our sojourn as pilgrims of God!

"To Him be the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

– 1 Peter 5:11

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON EIGHT:

1. On what two-fold basis did Peter exhort the elders?
1) _____
2) _____
2. What four statements show the character of the exhortation to “Shepherd the flock of God?”
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
3. What two things are given as motivation for the elders to heed Peter’s exhortation?
1) _____
2) _____
4. What in this context is to be the response of the church to her leaders?

5. In verses 8 & 9 what four things are necessary for the Christian to defeat the adversary?
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
6. What four great truths are expressed concerning the Christian and suffering are stated in verse 10?
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

LESSON NINE

PLAN OF EXPERIENCED KNOWLEDGE

INTRODUCTION:

If anybody in the early church knew the importance of being alert, it was the Apostle Peter. He had a tendency in his early years to feel overconfident when danger was near and to overlook the Master's warnings. He rushed ahead when he should have waited; he slept when he should have prayed; he talked when he should have listened. He was a courageous, but careless, Christian.

But he learned his lesson, and he wants to help us learn it too. In his first epistle, Peter emphasized the grace of God (1 Peter 5:12), but in this second letter, his emphasis is on the knowledge of God. The word *know* or *knowledge* is used at least thirteen times in this short epistle. The word does not mean a mere intellectual understanding of some truth, though that is included. It means a living participation in the truth in the sense that our Lord used it in John 17:3 – “*This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.*”

The Second Epistle of Peter is a short but significant part of the New Testament. It was written by Peter, who identifies himself as “*a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ*” (2 Peter 1:1). It was written to those who received his first epistle (2 Peter 3:1; 1 Peter 1:1). It was written shortly before his death (2 Peter 1:12-15).

LESSON TEXT: 2 Peter 1:1-21

LESSON AIM: To see that the whole basis of a person’s relationship to God and to Jesus Christ is founded and stands firmly on knowledge which is experienced knowledge.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn of the date, milieu, occasion and purpose of Second Peter.
 2. Learn and memorize seven graces which are to be added to a Christian’s faith.
 3. Discover the place of apostolic writing in the Christian coming to full knowledge.
-

THE DATE, OCCASION AND PURPOSE

A. The Date of Writing

1. Peter is an old man and death is near (1:12-15).
2. Historical tradition places Peter's death at Rome, approximately 67 A.D.

B. The Occasion of Writing

1. Peter's imminent death moves him to leave a final document (the second letter to them, 3:1) so they can have a permanent record of his teaching and thus confirm their faith and memory (1:12-15).
2. Peter sees through the eyes of the Spirit false teachers who will arise in the church and bring about an apostasy (2:1-2, 12). He feels a need to encourage them to grow in grace and knowledge, to be firm in the "full knowledge of Christ" to be prepared.
3. The false teachers after the apostles' death, will especially oppose the doctrine of the second coming of Christ and Peter defends the delay of that coming while intensifying their hope and desire to await that glorious coming and to be prepared for it (3:1-18).

C. The Purpose of Writing

1. Remind Christians of "full knowledge" and inspire them to apply full knowledge to their lives so they won't fall away, but rather make their calling, election and salvation sure (2 Peter 1:10-13; 3:1-4).
2. Leave Christians a permanent record of his teaching so that it can be studied after his death (2 Peter 1:14-15).
3. Warn and prepare Christians concerning false teachers (2 Peter 2:1-3).
4. Remind Christians of Christ's promise to return again and answer the objections of false teachers concerning the delay of that return (2 Peter 3:1-10).
5. Urge Christians to holy and diligent living in order to prepare them for Christ's coming (2 Peter 3:11-16).
6. Urge Christians to grow in "*grace and knowledge*" that they might remain steadfast to the end (2 Peter 3:17-18).

D. The Recipients – Same as 1 Peter

E. Introduction (1:1-2)

1. Author: Simon Peter, servant and apostle of Jesus Christ (1:1a).
2. Recipients: "... those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours" (1:1b). "*Through the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.*"
3. Salutation and theme (1:2).
 - a. Grace and Peace be multiplied.
 - b. Through the true knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

THE PLAN OF FULL KNOWLEDGE (1:3-21)

A. Gift of the Plan of Full Knowledge (1:3a-4b)

1. **Source** of the gift: “*His divine power*” (1:3a).
2. **Substance** of the gift: “*all things pertaining to life and godliness*” (1:3b).
3. **Medium** of the gift: “*through the full knowledge of Him*” (1:3c).
4. **Calling** of the gift: “*to His own glory and excellence*” (1:3d).
5. **Promises** of the gift: “*precious and magnificent*” (1:4a).
 - a. Partakers of the divine nature.
 - 1) Bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; 1 Corinthians 3:16).
 - 2) By incorporating His love into my life (1 John 4:16).
 - 3) In the resurrection (Philippians 3:20).
6. **Blessings** of the gift: “*... having escaped the corruption in the world by lust*” (1:4b).

B. Growth in the Plan of Full Knowledge (1:5-11)

1. The effort of growth (1:5a).
 - a. “*Applying all diligence.*”
 - b. “*Supply*” (add).
2. The goal of growth (1:5b-7). (Octave of notes for a song of full knowledge).
3. The foundation of growth – FAITH (1:5a). FAITH is “conviction, strong assurance.”
 - a. GOODNESS is “moral excellence, goodness.”
 - b. KNOWLEDGE is “correct insight.”
 - c. SELF-CONTROL is “self-discipline.”
 - d. PERSEVERANCE is “bearing up under trials.”
 - e. GODLINESS is “godly character out of devotion to God.”
 - f. BROTHERLY KINDNESS is “love toward brethren.”
 - g. LOVE is “active goodwill toward those in need.”
4. The importance of growth (v. 8).
 - a. We must “abound” in these seven “graces.”
 - b. Only then can it be said that we are “*... growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.*”
5. Therefore it is something more than simply increasing our “intellectual” knowledge of Jesus Christ!
 - a. Though such knowledge has a place, it is just one of the graces necessary.
 - b. Peter is talking about growing in a FULL AND PERSONAL knowledge of Jesus Christ!
 - 1) Which comes by developing the “Christ-like” attributes defined above.
 - 2) The more we grow in these “graces,” the more we really “know” Jesus (for He is the perfect personification of these “graces”).

6. That it involves more than intellectual knowledge is also evident from the Greek word used for knowledge in 2 Peter 1:2-3, 8.
 - a. The word is *epignosis* (ep-iг'-no-sis), meaning “to become thoroughly acquainted with, to know thoroughly, to know accurately, know well” (Thayer).
 - b. Such knowledge comes only as we DEMONSTRATE these “Christ-like graces” in our lives.
7. Failure to grow in this knowledge results in spiritual “myopia” (blindness) and “amnesia” (loss of memory) (v. 9).
 - a. Our religion is “short-sighted” if we are not growing in the knowledge of Jesus Christ!
 - b. Failure to so grow is an indication that we forgot that we were redeemed by the blood of Christ in the first place!
 - 1) To have our sins forgiven, yes.
 - 2) But then, that we might present ourselves to God and become what He wants us to be – LIKE HIS SON!
8. Results of growth – we will never stumble (vs. 10-11).
 - a. This does not mean we will never sin – cf. 1 John 1:8, 10.
 - b. The word “stumble” in Greek means “to fall into misery, become wretched; the loss of salvation” (Thayer).
 - c. We will never stumble so as to fall short of our ultimate salvation!
 - d. But this is true ONLY if we are “giving all diligence” to grow in the knowledge of Christ and thereby “making our calling and election sure.”
9. An entrance into the “everlasting kingdom” will be abundantly supplied (v. 11).
 - a. This “everlasting kingdom” is likely the “heavenly kingdom” referred to by Paul in 2 Timothy 4:8.
 - b. In other words, the ultimate destiny of the redeemed!
 - c. What is meant by the idea of an “abundant entrance?”
 - 1) “You may be able to enter, not as having escaped from a shipwreck, or from fire, but as it were in triumph.” (Bengel)
 - 2) By possessing the seven graces, we will be able to live victoriously in this life and to joyously anticipate what lies ahead – cf. 2 Timothy 4:6-8

C. The Ground of the Plan of Full Knowledge (1:12-21)

1. By **apostolic reminder** (vs. 12-13).
 - a. Remind of truths already known by readers (v. 12).
 - b. Stir up minds to remembrance is an apostolic duty (v. 13).
 - c. Leave a permanent document after death (vs. 14-15). (“Departure” is the word “exodus”).
2. From **apostolic testimony** (vs. 16-19).
 - a. Not myth but eyewitness truth (v. 16).
 - b. The sight and sound of the Transfiguration of Jesus (vs. 17-18).
 - c. The prophetic word made more sure (v. 19).

- 1) Like a lamp shining in a dark place.
- 2) Until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.
3. Through the **inspiration of the Holy Spirit** (vs. 20-21).
 - a. Prophecy of Scripture is not one's own interpretation (v. 20).
 - b. Prophecy is not made by an act of human will (v. 21a).
 - c. Prophecy occurs when men speak from God as moved by the Holy Spirit (v. 21b).

THE TESTIMONY OF APOSTOLIC EYEWITNESSES (vs. 16-18)

A. Their Testimony Was Not Cunningly Devised Fables

1. As found in other translations:
 - a. “*We were not following cleverly devised legends*” (Weymouth).
 - b. “*For they were no fictitious stories that we followed*” (Goodspeed).
 - c. “*It was not on tales artfully spun that we relied*” (NEB).
2. If what they claim did not happen, the only reasonable alternative!
 - a. Either they were telling the truth.
 - b. Or they were carefully and purposely fabricating lies!

B. Their Testimony Was That of Eyewitnesses

1. They claimed to be “eyewitnesses” of what they made known concerning Jesus’ coming and power!
2. As “eyewitnesses” they could not have been deceived.
 - a. Their interaction with Jesus was too intimate.
 - b. As Peter said to the household of Cornelius: “*...who ate and drank with him after he arose from the dead*” (Acts 10:41).
 - c. As John wrote in his first epistle: “*...which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life*” (1 John 1:1).

C. A Sample of Their Eyewitness Testimony

1. The event that occurred at “The Mount of Transfiguration” (Matthew 17:1-9; Mark 9:2-9; Luke 9:28-36).
2. An event which depicted the power, majesty, honor and glory Jesus possessed.
 - a. It heralds the majesty of Jesus.
 - b. It illustrates the nature of their testimony.
 - 1) They “saw” Jesus transfigured before them, and joined with Moses and Elijah.
 - 2) They “heard” the voice which came from the “Excellent Glory” (God the Father).
3. The fact that this event, was seen by a plurality of witnesses (“WE were with Him”) serves to strengthen the force of their testimony.
 - The foundation of our precious faith, then, rests upon the testimony of the apostles. Even Jesus realized this would be the case (cf. John 17:20).

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON NINE:

1. Give the date of the writing of Second Peter: _____
2. What is the occasion of Peter writing this final epistle?

3. There are at least six things that reflect the purpose of Peter writing. List these six things.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____
4. List the seven graces in verses 5-7 with a brief definition of each.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____
7) _____
5. What is Peter's emphasis in this epistle? _____
6. What is the result of failing to grow in knowledge in this context?

7. What is the two-fold promise/result of growth in verses 10-11?
1) _____
2) _____

LESSON TEN

APOSTASY FROM FULL KNOWLEDGE

INTRODUCTION:

 ne of the most successful rackets in the world today is that of selling “fake art.” Even some of the finest galleries and private collections have been invaded by paintings that are clever counterfeits of the great masters. Publishers have also had their share of hoaxes, purchasing “genuine” manuscripts that weren’t so genuine after all.

But counterfeits are nothing new. Satan is the “great imitator” (2 Corinthians 11:13-15), and he has been hard at work ever since he deceived Eve in the Garden (Genesis 3:1-7; 2 Corinthians 11:1-4). He has false Christians (Matthew 13:38; John 8:44), a false gospel (Galatians 1:6-9), and even a false righteousness (Romans 9:30-10:4).

The nation of Israel was constantly being led astray by false prophets. Elijah had to contend with the prophets of Baal, but they promoted a pagan religion. It was the *Jewish* false prophets who did the most damage, for they claimed to speak for Jehovah God. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel exposed this counterfeit ministry, but the people followed the pseudo-prophets just the same. Why? Because the religion of the false prophets was easy, comfortable, and popular. The fact that the false prophets preached a false peace did not worry the people (Jeremiah 6:14). That was the message they wanted to hear!

The apostles and prophets laid the foundation for the church and then passed from the scene (Ephesians 2:20). This is why Peter wrote about false teachers, because there are still false teachers in the church and Peter wanted us to be alert to the danger of being led astray. Before we get into chapter two and false teachers lets look at 1:19-21.

LESSON TEXT: 2 Peter 1:19 – 2:3

LESSON AIM: To understand the character and danger of false teachers.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Review the concept of the “sure work of prophecy.”
 2. Study the prediction of Peter relating to false prophets as to their character, methods and destructiveness.
 3. Discover the difference between a “false teacher” and someone who happens to teach error out of ignorance.
-

THE TESTIMONY OF DIVINELY ORIGINATED PROPHECY (1:19-21)

A. The Certainty of the Prophetic Word. “*We also have the prophetic word made more sure*” (vs. 19).

1. The divine assurance of all prophecy. How the words of the prophets were made more sure.
 - a. Peter is a prophet also.
 - 1) His word is of prophetic quality.
 - 2) He was inspired by the Holy Spirit.
 - 3) He revealed God’s will by inspiration.
 - 4) His word is prophecy just like the word of the Old Testament prophets.
 - b. Peter is saying here, we apostles have the prophetic word even more sure than the Old Testament prophets.
 - c. The Old Testament prophets only point by vision to the future.
 - 1) They saw it dimly, not with all of the details.
 - 2) Not with absolute knowledge.
 - 3) They saw parts of what would happen.
 - d. The apostles wrote what they actually saw.
 - 1) They saw the Messiah come in flesh.
 - 2) They touched Him. They walked with Him. They saw the miracles that He performed. They heard the teaching that He gave.
 - 3) They are eyewitnesses of what they talk about.
 - e. The Old Testament prophets were not eyewitnesses of Jesus. They never saw Him except in a vision or a dream. But the apostles saw Him in the flesh. And that makes their prophecy even more certain.
2. Old Testament prophets’ words are certain.
“Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:20).
 - a. Old Testament prophets when they prophesied, were not prophesying their own ideas.
 - b. The ideas they gave did not originate with them. Nor was it their interpretation of what they thought God’s will was.
 - c. It was actually God’s word because they spoke only what the Holy Spirit moved them to say.
 - d. Because the Holy Spirit guarantees it as God’s word.
3. New Testament prophets’ words are certain.
 - a. They had the Holy Spirit as the Old Testament prophets did to remind them of what they saw and remind them of what they heard.
 - b. John 14:26 – *“I will send you another comforter, a counselor, and he will remind you of everything I told you.”*
 - c. John 16:12-13 – *“I have many things to tell you, but you are not ready to bear them now but when the Holy Spirit is come he will guide you into all the truth.”*

- d. First Corinthians 14:37 – “*The things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.*” Cf. Galatians 1:7; 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

STUDY NOTES:

A. True Knowledge Was Delivered Through the Prophets of God

- 1. The source of true knowledge (1:16-21). – Two sources:
 - a. Eyewitness of the apostles (vs. 16-18).
 - b. Witness of prophecy (vs. 17-21).
- 2. The apostles were the channels of authority – they heard and saw.
- 3. Prophecy confirms the eyewitness accounts.
- 4. The prophet told exactly what God said. They did not give their own interpretations. Cf. Jeremiah 23:16; Ezekiel 13:3.
- 5. Men spoke not of their own knowledge or feeling but knowledge from God.

B. The Charge to Pay Heed

“*Which you do well to heed as a light that shines. . .*”

- 1. Christians should still carefully study the Old Testament Scriptures.
- 2. Paul commanded Timothy to do so (2 Timothy 3:14-15).
- 3. Their value is like “a light that shines in a dark place.”
 - a. Like apostolic testimony, they help to confirm our faith in Jesus.
 - b. They also help the Christian become “*wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus*” (2 Timothy 3:15).
 - c. They are therefore a source for developing patience, comfort and hope (Romans 15:4).
- 4. And they will serve such purpose “*until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.*”
 - a. A likely reference to the coming of our Lord, described by John as “*the Bright and Morning Star*” (Revelation 22:16).
 - b. Whose coming will be seen by all (“every eye will see Him”), but will be appreciated most fully “in the hearts” of those who anxiously await Him!

C. Understanding the Origin of Prophecy

- 1. Its source is not the mind of man.
 - a. “*No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation.*”
 - 1) “*No prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation*” (RSV; cf. KJV, NKJV, NASB, and JB).
 - 2) “*No prophecy of Scripture ever came about by a prophet’s own ideas*” (SEB; cf. NIV).
 - b. Both the immediate context (v. 21) and the remote context (1 Peter 1:10-12) of Peter’s comments support the latter translation.
 - c. “*For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*” (vs.21)
 - 1) This explains what Peter meant in verse 20.
 - 2) Thus the prophecies of the Old Testament were not the views or concepts of mere men, but the expressions of Spirit inspired spokesmen for God!

3. Realizing this, their fulfilled prophecies serve to strengthen our faith . . .
 - a. In the Old Testament as the inspired word of God!
 - b. In Jesus as the Messiah, of Whom the inspired prophets wrote!

THE DESTRUCTIVENESS OF FALSE TEACHERS (2:1-3)

As we enter the second chapter, we find Peter's attention turned to "false teachers" and the need to beware of them. Just as there were "false prophets" in Old Testament times, we can expect "false teachers" in our day (2 Peter 2:1).

A. Old Testament Examples

1. Zedekiah and Micaiah (1 Kings 22).
 - a. Zedekiah the false prophet predicted victory for king Ahab.
 - b. Micaiah, God's prophet, predicted defeat for king Ahab.
2. Hananiah and Jeremiah (Jeremiah 28).
 - a. Hananiah, a false prophet, prophesied what the kings wanted to hear.
 - b. Jeremiah, God's true prophet, prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity of all the people.
 - c. Hananiah deliberately lied to the people.

B. New Testament Examples and Warnings

1. Jesus predicted the coming of false prophets and teachers (Matthew 24:11; Matthew 7:15-16).
2. Paul predicted that false prophets would come (1 Timothy 4:1-2; Acts 20:29).
3. The term for "false teacher" is *pseudodidaskalos* (psyoo-dod-id-as'-kal-os) and is defined as "a spurious teacher, i.e. propagator of erroneous Christian doctrine – false teacher."
 - a. In the Bible, the term is found only in this passage.
 - b. Peter's use of it and his description of these "false teachers" throughout this chapter strongly suggests that it means more than simply someone who happens to teach error out of ignorance of the truth (such as someone sincerely mistaken). He has in mind those who know full well what they are doing and are purposely trying to mislead others!
4. While it may be true that there are "blind leaders of the blind" (Matthew 15:13-14), Peter is not describing "blind leaders" per se, but individuals much more sinister!

C. Their Destructive Heresies (2:1-2)

1. Defining "heresy."
 - a. The word in Greek is *heresies* (hah'-ee-res-is) which means:
 - 1) Choosing, choice, an opinion.
 - 2) That which is chosen.
 - 3) A body of men following their own tenets (sect or party), used of:
 - a) Sadducees – Acts 5:17.
 - b) Pharisees – Acts 15:5.
 - c) Christians – Acts 24:5.

- 4). Dissensions arising from diversity of opinions and aims (e.g., denominational division as it exists today).
- b. It not only refers to a “sect” or “party,” but sometimes to the doctrine(s) that produce the division.
- c. That seems to be the way Peter uses it here: referring to the doctrines the false teachers would “bring in” that would cause division.
- 2. Describing the heresy (v.1). “*Even denying the Lord who bought them.*”
- a. This may refer to either:
 - 1) What their doctrine promoted.
 - 2) What their doctrine produced in those who followed it.
- b. We know that soon after Peter wrote there were those (precursors of the “Gnostics”) who literally denied some things about the Lord. Cf. 2 John 7.
- c. Were these “false teachers” at one time true Christians?
 - 1) The phrase “*who bought them*” certainly suggests so! Cf. Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Peter 1:18-19.
 - 2) They are later described as those who had “*escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior*” (2 Peter 2:20).

D. The Fruit of Their Destructive Doctrines (2:2)

- 1. “*Many will follow their destructive ways.*”
- a. Instead of following the Lord as they should.
- b. Who is the only way of salvation.
- c. Thus separating themselves from the true source of salvation.
- 2. “*The way of truth will be blasphemed.*”
- a. Those in the world will speak evil of those who profess to follow Christ, thinking that the false teachers are a fair representation of Christianity (“If that is what it means to be Christian. . .”).
- b. Or they will speak evil of the divisions that will occur (“Hey, if you Christians have the truth, why can’t you agree on what it is?”).

E. Their Destructive Methods (2:1, 3)

- 1. They will work “secretly” (v. 1).
 - a. “. . .*who will secretly bring in destructive heresies.*”
 - b. Knowing that error cannot stand the light of the truth, they will resort to working behind the scenes.
 - c. Truth has nothing to fear from investigation, so if one believes they have the truth they will not object to open and fair evaluation.
 - d. If a teacher is not willing to let his doctrine be examined openly by others, let that be a warning sign!
- 2. They will appeal to covetousness (2:3).
 - a. “*By covetousness they will exploit you. . .*”
 - b. Trained in covetousness themselves, they will allure through this “lust of the flesh.” Cf. 2 Peter 2:14, 18.

- c. They will offer things that the flesh often desires: wealth, health, power, influence.
- d. This is a lot like the “gospel of health and wealth” of modern times.
- 3. They will use deceptive words (v. 3).
 - a. *“...they will exploit you with deceptive words.”*
 - b. Peter later adds *“...they speak great swelling words of emptiness”* (2 Peter 2:18).
 - c. They will be smooth talkers, who know exactly what they are doing – deceiving those who follow them!
 - d. If a person cannot give you “book, chapter, and verse,” but must appeal to “theological mumble-jumble,” watch out!

NOTE: With this awareness of the false teachers’ “modus operandi,” we are less likely to be deceived by them. Of course, being well-grounded in the truth of the gospel is the best protection against being misled!

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TEN:

1. The source of “true knowledge” is from what two sources?
1) _____
2) _____
2. What two Old Testament examples are used to illustrate the fact of false prophets?
1) _____
2) _____
3. What motive was the prophecy of Hananiah based? Jeremiah’s?
1) _____
2) _____
4. What was the particular “heresy” these false teachers in 2 Peter 2 were promoting?

5. What are two results of the destructive doctrines of the false teachers?
1) _____
2) _____
6. List three destructive methods used by the false teachers to promote their heresies.
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

LESSON ELEVEN

APOSTASY FROM KNOWLEDGE (2) PUNISHMENT OF APOSTASY

INTRODUCTION:

eter saw no hope for these apostates; their doom was sealed. His attitude was different from that of “tolerant” religious people today who say, “Well, they may not agree with us, but there are many roads to heaven.” Peter made it clear that these false teachers had “forsaken the right way” (2 Peter 2:15), which simply means they were going the *wrong* way! Their judgment was sure, even though it had not yet come. The trial was over, but the sentence had not yet been executed. It would not linger or slumber, Peter affirmed; it would come in due time.

In warning that “false teachers” will arise, leading many to follow their destructive ways, Peter also spoke of their coming judgment:

- a. “*...bring on themselves swift destruction*” (2 Peter 2:1).
- b. “*...for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber*” (2 Peter 2:3).

To illustrate that the “false teachers” face certain condemnation, Peter gives three examples of the righteous judgment of God in the past:

- a. The angels who sinned (2 Peter 2:4).
 - b. The ancient world (2 Peter 2:5).
 - c. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (2 Peter 2:6-9).
-

LESSON TEXT: 2 Peter 2:4-19

LESSON AIM: To understand that God holds false teachers responsible for their heresies and will execute judgment upon them.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Study three examples of God’s righteous judgment in the past.
 2. Come to know that God delivers the godly out of temptations and trials.
 3. Learn of the character of these false teachers and how they relate to modern teachers of false doctrines.
-

PUNISHMENT OF APOSTASY (2:3-9)

A. Punishment of False Teachers (2:3)

1. Their judgment from long ago is not idle.
2. Their destruction is not asleep.

B. The Angels Who Sinned (v. 4)

1. The circumstances of the angels' judgment!
 - a. God did not spare them, “...but cast them down to hell.”
 - 1) The word for “hell” is *tartaroo* (tar-tar-o'-o).
 - 2) “Tartarus, thought of by the Greeks as a subterranean place lower than Hades where divine punishment was meted out, was so regarded in Jewish apocalyptic as well” (BAG, p. 813).
 - 3) Peter may have simply chosen to use this well-known concept to convey the point that the angels are in a place of torment.
 - b. God “...delivered them to chains of darkness.”
 - 1) The NIV says “gloomy dungeons,” which is a possible translation.
 - 2) Jude describes it as “everlasting chains under darkness” (Jude 6).
 - c. There they remain, “...reserved for judgment.”
 - 1) As Jude puts it: “...for the judgment of the great Day” (Jude 6).
 - 2) Similar to the description of Jesus in Luke 16:19-31, where the wicked rich man was in torment awaiting the judgment at the Last Day.

NOTE: Peter's argument here is “from the greater to the lesser.” If God did not spare angels who beheld His glory when they sinned, He will certainly punish false teachers who purposely lead His people astray!

C. The Ancient World (v. 5)

1. God used the flood to judge the ungodly.
 - a. The “ancient world” is that antediluvian world described in Genesis 6:5-7, 11-12.
 - 1) In which “the wickedness of man was great in the earth.”
 - 2) Where “every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”
 - 3) And where the earth was “corrupt before God” and “filled with violence.”
 - 4) Which so grieved God that He found it necessary to destroy both man and beast.
 - b. Again, Peter's argument is “from the greater to the lesser.”

NOTE: If God destroyed the whole world because of their ungodliness will He not destroy these false teachers who “deny the Lord who bought them?”

2. But God spared Noah.
 - a. The same flood that was used to destroy the world was used to spare Noah! (1 Peter 3:20).
 - 1) God took notice of Noah (Genesis 6:8; 7:1).
 - 2) Noah was one who walked with God, even in the midst of a perverse generation.

- 3) He was a “preacher of righteousness,” both in deed and word.
- b. So while God was bringing judgment upon the ungodly.
 - 1) He did not lose sight of the godly!
 - 2) He provided for their deliverance from the judgment that came!

NOTE: In this way we are encouraged to remain faithful in two ways: not only will God bring doom upon the false teachers, but He will preserve those who remain faithful.

D. The Cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (vs. 6-9)

- 1. God turned them into ashes.
 - a. This judgment is described vividly in Genesis 19:24-28.
 - b. Why this terrible judgment?
 - 1) Jude says it was because they had “*given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh*” (Jude 7).
 - 2) The LORD said it was “*because their sin is very grievous*” (Genesis 18:20).
 - 3) We see a sample of it in Genesis 19:4-11.
 - c. Both Peter and Jude make the point that Sodom and Gomorrah are an example.
 - 1) An example “*to those who afterward would live ungodly*” (2 Peter 2:6).
 - 2) An example of those “*suffering the vengeance of eternal fire*” (Jude 7).
- 2. But God delivered righteous Lot.
 - a. Here is another example of how God does not lose sight of His faithful when He brings judgment upon the ungodly.
 - b. Lot was delivered because he was “righteous,” an adjective used three times by Peter.
 - 1) “Righteous Lot” – 2 Peter 2:7.
 - 2) “That righteous man” – 2 Peter 2:8.
 - 3) “His righteous soul” – 2 Peter 2:8.
 - c. He “was oppressed with the filthy conduct of the wicked.”
 - d. His soul was “*tormented. . . from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds.*”
 - e. Like Noah, Lot had been “*righteous before Me in this generation*” – cf. Genesis 7:1.

E. Peter’s Assurance to Christians Summarized in Verse 9

- 1. “*The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations.*”
 - a. As shown in the example of Noah and Lot.
 - b. This should encourage us to remain faithful to the Lord.
- 2. “*. . . and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment.*”
 - a. As illustrated in the three cases we have considered.
 - b. Note that the unjust are reserved “under punishment” for the day of judgment.

- 1) This suggests that the wicked are tormented during the “intermediate state” between death and the resurrection.
- 2) As illustrated in the story of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31).
- c. Should this not warn those who may be tempted to follow after false teachers?

NOTE: What can we conclude from this section of Scripture? The judgment and destruction of false teachers does not slumber. God’s judgments in the past guarantee that there is the day of judgment in the future! Those who remain faithful to the Lord will be spared like Noah and Lot were!

THE PICTURE OF APOSTASY (vs. 10-19)

A. The Character of the False Teachers

1. **Their sensuality** – indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires (2:10a).
2. **Their arrogance (2:10b-11).**
 - a. Despise authority.
 - b. Daring, self-willed.
 - c. Do not tremble to revile angelic majesties, when God’s angels, who are greater in might and power do not bring reviling judgments against angels.
3. **Their animal-like cruelty (2:12-13a).**
 - a. Like unreasoning animals, they revile without knowledge.
 - 1) Born as creatures of instinct.
 - 2) Born to be captured and killed.
 - b. Like the destruction of those creatures they will also be destroyed.
4. **Their selfish deception (2:13b-19).**
 - a. They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime (2:13b).
 - 1) They are stains and blemishes in your love feasts.
 - 2) They revel in their deceptions while they carouse as they feast with you.
 - b. Their eyes are full of adultery that never cease from sin (2:14).
 - 1) They entice unstable souls.
 - 2) Their heart is trained in greed.
 - 3) They are accursed children.
 - c. They love the wages of unrighteousness (2:15-16).
 - 1) Forsaking the right way they go astray.
 - 2) Follow in the way of Balaam, the son of Beor.
 - a) They loved the wages of unrighteousness.
 - b) He was rebuked by a dumb donkey.
 - d. Springs without water, mists driven by a storm toward black darkness (2:17-19).
 - 1) Speak arrogant words of vanity and entice by fleshly desires and sensuality those who are new converts (2:18).

- 2) Promise freedom while being slaves of corruption. A man is a slave of that which overcomes him (2:19).

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ELEVEN:

1. What three examples does Peter use to illustrate God's sure punishment on the false prophets in the church?

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

2. List four things which show the character of the false teachers bothering the church in Peters time.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

LESSON TWELVE

THE HOPE OF FULL KNOWLEDGE

INTRODUCTION:

 “everybody is ignorant,” said Will Rogers, “only on different subjects.” How true, and yet that is not the whole story because there is more than one kind of ignorance. Some people are ignorant because of lack of opportunity to learn, or perhaps lack of ability to learn; others are (to use Peter’s phrase in 2 Peter 3:5) “willingly . . . ignorant.” “Not ignorance, but ignorance of ignorance, is the death of knowledge,” said a famous philosopher, and he is right.

Peter has dealt with the character and conduct of the false prophets in 2 Peter 2, and now he deals with their false teaching. Peter affirmed the certainty of Christ’s coming in glory (2 Peter 1:16ff), a truth that the false teachers questioned and denied. In fact, they were scoffing at the very idea of the return of the Lord and the judgment of the world.

How important it is for us as Christians to understand God’s truth! Today we are surrounded by scoffers, people who refuse to take the Bible seriously when it speaks about Christ’s return and the certainty of judgment. In chapter three Peter admonished his readers to understand three important facts about God and the promise of Christ’s coming. 1) God’s word is true, 2) God’s work is consistent, and 3) God’s will is merciful.

LESSON TEXT: 2 Peter 3:1-18

LESSON AIM: To understand the assurance of hope which must be defended and held on to by every Christian.

LESSON OBJECTIVES: You will . . .

1. Learn of the plight of those who abandon the great hope found in Jesus Christ.
 2. Investigate the arguments of the doubters and the answers given by Peter to refute those arguments.
 3. Study the description of the second coming of Christ and the response that is required by all men.
-

PRODUCT OF APOSTASY (2:20-22)

A. The Ultimate Outcome of Apostasy

The last state becomes worse than the first (2:2).

1. If they escape the defilements of the world by the full knowledge of the Lord,
2. And afterwards are again entangled in them and overcome.
3. The last state is worse for them than the first.

B. The Tragedy of Unused Knowledge. Better not to have “fully known” the way of righteousness (2:21-22).

1. Better not to fully know than to turn away from the holy commandment delivered to them (2:21).
2. They are worse off now than before (vs. 20-22).
 - a. Dog returns to its own vomit.
 - b. Like the true proverbs (2:22).
 - c. Sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire.
3. Their latter end is worse than their beginning. Cf. Luke 12:47-48.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

Were These False Teachers Once True Christians?

1. They were “*denying the Lord who bought them*” (2 Peter 2:1).
 - a. These are souls who at one time had been “*bought by the Lord*.”
 - b. Peter had written in his first epistle that we are redeemed (bought back) by the precious blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:18-19).
 - c. Thus, these are souls who at one time were “blood bought individuals.”
2. “*They have forsaken the right way and gone astray*” (2 Peter 2:15).
 - a. The implication here is that they were once on the right way.
 - b. It is impossible to forsake something you never had, or to go astray if you were always lost.
3. “...*they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome*” (2 Peter 2:20).
 - a. Compare: “*having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust*” (2 Peter 1:4).
 - 1) What was said of Christians at the beginning of the epistle. . .
 - 2) . . .is now used to describe these false teachers!
 - b. They had escaped the pollutions of the world “*through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*” (2 Peter 2:20).
 - 1) Remember that this “knowledge” includes such things as listed in (2 Peter 1:5-8).
 - 2) Through such “saving” knowledge, then, they had escaped, but are now enslaved again.
4. “...*it has happened to them according to the true proverb*” (2 Peter 2:22).
 - a. They like dogs have returned to what they had gotten rid of at one point, and are like a washed sow returning to wallowing in the mire.
 - b. Some try to say these proverbs reveal that these false teachers were always “dogs” and “hogs,” never truly changed on the inside, which explains their returning to the vomit and mire.

- c. But in the overall context of this chapter, that seems to be straining the purpose of the proverbs.

HOPE OF FULL KNOWLEDGE (3:1-17)

A. Defense of the Hope of Full Knowledge (3:1-9)

1. Predictions of doubters of the second coming of Christ (3:1-3).
 - a. Peter's second letter of reminder: "*stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder*" (3:1).
 - b. The predictions of the prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through the apostles (3:2).
 - c. Peter's own prediction (3:3).
 - 1) In the last days mockers will come mocking the second coming.
 - 2) These mockers will follow after their own lusts.
2. The argument of the doubters of Christ's second coming (3:4).
 - a. The **failure of the promise**: "*Where is this coming he promised?*"
 - b. The **uniformity of nature**: "*Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.*"
3. Answers to the arguments of the doubters (3:5-9).
 - a. Refutation of the argument of uniformity (3:5-7).
 - 1) They overlook the formation of the heavens and the earth in the beginning. The earth was formed out of water and by water all by God's word (3:5).
 - 2) They overlook the destruction of the world by water during the flood (3:6).
 - 3) They fail to realize that the same word is reserving the present heavens and earth for fire for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men (3:7).
 - b. Refutation of argument of the failure of the promise (3:8-10a).
 - 1) Time is relative with God (not absolute): "*One day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*" (3:8).
 - 2) Delay is not slackness but patience (3:9).
 - a) The Lord is not slow as some count slowness.
 - b) God's patience gives time for all to avoid perishing and to come to repentance.
 - 3) Uncertainty of time allows surprise: "*the day of the Lord will come like a thief*" (3:10a).

B. Description of the Hope (3:10-13)

1. The suddenness of the Second Coming: "*the day of the Lord will come like a thief*" (3:10a.).
2. The destruction of the Second Coming (3:10b-12).
 - a. The heavens will pass away with a roar.
 - b. The elements will be destroyed with intense heat.
 - c. The earth and its works will be burned up.
 - d. All of these things are to be destroyed (3:11-12).

- 1) Such destruction demands holy conduct.
- 2) Such destruction demands godliness.
- 3) Such destruction demands vigilant watchfulness.
- 4) Such destruction demands desire for that day (hastening) to come.
- e. The heavens will be destroyed by burning (3:12b).
- f. The elements will melt with intense heat (3:12c).
3. The promised desire of the Second Coming (3:13).
 - a. According to His promise.
 - b. We look for new heavens and a new earth.
 - c. Wherein dwells righteousness.

C. Duty of the Hope (3:14-18a)

1. Duty of diligence (3:14a).
2. Duty to be found in Christ in peace, spotless and blameless (3:14b).
3. Duty to consider the Lord's patience to be salvation (3:15-16).
 - a. As the beloved brother Paul wrote to you (in God's wisdom).
 - b. As Paul wrote in all of his letters.
 - 1) Some of which is difficult to understand.
 - 2) Which the untaught and unstable distort, as the other Scriptures also, to their own destruction.
4. Duty to be on guard against false teachers (3:17).
 - a. Remember these predictions.
 - b. Do not be carried away by their error.
 - c. Do not fall from your own steadfastness.
5. Duty of growing in grace and knowledge (3:18a).

CONCLUSION:

3:18b – “*To Him (our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ) be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*”

It was not long after Peter penned these words that he “put off his tent” (2 Peter 1:14), and joined that great multitude described by his fellow apostle John.

“*After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!*” (Revelation 7:9-10).

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWELVE:

1. What illustration does Peter use to show the tragic state of the false teachers?

2. Give four statements in chapter two which would indicate that these false teachers were once true Christians.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

3. What are the two arguments given by the scoffers to prove that there would be no second coming?

1) _____

2) _____

4. What three answers does Peter give to the argument of uniformity?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

5. Give the three-point refutation of the argument of the failure of the promise to return.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Study Guide

Ted Stewart



Ted Stewart grew up in the Central Church of Christ in Amarillo, Texas. He attended Abilene Christian College (now University) where he received his Bachelor and Master Degrees in Bible. Ted served as a missionary in Sao Paulo, Brazil for thirteen years before returning to the States to preach and teach Bible at Abilene Christian University. In 1976 he became an instructor in the Sunset International Bible Institute.

Ted and Dot have four children. In 2003 his book on the chronology of Egyptian history entitled "*Solving the Exodus Mystery*" was published. He has traveled to Turkey to see the site of Noah's Ark and has produced a video on the veracity of the site. Until his retirement in 2002 he lectured on Christian Apologetics at many churches, presenting the case for the reliability of the Bible and the existence of God.

A Commentary on the New Testament Epistles of Peter, John, and Jude, by Guy N. Woods, published by the Gospel Advocate Company, serves as the textbook for this course.



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