

BUILDING FOUNDATIONS
1 & 2 PETER



Building Foundations 1 & 2 Peter

Study Guide

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Progression Toward Maturity

Phase 1: Relationship with God (Revelation 4:11; 1 Corinthians 1:9)

- The Call of God Is First to Himself.
- Foundation for Salvation (“Creation to Christ”)

Phase 2: Position with Christ (1 Corinthians 1:30a)

- We Become a New Creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).
- Foundation for Salvation (“Positioned in Christ” and “New Birth Explained”)

Phase 3: Dependence upon the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:17-18)

- The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth (John 16:13-14)
- Church Is the Pillar and Foundation of Truth (1 Timothy 3:15)
- Acts/Building Foundations

Phase 4: Practical Sanctification–Identification with Christ, Co-crucified with Christ, Conformed to Image of Christ (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 8:28-29)

- Romans to Revelation/Building Foundations
- Principles of Spiritual Growth
- God’s Masterpiece–The Cross
- Looking unto Jesus Lessons

Conclusion: Recommended Order of Study

Detailed Explanation of Each Phase

Phase 1: Foundation for Salvation (“Creation to Christ”)

The Christian life is a relationship; therefore, our desire is to lead our readers into a deep and intimate relationship with God. In order to grow into that level

of relationship with God, there are foundational truths that must be clearly taught and understood. These foundational truths include the following:

- The attributes of God – His love, power, grace, omniscience, omnipotence, justice, immutability, hatred of sin, faithfulness.
- The sinfulness of man, his helplessness to save himself, and his need for a Savior.
- Only God can provide a way of salvation.
- The Gospel

Phase 2: Foundation for Sanctification (“Positioned in Christ” and “The New Birth Explained”)

The moment someone is born again, there is an immediate change of position that takes place in his or her life. At that very moment, one becomes a child of God, and is taken out of Adam and placed into Christ. All that Christ is and all that Christ has become ours. Therefore, before service to God is considered, one must be grounded in an understanding of who we are in Christ. Some important foundational truths that should be emphasized in Phase 2 teaching include the following:

- Placed into Christ
- Justified (declared righteous) and accepted in Christ
- Child of God
- Restored to oneness with God
- Eternally secure in Christ
- His Divine power has given to us all things pertaining to life and godliness through His finished work on the cross.
- Our part is to believe.

Phase 3: Dependence upon the Spirit and Introduction of the Church (“Acts/Building Foundations”)

The position change that takes place in every believer's life at salvation is immediate and complete. The daily

"living out" of that position, on the other hand, is a growth process. It is the progression of growth that the Holy Spirit is working all believers through in His process of conforming us to the image of Christ.

In order for believers to move on to maturity, we must learn to walk and depend upon the Holy Spirit. Therefore, our purpose in Phase 3 teaching is to reveal the Holy Spirit's ministry and His faithfulness to lead, guide, feed, and protect God's children, as well as to introduce the church. Some of the important foundational truths that should be emphasized include the following:

- The Holy Spirit's ministry to lead, guide, feed, protect, and establish us in truth
- To emphasize the FAITHFULNESS of the Spirit to fulfill all that Jesus promised
- To reveal the early church's dependence upon the Spirit
- The Holy Spirit is as faithful in our lives today, as He was to the early church in the book of Acts.
- Introduction of the church and her role

Phase 4: Practical Sanctification–Identification with Christ; Conformed to the image of Christ (“Romans to Revelation/Building Foundations”), “Principles of Spiritual Growth,” God’s Masterpiece the Cross of Christ,” and “Looking Unto Jesus” lessons)

The Holy Spirit is teaching us to walk less in the flesh and more in the Spirit, with Christ becoming more and more the object of our hearts.

In Phase 4, we will study through the epistles with the purpose of learning to rest in our identification with Christ and His finished work. As we, by faith, begin to appropriate identification truths, our co-crucifixion with Christ, our lives will become more and more conformed to the image of Christ, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit.

Some of the important truths that will be emphasized in Phase 4 includes the following:

- The believer's identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (crucified with Him and raised to newness of life)
- Sanctification is the process of walking less and less in the flesh and more and more in the Spirit.
- Our part in the process is faith in the finished work of Christ and our identification with it.
- What it means to truly walk in the Spirit
- Putting off the old and putting on the new
- Manifesting the life of Christ/fruit of the Spirit

Conclusion: Recommended Order of Study

Because there truly is a progression of growth that the Holy Spirit is taking all believers through, our Bible lessons have been developed and arranged to line up with that work of the Spirit in our lives. Each set of lessons contains the foundational truths that must be in place in a person's heart in order to facilitate their growth onto the next stage of spiritual growth. Therefore, we believe that it is important to teach the lessons in the following order:

- ***God's Eternal Plan***
- ***Building Foundations Order of Study:***

Acts	2 Corinthians
Romans	Philippians
Ephesians	Philemon
1 Corinthians	2 Timothy
1 Timothy	1 and 2 Peter
Titus	1, 2 and 3 John
1 and 2 Thessalonians	Hebrews
Revelation	James
Galatians	Jude
Colossians	
- ***Knowing God*** before the ***Digging Deeper*** studies
- ***Digging Deeper*** studies in any order

1 PETER

LESSON 1

A. Introduction

- Peter's epistles were written primarily in accord with his special ministry to the Jewish people (**Galatians 2:8**).
- Peter was primarily writing to Christian Jews who were scattered abroad from the persecution (**Acts 8:1**).
- 1 Peter is an epistle that depicts the believer's journey from the cross to glory and the trials and affliction that one must endure as we travel our pilgrimage through this life to our inheritance in heaven.
- Therefore, Peter testifies that *"this is the true grace of God wherein we stand"* (**1 Peter 5:12**).
- Peter is not speaking of saving grace but the grace of God that is ministered each day and enables Christians to stand against the schemes of the enemy and the trials of life (**Romans 5:2; Ephesians 6:11**).
- Peter perceives that it is normal for believers to undergo affliction while pressing on toward their inheritance that is laid up for them in heaven.
- It is possible to actually rejoice in the privilege of suffering for Him who redeemed us with His own blood because it is through the suffering that we are matured (**1 Peter 5:10**).

B. Suffering

- Among Christians today, there is much misunderstanding regarding suffering and, therefore, we avoid it at all costs.

- We must understand that suffering is the fruit of the fall. Because of sin, we live in a fallen world, in cursed bodies that experience pain, sickness, and death. Keep in mind that trusting in Christ does not guarantee any change in our physical circumstances in this life.
- We must also understand that enduring trials and suffering is a natural part of this life (**1 Peter 2:21-23**).
- Jesus suffered severely on our behalf. Our suffering gives us a glimpse of what He endured for us.
- God's Word also teaches that God often uses our suffering to keep us from sin (**1 Peter 4:1; 2 Corinthians 12:7**).
- God uses suffering to perfect His children (**Hebrews 12:6-11**).
- If our suffering is truly out of faithfulness to His name and devotion to His cause, we will sense a special fellowship with Him while remaining in the place that rejected Him and still hates His testimony. However, the outcome is sure and will make us forget about the momentary affliction (**2 Corinthians 4:17**).
- Becoming a believer does not free us from many of sin's consequences as the Adamic curse has not been yet lifted.
- Also, the believer will find that the world to which he once belonged has now become a scene of hostility because of his association with Christ.
- We must also realize the difference between suffering WITH Christ (**Romans 8:17**) and suffering FOR Christ (**Acts 5:41**).
- All Christians suffer with Him because we are partakers of the divine nature and therefore experience the adverse conditions through which we are called to pass.

- But suffering for Him may include bearing shame and reproach even to persecution and death for Christ's name (**Acts 9:16**).
- Paul wrote in Galatians 2 that after consultation with the church leaders in Jerusalem, it was decided that Peter should go to the Jews and Paul to the Gentiles.
- In the book of Romans, Paul wrote that there was neither Jew nor Gentile, but all had become one in Christ.
- 1 Peter is an epistle for afflicted believers; even though Peter was writing primarily to believing Jews, the truths which he has written are applicable for the entire body of Christ, just as Paul's writings are also for believing Jews who are a part of the body.
- No one knows exactly when Peter wrote his epistles, but most conclude that it was approximately AD 66-67. It is evident from **2 Peter 3:15-16** that at least some of Paul's epistles were already in circulation and accepted by the time of Peter's writings.

1 PETER LESSON 2

A. Peter's Greeting

Read 1 Peter 1:1-2.

- Peter was writing to the scattered Jews who had placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as their Savior.
- He states that these Jewish believers are “elect” meaning they are chosen by God.
- God always knew that He would choose these believers through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit for the purpose of molding them into the image of Christ.
- God’s ultimate purpose for all of His children is Christ-likeness (**Romans 8:28-29**).
- At salvation and through the finished work of Christ we are placed into Christ and given a position of holiness before God.
- As we rest in and appropriate by faith what has already been done for us, it will become our daily experience, thereby also producing obedience. **Romans 1:5** makes clear that obedience is a fruit of faith.

Read 1 Peter 1:3.

- Peter writes that God should be thanked and praised because according to His great mercy, He has brought us into a new existence.
- Because of God’s abundant grace (giving of what is not deserved), He has given us a new and true living hope that was provided for and is dependent upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- Christ's resurrection proves that God was satisfied with Christ's payment of death, and thereby making available to us everything that His Word states will be accomplished by His death.
- Had God not been satisfied, Christ would have remained in the grave.

B. An Inheritance

Read 1 Peter 1:4-8.

- In **Romans 8:17**, Paul wrote that we are joint heirs with Jesus. Everything that He is and everything that He has is ours.
- Peter wrote that our inheritance is "incorruptible"; it cannot decay and can neither lose its existence nor its effect on us.
- Peter also wrote that our inheritance is undefiled which means that it is pure or unsoiled. Because it is from God and was obtained by Christ on our behalf, man had nothing to do with it; therefore, it can never become contaminated.
- He wrote that it does not fade away but is being reserved in heaven for us.
- It is perpetual and will never lose its authenticity or become watered down in its effect on man.
- It is reserved for us in heaven. What can be more sure and long lasting than that which is kept in heaven?
- Beginning in verse 5, Peter shifts his focus from the believer's inheritance to the believer.
- Believers are kept secure by the power of God through faith unto salvation.
- The Jewish believers that Peter was writing to were under much persecution. Peter wanted to encourage them by stating that their salvation was sure for it was guarded by the very power of God.

- The keeping of their salvation was not determined by their own effort or strength, which gave great reason to rejoice.
- The many difficult circumstances that these believers were going through was for the purpose of perfecting their faith.
- Trials and difficulties are used and often orchestrated by God to perfect our faith. In **James 1:2-4** we read that the “...*testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.*”
- In the flesh, our focus will be on our circumstances and our attitudes will follow accordingly.
- Paul said that faith is more precious than gold.
- What makes gold so precious is its rarity; however, true faith that anchors the heart even in the midst of trials and hardship is even more rare and precious than gold.
- Peter said that to have such faith in the midst of trials will result in praise and honor at the return of Christ.
- Peter also wrote that even though these believers had not physically seen Jesus, still they loved him and rejoiced with unspeakable joy.
- In the Spirit, Christ will be the occupation of our hearts and not our circumstances. Therefore, it will be possible for believers to rejoice while enduring difficult trials, for it is Christ and who we are in Him which will be the focus of our hearts.

C. Be Holy

Read 1 Peter 1:13-16.

- Peter said that since all these things were true and we have received such an awesome salvation, we should gird or prepare afresh our thoughts and be sober-minded, which strongly implies that one is spiritually-minded (walking in the Spirit).
- The flesh has its root and origin in Satan, and Satan is the master deceiver; therefore, any time we are carnally minded, we are deceived and therefore not sober-minded; nor will we set our hope (confident expectation) solely upon the grace of God that will be fully manifested at the coming of Jesus Christ.
- Peter goes on to say that we are no longer to walk in the flesh, carrying out our lustful desires as we once did prior to salvation, but rather we are to live faith-filled, obedient lives.
- It was God who called us to Himself and is holy and He has provided everything pertaining to life and godliness (**2 Peter 1:3**). Therefore we now have the ability to be holy in all manner of living in every area of our lives.
- Currently, God is taking us through the process of teaching us to walk less in the flesh and more in the Spirit, thereby conforming us more to the image of Christ; He is making us holy because He is holy.
- In **Genesis 1:26**, man was made in God's image after His likeness. However, after the fall, we are told that man was "born after Adam's kind" (**Genesis 5:3**). We were born separated from God with a sinful, human nature.

- Now in Christ, we have been re-born after His kind (**1 Peter 1:15**).

D. Be Holy

Read 1 Peter 1:17-25.

- All those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ will one day find themselves before the judgment seat of Christ where each man's work will be judged without partiality for the good deeds that Christ did in and through them.
- Therefore, pass your time in this life with awesome respect for God.
- We have not been redeemed with something corruptible—silver or gold or even by the useless traditions that our forefathers taught us.
- We have been redeemed/bought by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Since we know that we have been bought with something so precious, we should be convinced that God is taking all of this seriously.
- In God's eyes it is no light matter for His children, who have been bought by the blood of God the Son, to live selfish, carnal lives.
- God takes it all extremely seriously for it was paid for by the blood of God, the Son.
- Peter also said that the “seed” from which our salvation springs forth is the Word of God, which is incorruptible and will abide forever (**John 1:1**).
- Everything in this life upon which man glories will fade away, but the Word of God will abide forever.
- Therefore, the importance of God's Word and its appropriation in our lives is great.

1 PETER LESSON 3

A. Put Away Sin

Read 1 Peter 2:1-3.

- How are these things laid aside or put off?
Galatians 5:16: “*Walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.*”
- As we mature to walk more in the Spirit and less in the flesh, we will lay aside more often the deeds of the flesh and manifest more the fruit of the Spirit, having more of a hunger for knowing God and His Word.

B. The Cornerstone

Read 1 Peter 2:4-8.

- Christ was rejected by men but was the chosen of God to be the cornerstone of His Church.
- We believers are precious stones added to the building of the Church.
- Our purpose in this life as the “building of God” is to manifest His presence in the world and to offer up spiritual sacrifices, which are works done in the Spirit.
- The world rejects Christ, but those who place their faith and trust in Him will not be ashamed.
- Unbelievers often attempt to shame Christians, but ultimately, it will be they who are ashamed.

C. His Children

Read 1 Peter 2:9-10.

- God has called us unto Himself and made us His children, His possession, so that our lives will show forth His excellencies.
- Before, we were spiritually dead and on our way to hell; but today, we are God's people, who have been freely given the grace and mercy of God including eternal life with Him.
- He took people who were all wrong and deserved punishment and bestowed His grace upon them thereby making us His children so that we might manifest the excellencies of His grace to a lost and dying world.

D. A Fallen World

Read 1 Peter 2:11-12.

- This world is fallen and sinful; as God's children, positionally we are not considered citizens of this world but rather citizens of heaven (**Philippians 3:20**), thereby making us strangers and pilgrims on earth who are merely passing through.
- As we walk in the Spirit, we will walk through life as strangers who are different from the people who reside here.
- Walking in and fulfilling the deeds of the flesh (**Galatians 5:19-21**) is characteristic of those who are citizens of this world.
- However, even though unbelievers speak against Christians as evil doers, as we continue to walk in the Spirit, our crucified lives will draw some to Him, which ultimately will glorify God at the coming of Christ.

E. Obey Authorities

Read 1 Peter 2:13-16.

- As we live out the Christ-life (**Galatians 2:20**), our obedience to the authorities that God has placed over us will be a testimony to the rest of the world, which will ultimately silence the evil reports of the unbelievers.
- As we walk in the Spirit and live out the Christ-life, Peter said that we are to obey as free men and not to use our freedom as a license for further ungodliness (**Galatians 5:13**).
- We have been set free from the power of sin to be the servants of God.

Read 1 Peter 2:17-25.

- What Peter is describing here is the difference between life in the Spirit and life in the flesh.
- In the flesh, we are unable to truly love and honor anyone except ourselves, nor would we be able to endure suffering as Peter describes because our focus is on self and our rights and desires.
- However, in the Spirit, Christ will be the object of our heart and we will rest upon the finished work of Christ, and our lives will manifest the fruit of the Spirit.
- In the Spirit, circumstances will not be the controlling factor regarding the attitudes of our hearts. Like Christ, our trust will be in God who judges rightly.
- In the flesh, we judge unjustly; we attack and seek revenge on people for doing some of the same things that we ourselves do to others.

- Ultimately, Christ entrusted Himself to God and His will to accomplish God's purposes in his life.
- As we grow spiritually, we will have the same mindset, entrusting our lives into God's hands, desiring only to be used as He sees fit, and trusting that through all circumstances, God will use it all for His glory.

1 PETER LESSON 4

A. Instruction For Women

Read 1 Peter 3:1-6.

- Keep in mind that the key ingredient to this instruction is for wives to walk in the Spirit. In the Spirit, Christ will be the object of a woman's heart and it will be possible for her to live out Peter's instructions. In the flesh, she will focus on herself and her appearance, etc.

B. Instruction For Men

Read 1 Peter 3:7.

- Peter now gives instruction to husbands and tells them to dwell with their wives according to knowledge (KJV)/live with them in an understanding way (NAS).
- God made men and women to be different and have different roles in the home. He made men to be the servant-leader, the spiritual head of the home, and the wife to be his help-mate completer.
- The man was made to be stronger in many ways—physical, emotional and in personality—so that he could be the provider and protector of the home. His wife needs his understanding, protection, and loving kindness.
- It is also important for men to keep in mind that their wives have been made “joint heirs of the grace of life.” Equal grace is available to both the husband and wife.
- Peter then writes, *“that your prayers may not be hindered.”*

- If men are not dwelling with their wives in an understanding way and not watching over and protecting them, they are walking in the flesh; even though they may spend time in prayer, their own selfish desires will be the object and their prayers will not be according to the will of God.
- We know from **1 John 5:14-15**, if our prayers are not according to the will of God, they will be hindered.

C. Christian Living

Read 1 Peter 3:8-12.

- Peter now gives more characteristics of the Christ-life and how to live it.
- Again, this is only possible as we walk in the Spirit, for in the flesh, we only care for ourselves.
- Peter explains that if we walk in the Spirit, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit, no matter what life brings, whether good or bad, it will result in blessing our lives.
- God hears and will answer the supplications (humble request) of the righteous (those who are walking in the Spirit). But those who do evil (walking in the flesh) are in conflict with Him, and God's purpose in their lives will be to show them their carnality.

Read 1 Peter 3:13-16.

- In the flesh, our focus is earthly, seeking after the pleasures and comforts of this life.
- However, in the Spirit, Christ is the occupation of our heart, and we will be most concerned about abiding in Him and proclaiming Him to others.

- There will always be those who hate us because we are Christians; but as Christ is lived out in our lives, we will give them no cause for their evil accusations.

Read 1 Peter 3:17-22.

- Christ is our example and He suffered for well-doing, not for evil-doing.
- Christ suffered because of our sin, the righteous for the unrighteous, so that He might bring us to God.
- Therefore, as we rest in our co-crucifixion with Christ and walk in the Spirit, no matter what people do and say, our goal should always be to see them brought to God.
- In the Spirit, we will willingly endure evil for the sake of bringing others to Christ.

1 PETER LESSON 5

A. God's Purpose

Read 1 Peter 4:1-6.

- God's purpose in our lives is to conform us more to the image of Christ (**Galatians 4:19**).
- This process begins through our "struggling in the flesh." The more we walk in the flesh and fail, the more we come to realize that our only hope is through our co-crucifixion with Christ.
- The only solution that God's Word gives for overcoming the flesh on a daily basis is found in **Romans 6:6**; we are crucified with Christ (**Galatians 2:20**).

B. Walk in the Spirit

Read 1 Peter 4:7-11.

- Again, the exhortation is to walk in the Spirit, manifesting what should be characterizing our lives.
- We have the power and desire to live with the realization that soon the Lord will return and take us to be with Him; for everyone who has not believed, it will be too late.
- Therefore, all that we do and say and all of our prayers should be with the goal of reaching the lost and seeing them brought to Christ.
- Only as we walk in the Spirit, will we manifest the love of Christ, dying to ourselves, being hospitable and serving others (**2 Corinthians 4:10-12**).

- In the Spirit, the love of God will cover sin; we will look past the sinfulness of others to a lost soul that is heading for hell (**Proverbs 10:12**).
- By God's grace, each of us been gifted with an enablement to be used by the Lord to serve the body of Christ.
- As we walk in the Spirit, we will function in the body where we have been placed and according to our giftedness.
- As we walk in the Spirit and function according to His will, God will be glorified.

C. Persecution and Trials

Read 1 Peter 4:12-19.

- We should not be surprised when people speak evil of us and persecute us for being Christians.
- We live in a world that rejected Christ; therefore, as His followers, we, too, will be rejected (**John 17:14**).
- Because we are His followers, on the day that He returns to gather His Church unto Himself, our rejoicing will far exceed the amount of suffering that we are currently enduring in this life (**Romans 8:18**).
- Peter wrote that if we are reproached because of the name of Christ, if people are persecuting us because we are Christians, then we must be living a life that clearly reveals Christ.
- But in the flesh, our lives will look no different from the unbelievers; they may be unaware that we are Christians.

1 PETER LESSON 6

A. Instructions For Church Leaders

Read 1 Peter 5:1-4.

- Here we have Peter's instructions to those who are leading the church.
- He exhorts them to tend the flock that the Lord has given to them.
- In the flesh, leaders will lead with wrong motives—seeking recognition, position, money, or power.
- Keep in mind that in the flesh, it is impossible for a leader's life to manifest the love and life of Christ.
- However, in the Spirit, a leader will desire to lead with a sincere heart according to the will of God and because it is God's will.
- Christians are to be servant-leaders whose lives match their message (**Mark 10:42-45**).

B. Submit To One Another

Read 1 Peter 5:5-7.

- In the flesh, we care for ourselves, seek our desires, and are often inflated with self-importance.
- We are unwilling to submit one to another as it makes others look more intelligent, wise, and knowledgeable than ourselves.
- But Peter makes it clear that we should be girded (supported) by humility, which should govern all of our interactions with people.
- Peter writes that God resists man's fleshly pride, but gives grace/favor to the humble.

- God will not bless our prideful ways, as that would only tend to strengthen our pride and independence.
- To the humble He gives grace, unmerited favor.
- When we walk in Spirit-produced humility and live our lives resting in God's sovereign power, we will cast all of our cares upon Him, trusting, resting, and depending upon Him to bring about in our lives what He desires and in His time.

C. Be Sober-minded

Read 1 Peter 5:8-9.

- Peter writes that Satan is seeking those he may devour, those who are vulnerable.
- Satan can't force destruction upon our lives. He doesn't grab us by the hand and force us to sin; he tempts, accuses, and deceives.
- One of his main tactics is to cast a seed of doubt regarding truth.
- If we are walking in the flesh, we are one of the vulnerable ones that he seeks to devour, for in the flesh we will believe his lies and no longer stand upon the truth of God's Word.
- Peter writes that Satan is to be resisted by faith through the finished work of Christ and all that He has obtained on our behalf.

Read 1 Peter 5:10-11.

- The whole process of going through trials, struggles and difficulties—learning to walk less in the flesh and more in the spirit—is a process that will go on throughout our lives and is a part of God's perfecting us and conforming us more into the image of Christ.

- Notice Peter writes that it is God who is doing this work. It is not our responsibility to make ourselves grow spiritually, but His, as we continue to walk by faith in the finished work of Christ.

D. Peter's Closing Comments

Read 1 Peter 5:12-14.

- Through all that comes into our lives, God is working to conform us more to the image of Christ.
- Sometimes we walk in the flesh and become consumed with the difficult circumstances; but life is not about our circumstances—it's about what God is doing and His ultimate purpose of conforming us to the image of His Son.

2 PETER

LESSON 1

A. Introduction

- It is unclear how much time elapsed between the writing of 1 Peter and 2 Peter, but many believe that it was a rather short period.
- At the time Peter wrote this second letter, it is believed that Paul was either already with the Lord, or very close to martyrdom, for in **2 Peter 3:15-16**, Peter alludes to the fact that Paul's writings were already in circulation.
- 2 Peter is focused more on the future and what we believers can expect and how we are to proceed.
- The key word in this letter is "knowledge" and is used 13 times.
- It's important to note that Peter wrote this epistle knowing he would soon be martyred; therefore, he wanted to warn believers of the oncoming flood of error and apostasy that would sweep over Christendom.
- Peter's logic is simple. He first brings to our attention the blessings that are ours in Christ and the importance of growing in grace. Only then will we be able to stand against the oncoming evils that will threaten the church and shake the foundations of our faith.

Read 2 Peter 1:1-2.

- Peter refers to believers as those who have "obtained faith in (through) the righteousness of our God."
- Because of the finished work of Christ, God has, according to His righteousness, opened the door to salvation for all who believe.

- The phrase “like precious faith with us” refers to the object of all believers’ faith, not the amount of faith. Peter and the apostles had the same kind of faith as Christians do today—dependence upon the finished work of Christ.
- Peter writes, “*grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God.*”
- God’s grace and peace will only be experienced to the degree that we know God and our Savior Jesus Christ, and His finished work on our behalf.
- The only solution we have to all of our worries, fears, and problems is found in the finished work of Christ. (Christ died for me, I died with Christ; the Spirit is in control).
- If we are not mindful and do not have understanding of God’s solution, this can only result in worry, turmoil, and a lack of peace.
- In the flesh, we will trust and depend upon many other things (money, alcohol, drugs, sex, etc.) to find peace. Some of these things may seem to provide peace and joy for a short time (**Hebrews 11:25b**), but in the end will only let us down.

B. The Divine Nature

Read 2 Peter 1:3-4.

- God’s divine power has given to us everything that is needed in order to live a godly life. As we grow in the knowledge and understanding of what He has done, we will begin to see the extent of His grace and the more our hearts will become calmed and stabilized regardless of our circumstances.
- However, if we don’t know God and all that His divine power has provided, we will not understand His grace and our hearts will become unstable as we focus on our circumstances.

- Verse 4 is very clear: the way to escape the corruption in this world is to become more like Christ (partake of His divine nature).
- We partake or experience the divine nature by knowing of and believing in the “very great and precious promises,” which are found only in Christ (**2 Corinthians 3:18**).
- God’s provision, which makes it possible for man to be a partaker of “His divine nature” is promised and provided in Christ and in Him alone.
- If we want to experientially escape the lust that is in the world and be a partaker of the divine life of Christ, our only hope is to rest in the finished work of Christ and the fact of our identification with it. At salvation, we were positionally placed into Christ, and therefore crucified, resurrected, and seated with Him at the right hand of the Father.

C. The Fruit of Living Faith

Read 2 Peter 1:5-11.

- Peter is describing the “fruit of living by faith.” If we are truly experiencing a deliverance from the lust of our flesh and partaking of the divine nature, these characteristics will begin to characterize our lives.
- Along with growing in our knowledge of God and receiving God’s grace, peace, everything pertaining to life and Godliness, as well as His divine nature, Peter exhorts believers to earnestly consider the following—as we grow into Christ-likeness, to our faith will be added:

***Virtue** (valor or excellence or purity).

- ***Knowledge:** In order to live the Christian life, we must know who we are in Christ and what Christ has done for us before we can reckon them so.
- ***Self-control:** Self-control is a fruit of the Spirit and increases as we grow consistently and steadily into Christ-likeness.
- ***Patience:** Joyful endurance, constancy, patient continuance. Patiently enduring with joy comes as we grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ and is the fruit of the Spirit (**Colossians 1:11**).
- ***Godliness:** “God-likeness” is not man imitating God, but rather God reproducing Himself in a man. God is not in a hurry and does not provide shortcuts to godliness. He is working from eternity to eternity. As we understand this and settle into this truth, we will be enabled to patiently endure with joy the life-long process of growing into God-likeness.
- ***Brotherly kindness:** Fraternal affection or brotherly love will enable us to patiently endure the rate of another’s spiritual advance. If we truly love our brothers, then we will desire for them to succeed. There will not be competitive and jealous hearts (**Philippians 2:3-4**).
- ***Charity:** True biblical love is not a feeling nor is it self-centered. It comes from God and gives to others expecting nothing in return (**1 Corinthians 13:4-7; 1 Corinthians 12:15**).
- Peter went on to say that if these qualities are found in abundance in any Christian’s life, that person will not be idle or unfruitful in his knowledge of God.
- To say that we know God and yet not be motivated in these things is to have dead, idle, and inactive faith.
- If we buy a new vehicle because it’s nice and new, we don’t want to drive it because we don’t want

to get it dirty, then what use is it? Even though we have the vehicle, the fact that we won't use it makes it just as if we don't have it.

- Our faith and knowledge of God can be seen in a similar way. If all we have in Christ does not motivate and empower us to increase in these listed characteristics, then our faith and knowledge is idle, inactive, and not genuine.
- Peter goes on to say that in this situation, not only is our faith and knowledge inactive and idle, but we are blind and shortsighted, not remembering our cleansing of past sins.
- If we are not motivated to spiritual growth and a manifestation of these qualities in our lives, then we are not seeing the entire picture of salvation, but rather a narrow, self-centered view of salvation and all that we have been given in Christ.
- Titus writes, *“the grace of God [is] teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age”* (Titus 2:11-12).
- If we are not being motivated to live as such, then we don't have a clear view of what we've been saved from and freed unto by the grace of God.
- Peter exhorts believers to walk in and manifest these characteristics (virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience, Godliness, brotherly kindness, and love), for if they truly characterize our lives, it is proof that we are partaking of the divine nature—proving the transformation that our salvation has provided for us.

D. A Reminder

Read 2 Peter 1:12-15.

- These truths are so important that Peter communicates to his readers that he has a continual desire to always be reminding them and even more so now that his death was imminent.
- The same is true today. Even though we have heard these truths and know them to be true, we can never be reminded too often. It is easy to revert back to walking in the flesh and once again lose sight of the deeper truths of God's Word (**Ephesians 4:17-19**).

Read 2 Peter 1:16-21.

- Peter explains why Scripture is so important and worthy of our continual remembrance—because it is true.
- Even though we have not seen the things that the Scriptures proclaim with our own eyes, Peter says that he did. He was an eyewitness of the majesty of Christ and this is not a cleverly devised story.
- He was there on the Mount of Transfiguration and heard God's voice with his own ears.
- We live in a day and age when deception abounds and man doesn't know what to believe; but we will do well to believe the testimony that is being passed down to us by those who have seen these things firsthand.
- The day is coming when we will be in heaven and will see everything clearly.
- Even though at this time we have not seen for ourselves, still we know that all Scripture is inspired by the Spirit and is from God, and therefore can be believed just as confidently as if we had been there ourselves (**2 Timothy 3:16**).

2 PETER LESSON 2

A. False Teachers

Read 2 Peter 2:1.

- Peter writes that just as there were false prophets during Old Testament times in Israel, so in the time that he was writing this letter (as well as today) there are false teachers that have infiltrated the church.
- Peter wrote that they “secretly” bring in destructive heresies and many are deceived because of their relationship with these false teachers.
- Peter went on to say that false teachers deny Christ. They might not deny Him outright but often deny His finished work as that which is the source sanctification.
- Peter also said that false teachers bring swift destruction upon themselves—not necessarily physical destruction, but rather spiritual destruction; true faith in their lives is destroyed.

Read 2 Peter 2:2.

- Peter continued by saying that many will follow their destructive ways. Keep in mind that many false teachers are unaware that their teaching is false. The flesh has deceived them and through them the flesh is deceiving others.
- We are seeing this today as many carnal Christians desire to be put under the law because they are motivated by the flesh. Keep in mind that the flesh loves addition and multiplication but hates subtraction and cannot tolerate being

made a zero. They want to be told what they must do for God in order to feel good about themselves; the best the flesh can ever produce is self-righteousness.

- “For the Gospel of Grace is the end of religion, the final posting of the CLOSED sign on the sweatshop of the human race’s constant struggle to think well of itself; for at best, that is what religion is: Man’s well-meant but dim-witted attempt to gain approval for doing odd jobs that he thinks God will thank him for. Religion, therefore, is a loser. It has a failed past and a bankrupt future. There was no religion in Eden, and there will be none in the New Jerusalem; and in the meantime, Jesus has died and risen to persuade us to knock it off right now. He has made it real clear that as far as God is concerned, we’re all home free already, and there is not a single religious thing that you or I have to do. We are simply invited to believe it.” Robert Farrar Capon
- Most reject the truth that man’s part is faith, and they simply are to rest in the finished work of Christ on their behalf.

Read 2 Peter 2:3-6.

- Peter writes that the motivation of false teachers often is covetousness. They use their followers as merchandise to gain financially or larger numbers to benefit themselves; however, they will receive the same judgment that we have seen throughout the Old Testament with the fallen angels, the people in Noah’s day, and Sodom and Gomorrah.
- Peter writes that their “judgment does not slumber.” Just as the ungodly have always been

judged throughout history, so the judgment that these false teachers receive will be sure.

Read 2 Peter 2:7-9.

- Along with assuring believers that the false teacher's judgment is sure, Peter also assures them that the Christian's protection and deliverance will also be sure.
- He gives the example of Lot and describes how his soul was tormented every day by the wickedness that was in Sodom and Gomorrah.
- Lot was living among the wicked, but he was not one of them.
- God protected Lot from the wickedness in Sodom and also delivered him from the judgment that was brought upon the cities (**Genesis 14:15-16**).
- God's judgment is always perfect. Only the unjust will be punished and judged. Those who have already been justified by faith in Christ will not be judged and punished for their sin at the Great White Throne Judgment.
- This principle can also apply to the great tribulation. There are some today who are teaching that the Church will go through the tribulation, which is a time of judgment.

Read 2 Peter 2:10-16.

- Peter is describing some of the characteristics of false teachers; mainly that they are arrogant.
- They rebel against authority and are self-pleasing. They are proud and do not tremble at angelic majesties, speaking evil.
- They are not moved by the greatness of God and the great things that He has done.

- They do not understand the spirit world, but they strut and boast, rebuking and reviling Satan and the demons as if they are the ones who are in control of all.
- Peter said that they reproach supernatural beings; they speak evil about things that they don't even understand.
- Peter went on to say that these people have deviated from the truth; they are corrupt in all they say, do, and think.
- They are obviously living for themselves, their own pleasures, and their own benefit.

B. Worthless Teachings

Read 2 Peter 2:17-19.

- From a distance, a spring may look good and refreshing, but up close we may find that it's empty and worthless.
- Peter said that this is what false teachers are like. Often their teaching sounds good and right, but as we listen in the Spirit to what is being said, we find that it is worthless and evil.
- In this present age of grace, to put believers under the law and tell them they must now perform for God to gain His acceptance and approval may appear right and spiritual, but Paul tells us in **Acts 15:10** that it provokes God to wrath and is an unbearable yoke.
- Peter said that the false teachers are able to deceive those who are weak in their understanding of truth by their flowery words of man's wisdom.

- They promise freedom, though they themselves are in bondage to their own flesh, for they are not accepting the finished work of Christ as the sole provision of their sanctification.

Read 2 Peter 2:20-22.

- There are many born again believers who have tasted the good Word of God, and then returned to walking in the flesh and living in sin, just as they did before they were saved.
- Peter said that it would have been better for them to have never known and tasted of true righteousness, than to have tasted it and then returned to unrighteous living (**Hebrews 6:4-6**).
- A believer who is living a carnal and sinful life is miserable, for the Spirit's conviction of what they already know to be true will be ever present.
- However, Peter said the flesh never changes. It will never improve. Just as a dog will always return to its vomit and a pig to wallowing in the mud, so the flesh will always return to sinfulness and wickedness (**Proverbs 26:11**).

2 PETER LESSON 3

A. A Reminder

Read 2 Peter 3:1-4.

- Peter reminds the Jewish believers of past prophecies regarding the end times, that scoffers and false teachers will come doubting the Lord's return and saying, *"Since Old Testament times, all things remain the same; Jesus isn't coming back."*
- It was a similar situation in the days of Noah: *"Noah, you've been telling us for 20 years that it's going to rain. Where is it? Noah, it's been 50 years; Noah, it's been 100 years and no rain. Noah, after 119 years and still no rain, it's time to stop all this."*

Read 2 Peter 3:5-7.

- Why will God not use water to destroy the earth again? The rainbow is God's promise that He will never destroy the earth with water again (**Genesis 9:12-15**).

Read 2 Peter 3:8-9.

- In the days of Noah, Noah preached of coming judgment for 120 years. To the people of that time, it seemed foolish and untrue.
- Now, as we focus on the end times and the coming judgment, there will be many who feel the same: *"Oh, they have been saying this for hundreds of years. Where is it?"*

- We often make promises we don't keep. Sometimes we forget, we become lazy, we change our minds, or have promised something that we just can't produce.
- None of these things are so with God. The sole reason that He hasn't brought about the end times judgment yet is because He is longsuffering.
- It is His will that no man perish but that all should come to repentance.
- The longer He waits, the more people will have an opportunity to hear and believe the gospel.
- That is the only explanation that Peter gives as to why God is waiting.
- To us, five years seems like a very long time, but God sees man and our history from beginning to end at the same time.
- Therefore, to Him one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years is like one day.
- He is waiting for more to come to repentance.

B. The Thief in the Night

Read 2 Peter 3:10.

- Peter continues on by saying when the time is right, Jesus will come back like a thief in the night.
- No one will be expecting Him and He will come suddenly and without warning.
- Just as in the days of Noah when he warned the people for 120 years of God's coming judgment, and then one day the rains came without warning, it was too late for those who had not already believed.

- The Lord's coming and the earth's impending judgment will come quickly when it is His time, and it will be too late for those who refused to believe.

C. Holy Lives

Read 2 Peter 3:11-12.

- Since the Lord's return is imminent and it will come suddenly without warning, what kind of life should we live?
- How should we be found when the Lord returns (**Ephesians 4:1**)?
- We would not be pleased if the Lord were to return and find us living carnal lives.
- Peter continues on by saying that we should also live life with an eternal focus, looking for Christ's return and anxiously awaiting that day.

D. New Heaven/New Earth

Read 2 Peter 3:13-16.

- If we are living with an eternal focus, we will not be looking for this world to get better, but rather we will be looking forward to its destruction and the new heaven and the new earth that will one day be created.
- Many Christians are praying for God to improve things here, as if they have no hope of a new heaven and new earth.
- In verse 14, Peter writes that since we are looking for a new heaven and earth, give careful consideration to being found in peace and blameless.

- God's Word is sure, and as we believe His promises and look for their fulfillment, our hearts will remain calm and stable, even in the midst of a fallen and chaotic world (**John 8:32**).
- Peter wants his readers to know that God is longsuffering and is patiently waiting that more souls may have the opportunity to hear the gospel and believe.
- If our hearts truly grasped these truths—that the world is headed for destruction and there will be a new heaven and new earth and that God is allowing all this to continue for the salvation of many—our lives would be changed.

Read 2 Peter 3:17-18.

- Now that we know these truths and stand upon them, Peter warns us regarding being led astray from what we know and believe to be true.
- It is very easy to become caught up in the fleshly complexities of living in a fallen world and lose sight of the great and precious promises that God has given to us in His Word (**Ephesians 4:17-18**).
- Peter now concludes, "*Continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*"
- Peter knew that this is most important for all believers. The more we come to know Christ and the grace that He has bestowed upon us, the more our hearts will become occupied solely with Him and the truths of His Word.
- Our hearts will become stabilized and we will not be led astray by false teaching (**Isaiah 26:3**).

