

GREAT & PRECIOUS PROMISES

A Study in Second Peter

LESSON THREE

Prayerfully read through 2nd Peter, chapter three.

- 1) Looking at **verses 1 & 2a**, what does Peter state that his purpose was in writing both of his letters to these believers?

- 2) What does Peter tell them he wants them to be **mindful of** in **verse 2**?

Notice that Peter wants them to be **mindful**, not only of the words **he has spoken** to them, but of the words **God has spoken** throughout the **Old Testament**, as well as what the Holy Spirit has inspired Peter and the other disciples of Christ to write in the **New Testament**, Peter's "current time." The **whole Word of God** is vital for us to study and know. Not just "the words in **RED**," not just the **New Testament**, and not just **certain parts** of the **Old Testament** that we choose to read.

We also note in **verse 2** that Peter **confirms the authority** of the **New Testament writings as Scripture**, that were contained in the Gospels and letters, inspired by God's Spirit and written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, James, Jude, Paul, and Peter, himself. We see the proof of that if we look down to Notice that Peter wants them to be **mindful**, not only of the words he has spoken to them, but of the words of God had spoken throughout the Old Testament, as well as what the Holy Spirit has inspired Peter and the other disciples of Christ to write in the New Testament, Peter's "current time" and in **verses 15 & 16** of our chapter, where Peter refers to Paul's letters as Scripture.

- 3) Looking at **verse 3**, what important thing did Peter want them to know up front?

- 4) What did Peter warn would be the **question** that these “scoffers” would ask according to **verse 4**?

- 5) Still looking at **verse 4**, what is the argument they give for their mocking?

- 6) Today, it is no different. We still hear the same things said by scoffers and those who mock the truth of God’s Word. What clue do we get as to **why** these scoffers and mockers continue down this road of unbelief and rebellion? What did **verse 3** tell us about these people and the way they choose to live?

- 7) Reading **verses 5 & 6**, what does Peter say that these scoffers choose to **willfully forget**?

- 8) What is Peter referring to in these verses? Look up Jesus’ words in **Matthew 24:37-39** and explain the attitude that existed during that time.

- 9) What other example does Jesus give of this same attitude in **Luke 17:28-30**?

- 10) Many choose to believe the deceptive lie of the enemy seen in verse 4 of our chapter in 2 Peter. But what does **verse 7** assure us of concerning Christ’s return?

We too, need to be mindful of this truth, and allow this truth to influence the way we live. **David Guzik** states: “**A literal belief in Creation, in Adam and Eve, and in Noah’s Flood are essential for a true understanding of God’s working both then and now. To deny these things undermines the very foundations of our faith. Sadly, today it is many Christians who willfully forget these things, thereby putting themselves in the place of scoffers.**”

11) What word of encouragement does Peter give us concerning these things in **verse 8**?

Charles Spurgeon gives a wonderful commentary on this verse. He says, “**All things are equally near and present to his view; the distance of a thousand years before the occurrence of an event, is no more to him than would be the interval of a day. With God, indeed, there is neither past, present, nor future. He takes for his name the ‘I AM.’ ... He is the I AM; I AM in the present; I AM in the past and I AM in the future. Just as we say of God that he is everywhere, so we may say of him that he is always; he is everywhere in space; he is everywhere in time.**”

12) What **reason** does Peter give to us in **verse 9** concerning “God’s delay” of His coming?

God *longs* for all to be saved, while knowing that many will reject Him. Just as Jesus stated in **Matthew 23:37** about how He wanted to gather the people of Jerusalem like a mother hen gathers her chicks, knowing they **were not willing**. Yet He patiently waits for those He knows **will respond** to the Gospel. We can all say that we are so thankful He didn’t come 100 years ago. Some sitting here in this room right now are thankful He didn’t come 10 years ago, or 1 year ago. We trust in God’s knowledge of all things and His perfect timing in fulfilling all of His promises.

13) God’s love is expressed in His long-suffering, but Peter assures us in **verse 10** that the day **will come**. Describe from this verse **how it will come**.

14) Looking at **verse 11** Peter says “**Therefore**.....[*knowing this*]...” What does Peter point out to us that we should know, and how should that affect how we live?

15) How does this speak to you personally? Does reflecting on these things help change your priorities? If so, in what way?

16) Peter goes on to say in **verse 12** that even though the day of God brings with it the dissolving of the heavens, being on fire, and the elements melting with fervent heat, we can still look forward to the day and anticipate its coming. What reason does he give for this in **verse 13**?

17) Look up Isaiah’s description of this in **Isaiah 65:17** and write the verse below.

18) Read the rest of Isaiah’s descriptions in **Isaiah 65:18-25** and jot down a **few of these descriptions** that stand out most to you.

19) In **2 Peter 3:14**, what does Peter exhort us to **be diligent** of as we look forward to these things?

To “**be diligent**” means to *make every effort*. To **be blameless** is referring to **moral character**. The **Bible Knowledge Commentary** states that “**one’s behavior is linked to his expectation of the Lord’s coming.**” So then, if we really believe and look forward to Christ’s return, it has to affect the way in which we live.

20) Peter knew that as we “look forward” we can often feel impatient. Peter, Paul and many of these early founders of the church expected that Christ would come in their lifetime. By the things they expressed we know that anxious hope was alive and well. But even so, Peter also knew the truth of what he states in **verse 15**. This is a very real truth for all of us who came hundreds and hundreds of years after him. Write down the truth of the **first half** of **2 Peter 3:15** below.

21) As we look at the rest of this verse, along with **verse 16**, Peter reveals his warm regard for Paul and his appreciation of his teaching on this subject, as well as others, and confirming his belief in Paul’s epistles as being inspired by the Holy Spirit and placing them in the company of “**the rest of the Scriptures.**” He also acknowledges that some of these things both he and Paul have written about are “hard to understand.” What does he say in this verse that the **untaught** and **unstable** do with these **hard to understand** things?

22) We need to understand that along with the **untaught** and **unstable** being those that “**twist**” the Word of God to their own liking and destruction, it is also the **untaught** and **unstable** who fall for these deceptions. How important is it, then, to not be counted among them! Look up **Acts 17:11** and record the actions of the believers in Berea.

23) In **verse 17** Peter states, **“Therefore, beloved, since you know this before, beware.....”** Peter’s purpose in **preparing them** for these things was to make them **aware** and cause them to **beware**. What does **verse 17** say they should beware of?

24) **Albert Barnes** defines **“steadfastness”** as **“the firm adherence to the truth.”** In our own time, where we are seeing such a straying away from the “firm adherence” of God’s Word in so many churches today, how vital is it to be a **passionate student** of God’s Word and a **diligent follower** of it? Looking at the **first half of verse 18**, how does Peter say we can guard ourselves from “falling from” our “steadfastness?”

25) Look up and record the following Scriptures which speak to us about the Word of God:

Luke 21:33 -

1 Thessalonians 2:13 -

2 Timothy 2:15 -

2 Timothy 3:16 & 17-

Hebrews 4:12 -

1 Peter 1:23 -

Revelation 19:13 -

We note, as we look again at **verse 18**, the last verse of Peter's second letter, that we are exhorted not only to "have knowledge" but to grow in both the **grace** and the **knowledge** of our Lord Jesus, Christ. We can rightly assume that growing in God's knowledge means we study and feed on the Word of God, we read it, meditate on it, and as David stated in **Psalm 119:11**, we "hide it" in our hearts that we might not sin against Him. But what does it mean to grow in God's **grace**?

Charles Spurgeon gives great insight into what it means to grow in God's grace. He says, "[the text] tells us to 'grow in grace.' There is a vast difference between grace growing and our growing in grace. God's grace never increases; it is always infinite, so it cannot be more; it is always everlasting; it is always bottomless; it is always shoreless. It cannot be more; and, in the nature of God, it could not be less. The text tells us to 'grow in grace.' We are in the sea of God's grace; we cannot be in a deeper sea, but let us grow now we are in it." (Spurgeon)

David Guzik states: "Grace is not merely the way God draws us to Him in the beginning. It is also the way we grow and stay in our **steadfastness**. We can never grow apart from **the grace and knowledge of our Lord**, and we never grow out of God's grace."

26) What do the verses below tell us about the **purpose** and **work** of God's grace in our lives?

Ephesians 4:7 -

Ephesians 4:12 -

Ephesians 4:13 -

Ephesians 4:14 -

Ephesians 4:15 -

Ephesians 4:16 -

Spurgeon noted that this second letter of Peter ends on **“two trumpet blasts.”** One is from **heaven to earth:** grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **The other is from earth to heaven:** To Him be the glory both now and forever.

27) What ministered most to your heart about this last lesson of our study in the letter of 2 Peter?

28) What would you say was your greatest take-away from the entire study of the letter of 2 Peter?

This study was written and prepared by Shawn Van Hook, 2023