

# 2 PETER

**Author :**

Peter one of the original apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Date :**

Sometime about 67 AD.

**Themes :**

Peter knows that very shortly he will die (1:13-15). His purpose in writing was to remind believers of what they had already learned and to encourage them (1:13; 3:1), to warn them again about false teachers, and to urge them to go on growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus (3:18). "Knowledge" is a key thought of this letter, used 7 times. The words "know", "knows", "known", and "knowing" are used another 7 times, and the word "ignorant" appears 3 times. All this indicates Peter's conviction of the great importance of true knowledge in the Christian life.

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**1** Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ:

2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, 3 just as his divine power has given to us all things that *we need* for life and godliness, through the

knowledge of him who has called us by *his* glory and virtue. 4 Through these, great and precious promises have been given to us, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through evil desire.

5 For this very reason, giving all *your* effort, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, 6 and to knowledge self-control, and to

**1:1** 1 Pet 1:1.

"Simon" – Matt 4:18; 10:2.

"Servant" – Rom 1:1. Observe that Peter calls the Lord Jesus "our God and Saviour." This is a more literal translation of the Greek and brings out the deity of Christ better than the KJV. The Greek phrase here is constructed exactly like the one in v 11 – "our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." On Christ's deity see also Titus 2:13; Phil 2:6; Heb 1:3,8,10; John 20:28; etc.

"Precious" – faith is of very great value indeed (1 Pet 1:7). Those who have faith have "obtained" or "received" it. In other words, faith in Christ is a gift of God (Acts 3:16; Eph 2:8; Phil 1:29).

"Righteousness" – Rom 3:20-26.

**1:2** Rom 1:7.

"Be multiplied" – 1 Pet 1:2. Observe in what way grace and peace overflow to believers. Compare John 17:3. The better we know the Father and the Son the greater will be our peace, the more we will appreciate God's grace. God wants us to know Him better that we might better receive and use His grace. See 3:18. Paul was always praying that believers might know God better – Eph 1:17; 3:19; 4:13; Phil 1:9,10; Col 1:9-12.

**1:3** "His divine power" refers to the power of the Lord Jesus. He has divine power because He is God. For living the Christian life as it should be lived He has given us everything we need. Compare Eph 1:3. All resources of wisdom and power and holiness and strength are in Him, and He is in all believers (Rom 8:9,10; 2 Cor 13:5; Col 1:27; 2:3).

"Godliness" – 1 Tim 2:2; 3:16; 4:8; 6:5,6,11; Titus 1:1.

"Called" – 1 Pet 1:15; 2:9,21; 3:9; 5:10 (notes at Rom 1:6; 8:30).

"Glory" – John 1:14; 17:5.

"Virtue" – the Greek word is translated "praises" in 1 Pet 2:9. It means excellent qualities, worthy of praise. God is good, His character is praiseworthy – Ex 33:19; Neh 9:25; Ps 17:13; 31:19; 145:7; 1 Pet 2:3.

**1:4** "Great and precious promises" – the New Testament, the whole Bible, is full of them.

"Through them" – we must find these promises, believe them, meditate on them, use them to claim the things God has given us. Otherwise there cannot be the blessed results in our lives that God wants us to experience. It is by faith in God's Word and His promises that we overcome sin, Satan and the world, and it is by faith that we walk with Christ and serve Him.

"Partakers of the divine nature" –

believers in Christ do not become God. This is quite impossible for any man, any created being. But believers are united to Christ; they are in Him and He is in them, and God's Spirit is in them (John 14:17; 17:20-23). In this sense they participate in the divine nature.

"Having escaped" – if we do not escape the world's corruption we shall not escape the anger of God which comes on it (Matt 23:33; Rom 2:3; 1 Thess 5:3; 2 Tim 2:26; Heb 2:3; 12:25). And it is only by believing the promises of God that we can escape.

"Corruption" – Gen 6:11,12; Ps 14:3; Isa 1:4; Acts 2:40; Eph 4:22.

"Evil desire" – all the world's corruption can be traced to man's heart. See Jam 1:14,15; 4:1,2. We all need to obey Peter's exhortation in 1 Pet 1:14 and 2:11. God's very great and precious promises hold out a way of complete escape from corruption. Let us use them.

**1:5-7** Because Christ has given us everything we need, we should lay hold of what He has given and make earnest efforts to grow in all the good qualities of the Christian life.

"Add" – he does not mean to wait until we have one good quality before trying to add another one. These qualities should all be added together as we grow in the spiritual life. How can we add them? By laying hold of God's promises by faith, by self-examination, prayer and meditation on God's Word, by simply putting His Word into practice – doing those things we know we should do, by "putting on" Christ and the new nature (Ps 1:1-3; Luke 11:28; Rom 13:14; 2 Cor 5:7; Eph 4:22-24; etc).

**1:5** "Faith" – this is where we all must start. Without it, of course, we are not real Christians at all, and even if we could add the other qualities they would do us no permanent good – Heb 11:6; John 3:36.

"Virtue" – v 3. The Greek word suggests an excellent character, moral, upright, good.

"Knowledge" – v 2. This is something that cannot be added once and for all. Believers need a constant growth in knowledge – 3:18; Phil 3:10 – but we can begin to add it.

**1:6** "Self-control" – this is a fruit of God's Spirit (Gal 5:23). We "add" it by yielding to the Spirit and walking in the Spirit and using the strength the Spirit gives to bring our thoughts and desires and actions under control.

"Patient endurance" – means to persevere no matter what troubles and trials may

self-control patient endurance, and to patient endurance godliness, 7 and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are in you, and are increasing, they will cause *you to be* neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But he who lacks these things is blind, and cannot see far off, and has forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

10 Therefore, brethren, give even more effort to make your calling and election certain. For if you do these things, you will never fall. 11 For in this way an entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ will be richly provided to you.

12 Therefore I will not neglect to remind you always of these things, though you know *them*,

come to us, and go on in the faith. This is not something we have by nature. We must learn to "add" it (Jam 1:2-4,12).

"Godliness" – v 3; 3:11. The word means piety and devotion to God put into action.

**1:7** "Brotherly kindness" – Rom 12:10; 1 Thess 4:9; Heb 13:1; 1 Pet 1:22. This is love of fellow believers expressed in action, tender affection.

"Love" – divine love which God puts into the hearts of His believers ("agape" – note at 1 Cor 13:1).

**1:8** "Increasing" – 3:18; Gal 5:22,23; Eph 4:12-15; Phil 3:12-14.

"Neither barren or unfruitful" – we may not wish to be useless and unproductive in our Christian lives, but we will be just that – if we do not add the above qualities to our lives.

**1:9** "Blind. . . far off" – blind, that is, to certain spiritual truths, to many wonderful things he could see if his eyes were opened. See Paul's prayer in Eph 1:18,19. Those who can't see far off are not totally blind. They can see the things of this world, things that are all around them, but they lack the kind of sight Paul speaks of in 2 Cor 4:18.

"Forgotten" – if he kept in memory what cleansing from sin meant he would realize that God had called him to a high and holy life and would be adding the good qualities of vs 5-7.

**1:10** "God's calling and election" – Peter means God's choosing them for salvation and calling them to it. In the way the word "election" is used in the Bible God's people are chosen by only one vote – God's – and this vote was cast before the world was created (Eph 1:4; 1 Peter 1:2). See notes at John 6:37; Rom 1:6; 8:28-30; Eph 1:4-6. How do we make sure God has chosen and called us? One way is by adding the good qualities of vs 5-7. If we do not add them we might well doubt whether we know anything about the salvation God gives.

"Fall" – by adding those good qualities we become more sure that God has chosen us, our confidence in Him grows, and with it our strength to stand also grows.

and are established in the present truth. 13 Yes, I think it fitting, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by giving this reminder, 14 knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, even as our Lord Jesus Christ has showed me. 15 Moreover, I will make an effort *to see* that you will always be able to keep these things in memory after my decease.

16 For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when such a voice as this came to him from the majestic glory: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

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

**1:11** "Kingdom" – Matt 4:17; 5:3,10; 6:10,33; 7:21; 25:34; 1 Thess 2:12; 2 Tim 4:1,18; Heb 12:28. Christ will give a rich welcome to those believers who have eagerly added the qualities of vs 5-7. It may not be the same for those who have failed to add them. Compare Matt 5:19; 2 Cor 5:10; Rev 22:12.

**1:12** "Remind" – Rom 15:15; 1 Cor 15:1; 2 Tim 1:6; 2:14. There is a continual need for believers to remember the truths God has revealed. Forgetting is all too possible, and it will have very harmful results. See Deut 8:1-5; etc.

"Established" – Col 1:23; Luke 21:19; 1 Cor 16:13; 2 Cor 1:21,24.

**1:13** "Tabernacle" – or "tent" – 2 Cor 5:1,4.

**1:14** In other words, Peter was expecting to die soon. See John 21:18,19. Compare 2 Tim 4:6. Then Peter was not expecting the return of Christ in his lifetime.

**1:15** "Effort" – he was making part of that effort then, but he probably means he will write more fully on the above matters and send it to them.

**1:16** "We" – himself and the other apostles. They were with Jesus throughout His ministry and saw His supernatural power on many occasions.

"Cunningly devised fables" – compare 2:3; 1 Tim 1:4; 4:7.

"Eyewitnesses" – John 15:27; Acts 1:3. They knew exactly what He did and what He said. There was no room for doubt whatever.

"His majesty" – John 1:14. Here Peter may be speaking of a particular event – the transfiguration of the Lord Jesus. See Matt 17:1,2.

**1:17** See Matt 17:5. The voice came out of heaven, God's dwelling place.

**1:18** Matt 17:6. Peter is not reporting something he heard from someone else. He was there. He saw that Jesus was transfigured. He heard the voice from heaven. This is one factor that made the witness of the original apostles so powerful. Compare Acts 1:8; 2:32; etc.

19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy. *And* you do well to take heed to it, as to a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns, and the day star arises in your hearts. 20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. 21 For prophecy did not come in olden times by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.

**2** But there were false prophets also among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. 2 And many will follow their destructive ways. Because of them the way of truth will be slandered. 3 And because of greed they will make merchandise of you with fabricated teachings. Their condemnation

"Holy" – the mountain became holy because God set it apart for that event. Note at Lev 20:7.

**1:19** "Prophecy" – he means the writings of the Old Testament prophets. Note at Gen 20:7. They too spoke of the "power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (v 16; Ps 2:8,9; 96:13; 98:9; Isa 2:12-19; 13:9-11; 26:21; 62:11; 63:1-6; Dan 7:13,14; Zech 14:3-5; etc). The transfiguration of Jesus confirmed their prophecies, made believers even more certain that they would be fulfilled. The word of the prophets is a light which God has given believers (compare Ps 119:105; Prov 6:23). It shows us where we are and where we are going. It helps us to walk without stumbling and falling.

"Dark place" – Ps 82:5; Prov 4:19; John 1:5; 3:19; Rom 1:21; Eph 4:18; 6:12; 1 John 2:11.

"Day dawns" – the appearing of the Lord Jesus. Then the long night of earth's sin and darkness will be over – Rom 13:12; Isa 60:1-3.

"Day star" – or "morning star" – Rev 22:16. In this verse Peter is urging us to study the Old Testament prophets and observe carefully what they say.

**1:20** "Scripture" – he is referring to the Old Testament. The prophets did not write down their own interpretation of what they saw, and we will not be able to interpret what they wrote with our unaided reason. False prophets are just the opposite. They both prophesy and interpret prophecy out of their own hearts and imaginations – Jer 14:14; 23:16; Ezek 13:3. The prophecies of Scripture came from God and God's help is necessary to understand them.

**1:21** "By the will of man" – he means prophecy uttered by God's prophets and recorded in the Old Testament. The prophets did not of themselves decide to speak or to write something or other. Their prophecies came from heaven. Compare Jer 1:9. They could truthfully say, "Hear the word of the Lord", or "Thus says the Lord" (Isa 1:2,10,11; Jer 2:4; Ezek 3:16,17; etc) because it was absolutely true. God gave them the very words they should say. They were instruments in the hands of God's Spirit to declare God's truth. See Matt 4:4; 5:17,18; Mark 12:46; John 10:35; Acts 4:25; 1 Cor 2:13; 2 Tim 3:16; Heb 1:5-13; 1 Pet 1:11.

If we neglect the Bible we are neglecting the Word of the living God. If we are ignorant of prophecy, we are ignorant of what God will yet do on this earth, and many other

truths we need to know.

**2:1** "False prophets" – Deut 13:1-5; 18:20-22; 1 Kings 18:19-40; 22:6,7; Isa 9:15; Jer 2:8; 5:31; 14:14; 28:1-9; Ezek 13:2-7.

"Among you" – Matt 7:15; 24:11; Acts 20:29,30; Rom 16:17,18; Gal 1:7; Phil 3:18; 1 Tim 4:1,2; 2 Tim 4:3; Jam 4:1. Satan will not give up a method which has proved so successful through the centuries. He himself was the first false prophet on earth. See Gen 3:4; John 8:44.

"Secretly" – 2 Cor 11:13-15; Gal 2:4; Jude 4. Very cleverly they try to gain the confidence of Christians before introducing their false teachings. They mix truth with error so the false is more appealing and attractive. Many of them are pastors and teachers and professors and bishops accepted by churches and denominations.

"Destructive" – false teachings destroy the souls of individuals and whole churches. Religious lies are very deadly. Satan's first one (Gen 3:4) plunged mankind into ruin. His followers keep many people there.

"Denying the Lord who bought them" – Matt 20:28; 1 Cor 7:23; Gal 3:13; Rev 5:9. Christ gave Himself "a ransom for all men" and this includes false teachers. See 1 Tim 2:6. He paid a sufficient price to save everyone if everyone will repent and believe the gospel. False teachers deny Christ. This may mean they deny His deity or that they deny the necessity of His sacrifice. But they will call themselves Christians, and their denials may be subtle and sly (compare Rom 16:18).

"Bring upon themselves" – Phil 3:19. False teachers are inviting disaster. They are provoking God to destroy them. Their behavior cries out for judgment. They will be fully responsible for what happens to them.

**2:2** "Many will follow" – Matt 24:11; Phil 3:18.

"The way of truth will be slandered" – those who profess to walk in Christ's way when actually they do not, cause people to think that the way of Christ is not good. They dishonor the gospel they say they believe.

**2:3** "Greed" – v 15; Rom 16:18; Phil 3:19; 1 Tim 6:5,10. Their religious activity is not for God or for others, but for their own gain.

"Make merchandise of you" – they care nothing for God's people, or for the church. Like Judas they would sell anyone for money.

"Fabricated teachings" – 1 Tim 4:1,2,7; 6:20,21; 2 Tim 4:3,4. The clear teachings of the Word of God is not to the liking of such people, so they make up their own teachings.

uttered long ago now does not delay, and their damnation does not slumber.

4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be kept for judgment; 5 and did not spare the old world, but saved Noah *one of eight*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; 6 and *if he* turned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes *and* condemned *them* with an overthrow, making them an example to those who afterwards would live ungodly lives, 7 and delivered righteous Lot, troubled with the filthy behavior of the wicked 8 (for that righteous man living among them, in seeing and hearing *them*, had his righteous soul pained day after day with *their* unlawful deeds), 9 *then* the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to keep

"Condemnation" - God has already condemned them and will deal with them at the proper time.

**2:4** This is the first of three examples Peter gives to show that God is well able to punish those who will not walk in His truth.

"Angels who sinned" - Jude 6. Notes at Gen 6:1-5; 16:7; etc. Compare Rev 12:4,7,8. Sometime in the past some of the angels in heaven revolted against God and were cast out. Since God did not spare them, we may be sure He will not spare false teachers.

"Hell" - the original has "Tartarus", a Greek word indicating a place of punishment.

"Chains of darkness" - compare v 17; Matt 25:30.

"Judgment" - 1 Cor 6:2,3.

**2:5** Gen 6:5-8,11-13,18; 7:11,12,23.

"Noah. . . a preacher" - this is the only place in the Bible where Noah is called a preacher. He was a righteous man (Gen 6:9) and preached righteousness to the people of his day, but they refused to listen. His ministry went on for many years without a single convert. Since God did not spare the whole of mankind except for eight persons, we may be sure He will not spare false teachers.

**2:6-8** See Gen 19:1-29. How then will false teachers escape?

"An example" - Jude 7; Mal 4:1; Matt 3:10,12; 25:41.

"Righteous Lot" - Gen 18:23. From this verse we understand that Lot had believed God, and that God had counted him righteous (compare Gen 15:6), though we have no record of this in the Bible. Peter gives us further information about Lot's inner experiences as he lived in Sodom. His words show us what goes on in a righteous man's heart when he sees the sins of the world.

**2:9** As in all former eras, so now mankind is divided into two groups - the "godly" and the "unrighteous". In the Bible the "godly" are those who have faith in the one true and living God and are devoted to Him. The Lord Jesus Christ is His one incarnation, and so the godly believe in Him and follow Him. The

the unrighteous for the day of judgment to be punished, 10 and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise authority. *They are* arrogant *and* self-willed, *and* are not afraid to speak evil of honored ones. 11 Whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring abusive accusations against them before the Lord.

12 But these *people*, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand. And they will utterly perish in their own corruption, 13 and will receive the consequences of unrighteousness, *as* those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. *They are* blots and blemishes, delighting themselves with their own deceitfulness while they feast with you. 14 *Having* eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin, they entice unstable souls.

unrighteous reject Him (though, some of them may say they believe in Him), and their lives reveal that they do not truly believe in Him.

"Deliver. . . out of temptations" - 1 Cor 10:13; Rom 8:35-39.

"Day of judgment" - Acts 17:31.

"To be punished" - though the day of final judgment has not come, the unrighteous who have died are now being punished (Luke 16:22-25). This will continue until the day of judgment, and afterwards. **2:10** "Walk according to the flesh" - see Rom 7:5; 8:4-8.

"Lust of uncleanness" - Matt 15:19; Rom 1:24; Eph 4:19,22.

"Despise authority" - that is, despise any authority anyone tries to exercise over them. This often goes along with greed and immorality. Under the power of these things men reject all authority, God's or man's, that would interfere with them in their wickedness. They reject the Lordship of Christ. The more they follow their corrupt desires the more bold and arrogant they become.

"Honored ones" - or "heavenly beings" - such people are contemptuous of the unseen world. To them this world is everything. **2:11** Compare Jude 9.

**2:12** Eph 4:18; Jude 10. They are not humble enough to admit they are ignorant of anything. In their arrogance they speak evil of glorious truth beyond their understanding.

"Brute beasts" - Ps 49:12,20; 57:4; 74:19. Such people have no more spiritual understanding than animals. The satisfaction of bodily desire is all they want. They may pride themselves on their ability to reason, but behave as if they had none.

**2:13** "Consequences of unrighteousness" - Gal 6:7,8; 2 Thess 1:6.

"Daytime" - the nights are not enough for them to satisfy their corrupt desires. They have no shame and do not try to hide their sins.

"Feast with you" - Acts 2:42; Jude 12; note at 1 Cor 11:20-22.

**2:14** They look at every attractive woman

They have a heart exercised with greedy practices. *They are* cursed children 15 who have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son* of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness 16 (and was rebuked for his wickedness. The dumb donkey speaking with man's voice prohibited the madness of the prophet).

17 These *people* are wells without water, clouds that are carried about by a storm. The blackness of darkness is reserved for them for ever. 18 For when they speak great swelling *words* of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much* shamelessness, those who had completely escaped from those who live in error. 19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a man that same *thing* brings him into bondage. 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 in them and overcome, their latter end is worse than their beginning. 21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy command delivered to them. 22 But it has happened to them according to the true proverb, The dog has turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

**3** This second epistle, dearly loved ones, I am now writing to you. In *both* of them I would stir up your pure minds by way of reminder, 2 so that you may remember the words which were spoken beforehand by the holy prophets, and the command of the Lord and

with lust and think how they might seduce her. They sin continually in thought, desire and deed. Compare Matt 5:28-30.

"Greedy" - v 3. They are utterly selfish, the freedom to be enslaved as they are.

"Cursed" - 1 Cor 16:22; Gal 1:8,9; Heb 6:8; Gen 4:11; Deut 16:22; Gal 1:8,9; Heb 6:8; Gen 4:11; Deut 11:26-28; Prov 3:33; Isa 24:6.

**2:15** "Forsaken the right way" - 1 John 2:19.

"Balaam" - Jude 11. His story is found in Numbers chapters 22-25. See notes on Num 22:1-7,19. False teachers and false prophets are for hire. They go after money or other worldly advantages, and are willing to teach what people want to hear.

**2:16** Num 22:28-31.

"Madness" - it is madness for anyone to think he can hide his motives and intentions from God, and to be determined to take one's own way instead of His.

**2:17** "Wells without water" - compare 2 Tim 3:5. They appear promising on the outside but are empty of spiritual life. They profess to belong to God but are without God's Spirit. On "water" see John 4:13,14; 7:38,39.

"Clouds. . .carried about" - Jude 12. See Eph 4:14.

"Darkness" - they choose darkness here on earth (John 3:19,20); they will have darkness forever (Matt 8:12; 22:13; Jude 13).

**2:18** "Swelling words of vanity" - the ungodly are often great boasters - Ps 52:1; 75:4; 94:4; Rom 1:30; Gal 6:13; 2 Tim 3:2; Jam 3:5. They who have least to boast about are often the most boastful.

"Escaped from them" - these evil teachers want to regain control over those who show an interest in the gospel, or who are new Christians, and try to corrupt them.

**2:19** "Promise them liberty" - the only so-called liberty they know is the freedom to do what their sinful natures desire. They pervert the grace of God and seemingly believe that Christians may go on in their sins and still be saved (Jude 4; Gal 5:13), ignoring the teachings of God's Word on this

(1 Cor 6:9,10; Gal 5:21,24).

"Slaves" - John 8:34,35; Rom 6:16. Slaves to money and to lust sometimes stand and preach freedom to others - the freedom to be enslaved as they are.

**2:20** "Escaped. . .through the knowledge of the Lord" - such people may have much knowledge of Christ, may even know Him as Judas did. Notice the word "if" and compare Heb 6:4-6; 10:26,27. People may know a great deal about Christ, may decide to turn over a new leaf and turn away from the corruption in the world. This does not necessarily mean they have received a new spiritual life and a new nature by God's Spirit.

"Worse than their beginning" - compare Matt 12:43-45.

**2:21** Christ's way is the way of righteousness, a straight and narrow way (2:2,15; Matt 5:20; 7:13,14; Isa 35:8; Ps 15:1-5). It is very possible to know this way and turn back from it.

"Holy command" - Matt 4:17,19; Mark 1:15; Luke 24:47; Acts 17:30. The gospel message is like God's holy command to man.

**2:22** The first proverb is found in Prov 26:11, the origin of the second is unknown. True believers are "sheep" (John 10:27), not dogs or pigs. Sheep neither return to their vomit nor wallow in the mud. It is possible for Christ's people to fall into sin (Jam 3:2; 1 John 2:1; Gal 2:11-13; 5:17), but they do not stay wallowing in it (Prov 24:16; 1 John 3:9). Peter gives a clear picture of those who for some reason or other become religious and leave behind for a while their former corrupt and immoral practices. But soon their real nature reasserts itself and they return to them. A washed pig will always be a pig and not anything else.

**3:1** "Reminder" - 1:12-15.

**3:2** "Prophets" - 1:19-21.

"Command" - 2:21. Again he emphasizes the importance of both the Old and New Testaments to the understanding and growth of believers.

Saviour through us, the apostles.

3 First understand this: in the last days there will come scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 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." 5 For they are willingly ignorant of the *fact* that long ago by the word of God the heavens existed, and the earth stood out of the water and in the water, 6 and that the world that then existed was covered with water and perished. 7 But by that same word the heavens and the earth which now exist are reserved for fire, kept until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

8 But, dearly loved ones, do not be ignorant of this one thing, that with the Lord one day *is* like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. 9 The Lord is not slow concerning his promise,

**3:3** "Scoffers" – 2:12; 2 Chron 36:16; Ps 1:1; Ps 73:8; 74:22; Prov 14:9; 15:12; 19:29; 21:24; Isa 28:14; Acts 13:41; Jude 18. Some men ignorantly sneer at the well-founded beliefs of Christians. It is easier to scoff than to examine the evidence and renounce evil desires.

**3:4** "His coming" – Matt 24:3,30; John 14:3. These scoffers will assume that because Jesus has not returned for a long time He will not return at all.

**3:5** "Are willingly ignorant" – they wish to follow their evil desires and do not want to keep in mind anything that might interfere with that. Their beliefs are not based on the facts, but on what they want to be true. Compare Rom 1:28. Their ignorance of God's truth and unbelief are intentional, deliberate.

"By the Word of God" – Gen 1:1-3,6,9, etc; Ps 33:6.

**3:6** See 2:5.

**3:7** "Word" – Heb 1:3.

"Fire" – v 12; Isa 66:15,16; Nahum 1:56; Mal 4:1; Rev 20:9. When will the heavens and earth be destroyed by fire? At the time of the judgment of the unsaved, not before (see Rev 20:11-15). Compare Matt 19:28; Acts 3:21; Rom 8:19-21.

**3:8,9** To men it seems a long time since Christ promised to return. But God does not experience time as we do, and to Him it is like two days, or less. See Ps 90:4 and note. If He waits 2000 years (or more) in our reckoning before sending Christ again, He has a very good purpose in mind. He is at work bringing men to repentance and waiting until He knows He should wait no more. Compare Gen 6:3.

"Not willing that any should perish" – Ezek 18:32; 1 Tim 2:4; John 3:16. God wants every human being to come to repentance – Acts 17:30. Note on repentance at Matt 3:2; etc.

**3:10** "The Day of the Lord" – notes at Isa 2:12; 13:6-13; Joel 2:1,2,30,31; Zeph 1:14-18; Acts 2:20; 1 Thess 5:2;

as some men count slowness, but is patient toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. In that *day* the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fiery heat. The earth also and the works that are in it will be burned up. 11 *Since* then all these things will be dissolved, what kind *of people* you ought to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 *as you* look for and speed the coming of the day of God, in which the heavens will be on fire and dissolve, and the elements will melt with fiery heat! 13 Nevertheless, in accordance with his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness *will* dwell.

14 Therefore, dearly loved ones, since you look for such things, make *every* effort to be

2 Thess 2:2. In the Bible the word "day" does not necessarily mean one single literal day. See Gen 2:4; John 9:4; Isa 34:8; 1 Thess 5:5,8. The "day" of salvation (2 Cor 6:2) has continued from Paul's day to ours, nearly two thousand years. The period of time for the "day" of the Lord may be a thousand years or more, beginning with the return of Christ and ending with the final judgment of Rev 20:11-15.

"Like a thief" – 1 Thess 5:1-3; Rev 3:3; 16:15.

"Fire" – v 7. Peter does not give us a schedule of future events. His language does not rule out the possibility that Christ will return and reign for a thousand years before the final judgment of men and the complete destruction of the heavens and earth (Rev 20:1-6). There will be fiery punishment both before and after that thousand years – 2 Thess 1:7; Isa 24:6-13; 29:6; 30:30; Rev 16:8,9; 20:9,14,15.

**3:11** "What kind" – is it reasonable to live for the things of a world which is heading for destruction? Compare 1 John 2:15-17.

"Holy conduct and godliness" – Titus 2:11-14; 1 Pet 1:15; 1 John 1:6.

**3:12** "Day of God" – v 10; 1 Cor 1:8; 3:13; 5:5; 2 Cor 1:14; Phil 1:6. How can believers speed its coming, that is, cause that day to come more quickly? By doing what the Lord Jesus told us to do. He has instructed us to pray for His Kingdom to come (Matt 6:10), and to take His gospel to all the various peoples on earth (Matt 28:19; Mark 16:15). When His Church has completed this task the end of this age will come (Matt 24:14).

**3:13** "New heavens and a new earth" – Isa 65:17; Rev 21:1.

"Where righteousness dwells" – Rev 21:27; 22:14,15; Ps 15:1-5; 89:14; 118:19; Isa 11:4,5; 1 Cor 6:9,10. It will be the exact opposite of this world where true righteousness, God's righteousness, is despised and persecuted.

**3:14** Dan 12:10; 1 Cor 1:8; Eph 1:4; 4:3;

found by him in peace, without spot, and blameless. 15 And consider *that* the patience of our Lord *is* salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also according to the wisdom given to him has written to you, 16 as also in all *his* letters, speaking in them of these things. In them some things are hard to understand. Those who are ignorant and unstable twist these things, as *they do* also

the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

17 Therefore, dearly loved ones, seeing *that* you know *these things* beforehand, be careful that you also are not led away by the error of the wicked, and fall from your own firm position. 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.

5:27; Phil 1:10; 2:15; 1 Thess 5:23; Heb 12:14. If we live as He has told us, we can look forward to His coming with joy and confidence.

**3:15** "Patience" - v 9.

"Paul" - he wrote of God's patience in Rom 2:4; 3:25,26; 9:22,23; 10:21. Peter may be referring to that letter.

**3:16** "Hard to understand" - there are difficult matters and difficult language in some of Paul's letters (for example, parts of Romans). Without much study and, above all, the enlightenment and wisdom God's Spirit gives, we shall not understand them.

"Ignorant" - this seems a better translation than "unlearned." It is not a lack of education that causes people to "twist" the Scriptures, but ignorance of God and ignorance of how God's Word should be studied and understood.

"Unstable" - 2:14; Jam 1:8 - not firm in the truth (Col 1:23; 4:12; 1 Thess 3:8; 2 Thess 2:15; 1 Pet 5:9,10).

"Twist" - or "distort" - Acts 20:30; 2 Cor 4:2; Gal 1:7; Jer 23:36. How the writings of Paul (and indeed, the whole Bible) have suffered at the hands of such people - many of them highly educated people.

"Other Scriptures" - observe that Peter

places what Paul wrote to them on a par with the Scriptures (which Peter accepted as inspired by the Holy Spirit - 1:21,22).

"To their own destruction" - 2:1,3; 2 Thess 2:10. We must be extremely careful how we treat God's revelation. If we twist and pervert His teachings and do what we wish we cannot escape His condemnation.

**3:17** "Be careful" - or "be on your guard" - Matt 10:17; 16:6; Mark 13:9,23,33; Acts 20:31; 1 Cor 16:13.

"Wicked" - or "lawless" - 2:7,8; 2 Thess 2:3,7-9; 1 John 3:4; Jude 4; 1 Cor 9:21; Jam 2:8.

"Fall" - 1:10; 1 Cor 10:12.

**3:18** "Grow" - Eph 4:12-15; 1 Pet 2:2.

"Grace" - see in Titus 2:11-14 what grace teaches us and what we are to grow in. This is the grace of Christ, and growing in it will be growing more like Him.

"Knowledge" - Eph 1:17; 3:18,19; Phil 3:10; Col 1:9; 2:2. To know Christ better and to be more like Him - this must be the great aim of every believer.

"To him be glory" - Peter knows glory belongs to Christ. Only God is worthy of this glory. Isa 42:8; Rom 11:36; 16:27. Christ is worthy of it because He is the incarnation of God.