

First Baptist Church Publications



Outline on Second Peter

Eight Steps To
Spiritual Growth

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Book of 2 Peter

By Pastor Dr. Ronnie Wolfe – Beginning 5-20-2012

EIGHT STEPS TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Authorship.

1. Peter is the author of this book. If he is not, this book is written by a liar; for he says that he is the apostle Peter. Many so-called scholars agree together to Peter definitely did not write this book, but they are in error as is evident from the following facts:
2. They say that the name Simon Peter here is a pseudonym, or a false name. It is not; otherwise, this author would be a liar.
3. This author refers to his death in 2 Peter 1:14 *Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.* This is evidently a reference to our Lord's words in John 21:17-19 *He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. 19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.*
4. He claimed to have been with the Lord on the Mount of Transfiguration: 2 Peter 1:16-18
5. He claimed to have written another epistle: 2 Peter 3:1
6. Many say that Peter copies portions from the book of Jude, but 2 Peter was written before Jude was written, and it seems that the false teachers are future in 2 Peter (2:1-3; and 12) and are present in the book of Jude.
7. Probably written about 66 AD.

B. Background

1. Gnosticism had gained hold among the believers.
 - a. Gnosticism: The word "gnostic" means "learned, or to know."
 - b. Gnostics had much carnal knowledge but thought little of spiritual knowledge.
2. Antinomianism was prominent in believers
 - a. Antinomianism: Christian doubting the force of laws: in Christian doctrine, the belief that Christians are not bound by established moral laws, but should rely on faith and divine grace for salvation and living; that is, no keeping of God's law but having freedom to do whatever one wants without any punishment.
 - b. Peter speaks of it in 2:1-2 and 3:3

II. EIGHT STEPS TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH

A. Step One – Obtain like Precious Faith, 1:1-4

1. Peter says that “we have obtained like precious faith.”
2. This is through the righteousness of God and Christ, 1
3. In Hebrews 11:1 we have the very definition of this faith: *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*
4. Faith is spoken of throughout the whole world: Rom. 1:8 *First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.*
5. Faith is counted for righteousness: Rom. 4:5 *But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.*
6. In order to grow in spiritual things, you must obtain this faith.
 - a. Eph 1:13 *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,*
 - b. Acts 16:31 *And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*
 - c. John 6:47 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.*
 - d. Rom 3:28 *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*
 - e. Heb 11:7 *By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.*
 - f. Rom 10:17 *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*
 - (1) So you must hear the gospel of salvation, the message of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ
 - (2) You must repent and believe: Acts 20:21 *Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*
 - g. So, the first step to spiritual growth is to obtain like precious faith.
 - h. By this faith we are given great and precious promises and a divine nature, 4

B. Second Step: Add to Your Faith, 1:5-9

1. Now that we have faith, we need to add
 - a. Salvation uses all four parts of math
 - b. Subtraction: Col 3:9 *Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;*
 - c. Division: 1 Cor 12:11 *But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.*
 - d. Multiplication: Jude 1:2 *Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.*
 - e. Addition: And here in our text: “add to your faith” 5.

2. Add To Your Faith
 - a. Add to your faith Virtue: *any particular moral excellence, as modesty, purity*
 - b. Add to your Virtue Knowledge: *the deeper more perfect and enlarged knowledge of this religion, such as belongs to the more advanced*
 - c. Add to your Knowledge Temperance: *self-control (the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions, esp. his sensual appetites)*
 - d. Add to your Temperance Patience: *a patient enduring, sustaining, perseverance*
 - e. Add to your Patience Godliness: *piety towards God, reverence, respect*
 - f. Add to your Godliness Brotherly Kindness: *in the NT the love which Christians cherish for each other as brethren*
 - g. Add to your Brotherly Kindness Charity: *affection, good will, love, benevolence*
3. Faith brings abundance and growth, 8-9
 - a. "If these things be in you" means that there are probably believers who do not have all of these things in them. We must grow into them.
 - b. You will not be barren: Barren – *lazy, shunning the labour which one ought to perform*
 - c. You will not be unfruitful, meaning *unyielding, not producing what one should produce*. 8
 - d. Knowledge is what our fruit should be, 8, knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
4. Some believers are blind, 9
 - a. If you lack these things; that is, these additions to your faith,
 - b. You will be blind; that is, myopic (cannot see afar off--muopazo).
 - c. To be blind in this sense means that you have forgotten that you were purged (cleansed by Jesus' blood) from your old sins.
 - (1) How can a person forget that?
 - (2) Peter forgot that when he said "I know not the man" (Matt. 26:74).
 - (3) Peter forgot that when he said, "I go a fishing" (John 21:3).
 - (4) Peter forgot that when he asked "dost thou wash my feet?" (John 13:6).
 - d. Have you forgotten that you were purged from your old sins?
 - (1) Perhaps you have never been purged by the blood of Christ from your old sins.
 - (2) Peter was purged from his sins by faith in Jesus Christ. So was Paul, so were all the other apostles, and so has every believer in Christ.
 - (3) If you have been purged and then forgotten you were purged, Peter encourages you to remember in 2 Peter 1:12 *Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.*
 - (4) Remember
 - (a) Remember the five loaves of the five thousand, Matt. 16:9
 - (b) Remember his holy covenant, Luke 1:72
 - (c) Remember Lot's wife, Luke 17:32
 - (d) Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, Acts 20:35
 - (e) Remember the poor, Gal. 2:10
 - (f) 2 Tim. 2:8 *Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised*

from the dead according to my gospel:

- (g) Remember them that are in bonds, Heb. 13:3
- (h) Rev 2:5 *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.*
- (i) Do you remember the day you were saved?
- (j) Do you remember your change of heart?
- (k) Do you remember the love and mercy of Jesus in saving you?
- (l) Do you remember the release of the heavy burden of sin when he saved you?
- (m) Do you remember?
- (n) *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works* (Rev. 2:5). He speaks here to the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- (o) 2 Peter 3:17 *Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.*

C. Third Step: Make Your Calling And Election Sure, 1:10-11

1. Calling

a. God's calling us

- (1) We learn a great lesson from Mark 3:13 *And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him.*
- (2) He calls whom he will
- (3) Acts 2:39 *For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*
- (4) The promise is for those whom God shall call.
- (5) So, evidently God does not call everyone.
- (6) John 10:3 *To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.*
- (7) The Lord calls his own sheep. He does not call goats.
- (8) Rom. 9:11 *(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)*
- (9) One of the sweetest verses in the Bible is when Martha says in John 11:28 *And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.*
- (10) There is a general call and a special call from God.
- (11) The general call is the call of the message of the gospel as it goes out from the lips of men into the world.
- (12) The special call is the calling of God upon the soul to bring to repentance and faith the one being called.

b. How can we make our calling sure? The only way is to call upon him.

(1) Acts 2:21 *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

(2) Rom. 10:13 *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. 14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*

2. Election

a. Election means choosing

b. Disciples – Luke 6:13 *And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;*

c. Mt 20:16 *So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.*

d. Many are called with the general or gospel call, but few are chosen with the special call of God upon the heart to bring to repentance and faith. This is the result of election

e. The word “elect” is used 16 times in the New Testament

f. Two times the N.T. mentions “his elect” (Matt. 24:32; Mark 13:27)

g. Seven times the N.T. mentions “the elect.” All have to do with God’s elect children except for 1 Tim. 5:21, which mentions “the elect angels.”

h. 2 Thes 2:13 *But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: This is election.*

i. Rom. 9:11 *(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)*

j. How can we be sure of our election? John 1:12 *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

3. Sure - “to make firm or steadfast”

a. We must make both our calling and our election sure; otherwise, we cannot grow to maturity in the Lord.

b. We need to “firm up” our certainly and realize our steadfastness. This will give us assurance so that we may grow in the Lord.

D. Fourth Step: Believe The Word of God, 1:12-21

1. The Remembrance, 1:12-15

a. They need remembrance, because some do not know all the truth. We should always look for greater truth from God’s word.

b. They need remembrance, because, even though many already know the truth, they need to be stabilized in the truth in order to continue in it. Sometimes we forget what we have learned.

(1) Deut. 32:18 *Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast*

forgotten God that formed thee.

(2) 2 Peter 1:9 *But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.*

(3) Hebrews 12:5 *And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:*

- c. They need remembrance, because, even though many may be mature as believers and know well the things that Peter has taught to them, they need to remember that there is no other place to go from here, no other realm to study after they have learned the word of God, no new revelation.
- d. They need remembrance in order to be stirred up (13) or excited to the cause to be continually faithful to preaching the things that are being presented and remembered.
- e. They need to remember, because Peter will shortly die (14-15). After his death, they are not to look to another but remain faithful to the words that Peter has taught them. The word of God is settled; it is not changeable, and it does not evolve.

(1) Paul knew his departure was at hand - (2 Tim. 4:6).

(2) Peter may have been given a recent revelation from God, as an apostle, that he was going to die soon.

(3) This could be referring to the occasion in John 21:18-19 *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. 19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.*

2. The Revelation, 1:16-21

a. Voice from experience, 16-18

(1) Peter has not followed fables, 16

(a) In 1 Tim. 1:4 they are called Jewish fables and endless genealogies

(b) In 1 Tim. 4:7 they are called “old wives fables”

(c) In 2 Tim. 4:4 they are simply called “fables”

(d) In Titus 1:14 They are called “Jewish fables and commandments of men, that turn from the truth”

(e) In our text at 2 Peter 1:16 they are called “cunningly devised fables”

(2) Peter heard a voice from heaven, 17-18

(a) Peter heard the audible voice of God when he was in the mount with James and John along with Jesus.

(b) See Matt. 17:1-7

(c) They actually heard God the Father say, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.”

b. Voice from revelation, 19-21

(1) This is a “more sure word of prophecy.”

- (2) This is the inspiration of the word of God as God is giving it piece by piece through those who were inspired of God to write down his words.
- (3) The Bible is the “more sure word of prophecy,” 19
 - (a) Even more sure than a miracle from the heavens
 - (b) Even more sure than hearing God’s own voice from heaven.
 - (c) Even more sure than dreams, visions, and manifestations.
 - (d) Even more than healings and personal experiences with God
 - (e) The very experience that Peter had of hearing God speak from heaven is not a sure word of prophecy until it is written down in scripture.
- (4) We are to take heed to his word (God’s word), 19
- (5) It is like a light that shines in a dark place.
- (6) Psalm 119:105 *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*
- (7) The word of God is of no private interpretation, not for our own wresting, twisting, and changing to fit our own ideas.
- (8) The prophecy
 - (a) This refers, of course, to the Old Testament.
 - (b) Peter read the Old Testament and received much instruction from it, but he was also an apostle of the Lord and received inspiration from the Holy Spirit as well as the writers of the Old Testament.
 - (c) Holy men of God, prophets from the Old Testament period, were “moved along” by the Holy Ghost and spake the words of inspiration (and writing can be a form of speaking), though the Greek word LALEO is used here, which means to speak.
- (9) Now these Jews to whom Peter, the apostle to the Jews, speaks are to remember, not what Peter experienced, but what the Holy Ghost spoke as he moved them along in order to speak the infallible words of the scriptures; and remember that his experience was written down in the scriptures.
- (10) These hearers were to listen to, hearken to, and obey the words of scripture for a more sure word of prophecy.
- c. So, the fourth step to Christian maturity is to learn and listen to the word of God, which does not change, and it is not up to us to interpret it except as it is interpreted by its own words through our diligent study and dependence upon the very words that God has written to us.
- d. We are to do this until “the day dawn,” which is the appearing of Jesus Christ in the clouds to receive us unto himself. We are to be faithful to the scriptures.
- e. The next chapter will tell us why we need to stay planted in the word of God and trust it always above all other philosophies and fables.
- f. Some quotes from famous people regarding the Bible:
 - (1) John Quincy Adams – “So great is my veneration for the BIBLE that the earlier my children begin to read it, the more confident will be my hope that they will prove useful citizens to their country and respectable members of society”
 - (2) Henry Ward Beecher – “The BIBLE is G-D's chart for you to steer by, to keep

you from the bottom of the sea, and to show you where the harbour is, and how to reach it without running on rocks and bars"

- (3) George Washington Carver – "The secret of my success? It is simple. It is found in the BIBLE, "In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths"
- (4) Calvin Coolidge – "The foundations of our society and our government rest so much on the teachings of the BIBLE that it would be difficult to support them if faith in these teachings would cease to be practically universal in our country"
- (5) Billy Graham – "The BIBLE is the Constitution of Christianity"
- (6) If you were to write a statement about the Bible, what would it be?
- (7) Read and study the Bible so that you may grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

E. Fifth Step: Resist False Prophets, 2:1-22

1. The Destructiveness of False Teachers, 1-3

a. Their destructive nature, 1-2

- (1) They are pretentious, called "false" teachers.
- (2) They are purchased, "bought" by creation; therefore, they are responsible before God.
- (3) They are private (privily), meaning that they try to hide their cunning ways.
- (4) They are pernicious, which here means "destructive."
- (5) They are protective (covetous), 3

b. Their destructive methods, 1, 3

- (1) They "privately bring in" heresies (new choices other than the word of God)
 - (a) The word "heresies" basically means "choose, or capture"
- (2) They deny the Lord that bought them (Deut. 32:5-6; Jude 1:4; Exod 15:13).
 - (a) The word translated Lord here is "despot." This is God the Father.
 - (b) God bought them by creation and is Lord of all. This is not a redemptive purchase.
- (3) They bring upon themselves "swift destruction."
 - (a) So, their choices (heresies) bring destruction to their hearers, but it also brings destruction to themselves.
- (4) They speak evil (the word means "blasphemy") of the way of truth.
 - (a) See also 2 Peter 2:10
 - (b) Jude 1:8 *Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.*

c. Their destructive end, 1,3

- (1) Their judgment does not linger, or it is not interrupted. God's judgment is sure, and nothing can stop it. (Greek KRIMA-judgment) (Greek for "linger" is ARGEO, to be inactive, or to be delayed).
- (2) Their damnation (Greek APOLEIA, meaning "destruction") slumbers not

(Greek NUSTAZO, meaning “to be overcome with sleep, or careless).

2. The Doom of False Teachers, 4-9
 - a. The example of angels who sinned, 4
 - (1) Rev. 12:9 *And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*
 - (2) These were cast out without mercy, without redemption, without a Savior.
 - (3) There is no exception to the angels that sinned, but notice the exceptions to the others mentioned.
 - b. The example of the flood, 5
 - (1) The old world - God spared not (or he destroyed) the old world of the ungodly with a flood.
 - (2) But he saved Noah, a preacher of righteousness.
 - (3) Notice the exception of the eighth person. God had mercy on Noah and his family. He is the 8th person, because he was one of the eight
 - (4) 1Peter 3:20 *Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.*
 - c. The example of Sodom and Gomorrah, 6-8
 - (1) God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, turning them into ashes.
 - (2) This was an example to those who would later live ungodly, namely these very false teachers that Peter is speaking of.
 - (3) God delivered (Greek, “to draw to oneself”) just Lot, who was vexed (oppressed) with the filthy life of these wicked people in Sodom and Gomorrah.
 - d. God will deliver the godly and punish the wicked, 9
 - (1) This not only to teach us destruction of the wicked but also to teach deliverance of his saints.
 - (2) God knows how to (and God does) deliver the godly out of temptations, and he also reserves the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.
 - (3) In all of this God is just and righteous.
3. The Depravity of False Teachers
 - a. Reviling against authority, 10-13a
 - (1) They walk after the flesh of uncleanness
 - (a) The flesh is weak: Matt 26:41 *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*
 - (b) The flesh profiteth nothing: John 6:63 *It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.*
 - (c) Rom. 7:5 *For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.*
 - (2) They despise government (power, lordship, authority)
 - (a) We are to “remember” those who have rule over us (Heb. 13:7)

- (b) We are to “obey” them (Heb. 13:17)
- (c) We are to “solute” them (Heb. 13:24)
- (3) They are presumptuous
 - (a) This word mean “daring”
 - (b) Walking in where “angels fear to tread”
- (4) They are self-willed
 - (a) They exercise their own will rather than God’s will.
 - (b) Mark 3:35 *For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.*
 - (c) Rom. 12:2 *And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*
- (5) They are not afraid to speak evil of dignities
 - (a) Acts 23:5 *Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.*
 - (b) Our text: 2 Peter 2:12 *But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;*
- b. Reveling with great pleasure, 13b-14
 - (1) They count it pleasure to riot in the day time, 13
 - (2) They sport themselves (live luxuriously).
 - (3) They “feast with you.” Eph 5:11 *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.*
 - (4) They are full of adultery, both physical and spiritual
 - (5) They cannot cease from sin
 - (6) They beguile unstable souls, alluring and capturing the weak in doctrine.
 - (7) Their work is for their own gain (covetous)
 - (8) They are “cursed children”
 - (a) This word (Greek KATARA) means not only “cursed” but also “cursing,” which means probably that they were cursing the good way and the people of God.
 - (b) Gal. 3:10 *For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*
 - (c) Matt 25:41 *Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:*
- c. Revolting against the right way, 15-17
 - (1) They have “forsaken” the right way, meaning that they know the right way but are unwilling to follow the right way, or the “way of righteousness.”
 - (a) Our text: 2 Peter 2:21 *For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.*
 - (2) They have “gone astray” following Balaam’s way who loved the wages of

- unrighteousness. (See Judges 1:11; Rev. 2:14; Numbers 22:5-7)
- (3) They are wells without water, 17; clouds carried away with a tempest.
 - (4) The “mist of darkness” is reserved for them forever.
4. The Deception of False Teachers, 18-22
 - a. Deceptive in their methods, 18
 - (1) They speak “great swelling words of vanity” that allure through the lusts of the flesh, wantonness (unbridled lust) those who have escaped their former heathen ways to at least a recognition in their minds of the truth of God’s way but were not wholly escaped both body, soul, and spirit.
 - (2) Heb. 6:4-6 *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, 5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.*
 - (3) These do not fall away from salvation, for they were never truly born again; they have only been enlightened to the truth to receive it logically, not spiritually.
 - (4) These who are deceived did not fall away from salvation. They only saw and understood the difference between their old, heathen way of life and began to enjoy the new life in the truth, never having received it in their spirits.
 - b. Deceptive in their promise, 19
 - (1) They promised liberty
 - (2) But they were servants of corruption (moral decay, perishing)
 - (3) By their promise of liberty these cursed children allure, capture and make slaves of those they overcome (to make inferior). Their job is to make themselves great and their subjects slaved. This is what cults do.
 - c. Deceptive in their destiny, 20-22
 - (1) The trend of the false professors of Christianity, 20-21
 - (a) They have escaped the pollutions (vices, habits) of the world through the knowledge of Jesus Christ.
 - (b) But they have again been “inweaved, entangled, involved in” the pollutions of the world.
 - (c) When this happens, the last end is worse than the beginning.
 - (d) They knew the way of righteousness, though they did not receive it by faith; and they took the “holy commandment” (or “the way of truth” in 2 Peter 2:2) in their minds but not in their spirits.
 - (e) The holy commandment – 2 Peter 3:2 *That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: This is the gospel.*
 - (f) They accepted the church ordinances and observed them and the Christian way of life, but they turned from it either completely or corrupted it.
 - (2) The identity of the false professors, 22

- (a) The true proverb: Prov 26:11 *As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly.*
- (b) The reference to the sow may be Peter's own metaphor. The Hebrew word for "sow" has the base meaning of "return" due to the character of the sow to return to the mud after being cleaned.
- (c) These unbelievers, these ungodly, these wicked ones, once they have been delivered from the pollutions of the world through the preaching of the gospel return again to their own righteousness or their unrighteousness, and the last end is worse than the first, because they not only pollute the word of God and pervert the right way and corrupt it, but they enjoy entrapping others into their pernicious, or destructive, ways.
- (d) Matt 23:15 *Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.*
- (e) Romans 1:32 *Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.*

1. Obtain Precious Faith
2. Add To Your Faith
3. Make Your Calling and Election Sure
4. Believe The Word of God
5. Resist False Prophets
6. Remember The Words of the Holy Prophets – THIS LESSON

F. Sixth Step: Remember The Words Of The Holy Prophets, 3:1-7

1. The Same Prophecy - Old And New Testaments, 1-2
 - a. The Old and New Testaments carry the same basic message.
 - b. There is not such pronouncement in scripture of our eliminating one to hold onto the other.
 - c. Some love the Old Testament and neglect a study of the New Testament.
 - d. Others study the New Testament at the expense of the Old Testament.
 - e. Verses 1 and 2 tell us to put both on the same par, on the same level, as God's inspired word. The two testaments fit together like a hand and glove.
 - f. Scriptures
 - (1) Genesis 15:6 *And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.*
 - (2) Romans 4:3 *For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.*
 - (3) Galatians 3:8 *And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.*

- (4) Deuteronomy 18:15 *The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;*
- (5) Acts 7:37 *This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.*
2. The Sure Prophecy - Scoffers, 3-4
- a. “Knowing this first” could mean first in number, or it is the first thing that the readers should know. Without this knowledge one can easily get off tract serving God. It could also mean first in priority. This means that what he is about to tell us is what we should mainly remember as we serve God.
- b. What should we know? (3) “... that there shall come in the last days scoffers.”
- (1) Scoffers are “mockers.” (3)
- (a) The Greek word (EMPAIKTES) literally means “to trifle with,” or to make unimportant, thus to mock or scoff at.
- (b) This is the only place in the Bible that this English word is used.
- (c) 2 Chronicles 36:16 *But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy.*
- (d) Lamentations 1:7 *Jerusalem remembered in the days of her affliction and of her miseries all her pleasant things that she had in the days of old, when her people fell into the hand of the enemy, and none did help her: the adversaries saw her, and did mock at her sabbaths.*
- (e) Jesus: Mark 15:20 *And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.*
- (f) This same Greek word translated “scoffers” in this verse is translated “mockers” in Jude 1:18 *How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.*
- (2) “Walking after their own lusts.” (3)
- (a) Romans 13:14 *But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.*
- (b) 2 Timothy 2:22 *Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*
- (c) 2 Timothy 4:3 *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;*
- (d) Jude 1:16 *These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage.*
- c. How Do They Scoff?
- (1) They scoff his coming (4)
- (a) Where is his coming?

- i) Heb 9:15 *And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.*
 - ii) Heb 10:36 *For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.*
 - iii) 1 John 2:25 *And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.*
 - iv) John 14:3 *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*
 - v) Acts 1:11 *Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*
 - vi) Phil. 4:5 *Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.*
 - (2) The fathers fell asleep, 4
 - (a) These scoffers believe that the fathers have fallen asleep never to wake up again. They do not believe in resurrection.
 - (b) Mark 12:26-27 *And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? 27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.*
 - (3) All things continue as they were . . . , 4
 - (a) This is a teaching of Uniformitarianism
 - i) This is the teaching that there are no catastrophes but that all things progress normally from day to day.
 - ii) Therefore, they say there was no creation
 - iii) Therefore, they say there was no flood
 - iv) Therefore, they say that there will never be coming of Jesus Christ.
 - (b) These measure everything by what they see.
 - i) The moon, sun, and stars go in their paths in a normal way.
 - ii) Nations rise and fall according to a normal pattern.
 - iii) There is nothing new to expect from heaven or earth.
3. The Subtle Ignorance, 5-7
- a. As a result of their Uniformitarianism, they are ignorant of any cataclysmic activity but believe that all things continue the same always.
 - b. They should know of this, since they had the scriptures for their use.
 - c. What were they ignorant of?
 - (1) That the universe was created by the word of God
 - (a) Not only the “commandment” of God, but the Logos, the Word, Jesus Christ; for by him were all things created:
 - (b) John 1:3 *All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing*

made that was made.

- (c) Col 1:16 *For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:*
- (2) That the earth was created and put in and out of the water, 5
 - (a) The earth is *terraqueous*, which means that it is both land and water.
 - (b) Psalm 24:1-2 *The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. 2 For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.*
 - (c) Probably the earth was surrounded first by water; then the Lord brought the land out of the sea, or separated the land from the water. Now the earth stands partly outside and partly inside the water.
 - (d) The earth depends upon water for its sustenance, so we have here, not only the creation, but also the sustenance of the earth and all things.
 - (e) They were ignorant of both creation and continual Providence regarding the earth. – Col 1:17 *And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*
- (3) That there was a flood in Noah's day, 6
 - (a) That the old world was destroyed by water.
 - (b) Just as today science falsely so-called denies this very thing, believing instead in Uniformitarianism.
 - (c) They think this is the same world, but it is not; the old world perished.
 - i) 2 Peter 2:5 *And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;*
- (4) That heavens and earth that are NOW are reserved unto fire and God's judgment, 7
 - (a) 2 Peter 3:10 *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*
 - (b) 2 Peter 3:12 *Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?*

- G. Seventh Step: Remember The Lord Is Not Slack Concerning His Promise, 3:8-14
1. Four times the New Testament tells us that the heaven and earth will pass away, and the Lord said, “But my words shall not pass away.”
 - a. Matt. 24:34; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:32, 33
 - b. Man has been waiting for this for many years, and it is easy to lose faith in the promise of God if we are not vigilant. We must watch each day for his coming.
 2. His Promises (plural)
 - a. Jesus Christ confirmed the promises made unto the fathers – Romans 15:8 *Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:*
 - b. The promises demand holy living – 2 Corinthians 7:1 *Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*
 - c. Promises were made to Abraham and his seed – Galatians 3:16 *Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.*
 - d. We inherit the promises through faith – Hebrews 6:12 *That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*
 - e. The new covenant is based on better promises – Hebrews 8:6 *But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.*
 - f. Old Testament saints did not receive these better promises – Hebrews 11:13 *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*
 - g. But Abraham received two promises: (1) that he would have a son, and (2) that a Messiah would come from his son – Heb 11:17 *By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,*
 - h. We have exceeding great and precious promises – 2 Peter 1:4 *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*
 3. “The Promise” used in the New Testament
 - a. Promise to Abraham of deliverance from Egypt – Acts 7:17 *But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, See Genesis 15:13*
 - b. The promise of Christ’s coming to earth – Ac 13:32 *And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, See Genesis 22:18.*
 - c. The promise of resurrection – Acts 26:6 *And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: See Job 19:26*
 - d. The promise is sure through faith – Romans 4:16 *Therefore it is of faith, that it*

- might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; . . .*
- e. The promise of Christ's return to earth – 2 Peter 3:4 *And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.*
 - f. The promise of eternal life – 1 John 2:25 *And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.*
4. God is not slack concerning these promises (our text)
 - a. Because one day is as a thousand years.
 - (1) Heb 10:37 *For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.*
 - b. Because he is longsuffering to “us-ward,” or toward we who are saved.
 - (1) If he does not keep us saved by grace, then his grace fails
 - (2) If he does not keep us saved by grace, then his promise is no good.
 - c. Because he is not willing that any should perish the “us-ward” ones.
 - (1) We who are saved will not perish, because it is not his will that any of us should perish or that any of his elect should come short of eternal life.
 - (2) Notice Matthew 18:14 *Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.*
 - (3) John 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*
 - (4) John 10:28 *And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*
 - (5) John 6:37 *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*
 - d. Because all shall come to repentance, 9
 - (1) Jesus calls sinners to repentance – Mark 2:17 *When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Luke 5:32*
 - (2) Acts 5:31 *Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*
 - (3) Acts 11:18 *When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.*
 - (4) Then our text: 2 Peter 3:9 *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*
 - (5) All of his people will come to repentance and faith in him, and they will be saved forever.
 - e. Because the day of the Lord will come, 10
 - (1) The promise given here is that the earth will be burned up, and God is not slack (a delay) in this promise; but it will happen when, where, and how he has it planned.
 5. The Result Of His Promise, 11-14
 - a. What kind of persons should we be?

- (1) He mentions first “holy conversation” or a holy way of life.
 - (a) Romans 6:19 . . . *even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.*
 - (b) 2 Corinthians 7:1 *Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*
 - (c) 1 Thessalonians 4:7 *For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.*
 - (d) Hebrews 12:10 *For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.*
 - (e) Hebrews 12:14 *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:*
- (2) Next he mentions “godliness.” (EUSEBEA), meaning “reverence, respect” toward God.
 - (a) 1 Timothy 4:7 *But refuse profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.*
 - (b) 1 Timothy 6:6 *But godliness with contentment is great gain.*
 - (c) Titus 1:1 *Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;*
- (3) Looking for his coming, 12-13
 - (a) We are looking for (or waiting for) the coming of the day of God when the heavens and earth will burn with fire, 12
 - (b) We are also looking for (or waiting for) the promise, the new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.
 - i) Revelation 21:1 *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.*

H. Eighth Step: Grow In Grace And Knowledge, 3:15-18

1. We know that the longsuffering of God is salvation, 15-16
 - a. Not the longsuffering toward evildoers or to the wicked, for their judgment is kept in store.
 - (1) 2 Peter 3:7 *But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*
 - (2) 2 Peter 2:3 *And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.*
 - b. This longsuffering is toward the people of God. His longsuffering is praised in the Old and New Testaments.
 - (1) Psalm 86:15 *But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.*
 - (2) Jeremiah 15:15 *O LORD, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and*

revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke.

(3) 1 Timothy 1:16 *Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.*

(4) This is what salvation is all about – God’s putting up with us.

2. The writings of Paul, 15-16
 - a. This may refer to his reference in Heb 10:36 *For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.*
 - b. That is, if you believe Paul wrote the book of Hebrews. Otherwise, we have no reference to it in our scriptures.
 - c. The things, then, concerning Melchizedek and the priesthood is hard to understand unless one is skillful in the word of God and in spiritual understanding. Thus he calls them unlearned and unstable.
3. We are to beware, 17
 - a. Matt 7:15 *Beware of false prophets*
 - b. Mt 10:17 *But beware of men*
 - c. Matt 16:16 *beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.*
 - d. Luke 12:15 *beware of covetousness:*
 - e. Phil. 3:2 *Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.*
 - f. Col 2:8 *Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*
 - g. Our text: 2 Peter 3:17 *Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.*
4. Falling from your steadfastness, 17
 - a. 1 Cor 15:58 *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*
 - b. Heb 3:14 *For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;*
 - c. Heb 6:19 *Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;*
 - d. 1 Peter 5:9 *Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.*
 - e. There will be a great falling away: 2 Thess 2:3 *Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;*
 - f. Temptation makes some fall away. Luke 8:13 *They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.*
 - g. John Gill says on this verse: “though the saints can never finally and totally fall into sin, or from the truth, yet they may fall from their steadfastness, both as to the

exercise of the grace of faith, and as to their profession of the doctrine of faith; and to be fluctuating, hesitating, and doubting in either respect, must be very uncomfortable and dishonourable.”

5. Grow in grace and knowledge, 18

a. Grow in grace

- (1) These are the gifts of grace or talents that the Lord gives each believer; and if a believer does not grow in them, then he will decrease in his effectiveness in them and may even lose them completely, or he may never develop a talent that was innate in his being but was never allowed to develop and mature. That is the reason that we all should seek our spiritual gifts and then use them.
- (2) Some neglect the gift by wishing they had someone else’s gift, but Paul told Timothy in 1Tim. 4:14 *Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.*
- (3) Some may even detest the gift that God has given them, because it may not be a noticeable and rewarding gift but may be a private gift that is not noticed by others and therefore not praised by others.
- (4) Mark 4:28 *For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.*
- (5) Matt 13:30 *Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.*
- (6) You must continue in order to grow – Acts 13:43 *Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God.*
- (7) John Gill says this, “There is such a thing as growth in grace, in this sense; every grace, as to its act and exercise, is capable of growing and increasing; faith may grow exceedingly, hope abound, love increase, and patience have its perfect work, and saints may grow more humble, holy, and self-denying: this is indeed God's work, to cause them to grow, and it is owing to his grace; yet saint, should show a concern for this, and make use of means which God owns and blesses for this purpose, such as prayer, attending on the word, and looking over the promises of God, for an increase of faith;”

b. Grow in knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ

- (1) We need to know more about Jesus. We cannot learn enough about Jesus.
- (2) We do know him: John 14:17 *Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*
- (3) Paul says in Phil. 3:10 *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*
- (4) John says in 1 John 2:3 *And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.*

- (5) Eph 1:17 *That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:*
- (6) 2 Peter 1:3 *According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*
- (7) We must know that he is our Lord
 - (a) I searched the phrase “our Lord” and found that it is in the New Testament 79 times. The first reference is Acts 15:26 *Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
 - (b) Then I searched the phrase “he is Lord” and found it three times in the New Testament
 - i) Acts 10:36 - He is Lord of all
 - ii) Acts 17:34 - He is Lord of heaven and earth
 - iii) Rev. 17:14 - He is Lord of lords and King of kings
- (8) We must know that he is our Savior
 - (a) John 4:42 *And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.*
 - (b) Acts 13:23 *Of this man’s seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus:*
 - (c) In 24 mentions of Saviour in the New Testament, almost all of them refer to the Lord, Jesus Christ.
 - (d) Then we have mention four times of the phrase “Lord and Saviour, and they are all in 2 Peter:
 - i) 2 Peter 1:11 *For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*
 - ii) 2 Peter 2:20 *For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.*
 - iii) 2 Peter 3:2 *That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:*
 - iv) 2 Peter 3:18 *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

6. Conclusion

- a. If a plant does not grow in the garden, it is not much good for the garden.
- b. If a child does not grow, he is not much good for the family.
- c. If a Christian does not grow, he is not much use for the kingdom of God.
- d. Are you growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ?