

# A Study of 2 Peter

## Lesson One

### Chapter 1 – Know that Your Place is Secure!

#### Goals

1. To understand the knowledge that is ours in Christ
2. To understand where we can find that knowledge
3. To understand that Scripture is GOD’S Word

#### Introduction

It’s pretty important to know things. Every April the IRS wants to know about your income. We want to know scores of ballgames and weather reports. So we watch ESPN, the weather channel, or check the Internet. Knowledge is important. Even more important than sports scores and weather forecasts is knowledge about our eternal condition. What is our eternal condition? How do we know about it?

- **Background of 2 Peter**

**Who?** Simon Peter (1:1; 1:16-18) – references made to it possibly as early as A.D. 95. Was listed as antilegoumena, along with 2-3 John, Jude, Revelation. Chapter two is very similar to Jude. After the time of Eusebius (A.D. 330), “generally accepted as canonical.” In recent times challenged again. Most liberal scholars consider it to have been written by someone else, who used the name of Peter to lend it authority.

**What?** An epistle, a letter from an apostle; the letter is very pastoral, a shepherd addressing his sheep, not specific questions and issues (like 1 Corinthians), but universal truths and encouragements

**When?** Near the end of Peter’s life (1:12-15), A.D. 65-68; “Peter’s last will and testament;” Church tradition and history has Peter martyred in Rome under Nero (d. A.D. 68).

**Where?** Written from Rome (same as 1 Peter, where Peter refers to Rome as Babylon [1 Peter 5:13]); Likely written to the same people as 1 Peter, that is, the Christians in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia (no specific address, “to those...” [v1]).

**Why?** To comfort people facing false teachings inside the church; to encourage living of the faith; “to encourage watchfulness in view of the Lord’s certain return” Theme: Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

“In summary, chapter 1 shows what Christendom was to be like at the time of the pure gospel. Chapter 2 shows how it was to be in the time of the pope and the doctrines of men. Chapter 3 shows how, after this, people will despise both the gospel and all doctrine, and will believe nothing – and this is now in full swing – until Christ comes” (*Luther’s Works* 35:292).

- **Know that you are saved**

**2 Peter 1:1-4** – *Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: <sup>2</sup>Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. <sup>3</sup>His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. <sup>4</sup>Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.*

**List some of the different ways Peter emphasizes that we have nothing to do with our salvation.**

**At least 7** – “through the righteousness of our God and Savior,” “have received,” “through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord,” “His divine power has given us everything we need,” “him who called us”, “he has given us his very great and precious promises,” “through them you may participate”

**Peter says we have been given God’s great and precious promises? Can you name some?**

1) Forgiveness of sins; 2) Peace of conscience/mind; 3) Heaven; 4) Protection in life; 5) Prosperity;

**What does it mean that we “participate in the divine nature”? What doesn’t it mean? For help, read Romans 8:9-17, 1 Corinthians 6:19, Ephesians 2:19-22, and Colossians 1:27 and 3:15-17.**

It doesn’t mean that we become God. It does mean that our will is now once again in line with God’s will. We want to serve Him. We want to follow His laws and commands. We are intimately connected to God. He is our Father, we are His sons (Romans 8:11ff). Christ dwells in us (Colossians 1:27). We are bonded to Him in an intimate fellowship.

- **Knowing that I’m saved, what do I do next?**

**2 Peter 1:5-11** – *<sup>5</sup>For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; <sup>6</sup>and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; <sup>7</sup>and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. <sup>8</sup>For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup>But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. <sup>10</sup>Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, <sup>11</sup>and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

**True or False – Peter is saying that WE make our calling and election sure, that is, it is our work that makes us one of God’s elect, one of the saved. Why or why not? Can you think of some passages that make this clear?**

Disagree. Peter isn’t saying that we save ourselves. In verses 1-4 he nailed home the point that it is the work and merits of Christ that save us. It is God who calls us and elects us. Here he says, based on that, GROW in your faith. Don’t sit idly by, sinning that grace may increase (Romans 6:1-2). Rather, faith is made more certain through works (James 2:14-24). This is the Christian life (cf. Galatians 5:22-23). These works are visible things, visible evidences of faith, how we “see” faith.

What Peter is saying is that we can increase our confidence and knowledge that all of God’s promises are true for us. We can be comforted because we know we are one of God’s chosen, thus we cannot be ripped apart from Christ (not to say we cannot fall away completely, 1 Cor 10:12). And in the end, we will be welcomed into heaven, because Christ has opened the door for us. **Passages: John 15:16, Romans 3:21-28, 2 Corinthians 5:14-21, Ephesians 2:4-9**

**In groups of two or three, discuss Peter’s list of spiritual fruits (verses 5-7). What stands out to you? What is the most challenging for you? If you were making a New Year’s resolution, which would you choose and how would you go about trying to carry it out?**

Answers will vary.

- **How do I know what God says?**

**2 Peter 1:12-15** – *<sup>12</sup>So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. <sup>13</sup>I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, <sup>14</sup>because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. <sup>15</sup>And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.*

### **Why do we need to be constantly reminded “of these things?”**

Our sinful nature wants us to drift away. The world sends countless contradictory messages our way. The devil tempts us to do both, to drift, to listen to the world, to listen to our own thoughts and feelings and impressions.

### **Peter says he will make every effort to remind his readers “of these things.” What efforts can we make?**

Study of the Word at home, personally and in family groups. Study of the Word at Church (Adult Sunday School, Youth Sunday School, GOD 101, GOD 201, catechism). Worship (lessons, sermons, order of service [liturgy]).

**2 Peter 1:16-21** – *<sup>16</sup>We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. <sup>17</sup>For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” <sup>18</sup>We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain. <sup>19</sup>And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. <sup>20</sup>Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. <sup>21</sup>For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

### **Why do we trust the words of the prophets and apostles?**

Because they are eyewitnesses of God’s salvation history. Because they do not speak by their own authority and interpretation, but by God’s authority.

### **What are some things that shake our confidence in the doctrine of verbal inspiration?**

Our own human reason which questions God’s Words, that wants to justify our own sinful behaviors. The results of “scholarly” research pointing out errors and mistakes. The attitudes of our world that doubt the supernatural.

**Key Words:** Holy (perfect, sinless, divine), Inspired (breathed into), Inerrant (without error), Infallible (absolutely trustworthy and sure), source and norm of doctrine and life

- **Summary**

I know that I am saved by Christ, His work on my behalf, applied personally to me through faith. My doing or effort achieves nothing. Based on that, I know that I am called to grow in my faith by living a God-pleasing life. God has empowered me to do that. How do I know all these things? God’s true, holy, inspired, inerrant, and infallible Word tells me everything I need to know. It reminds me of God’s undeserved love and directs me in the paths He desires me to walk.

**A Study of 2 Peter**  
**Lesson Two**  
**Chapter 2 – Know That False Teachers Are Coming!**

**Goals**

1. To come to grips with false teachers in the Church
2. To see how God describes these teachers and their end
3. To look at examples of false teachings within the Church

**Introduction**

This chapter of 2 Peter is very similar to the book of Jude, especially verses 4-16. Some scholars say that proves that the Bible is just a hodge-podge of scraps picked up here and there by editors and put together under the name of influential leaders. However, quite the opposite is true. That Peter borrowed from Jude (or vice versa) is not surprising. The problems they describe, false teachings and teachers within the Church are ones that plague the Church at all places and all times.

- **False teachers exist within the Church**

***2 Peter 2:1-3** But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. <sup>2</sup> Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. <sup>3</sup> In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.*

**What two promises does Peter make about false teachers? Cf. Matthew 24:4-14**

They will be there (in the Church!). “Many will follow them...” Sign of sin and end times.

**How can we determine who these teachers are? Matthew 7:15-23, 1 John 4:1. Why must we test teachings, not just “style” issues (like popularity, talent, beautiful worship space, etc.)?**

We must compare their teachings to the Word of God – the inspired, inerrant, holy, infallible Word. We also will know them by their “fruits.” Which we will see in verses 10-22. They won’t always be obvious false teachers. Satan is wily. He uses sheep’s clothing to infiltrate and try to destroy the Church. So we can’t judge by popularity, numbers, or any “style” issues (good preaching, beautiful church, etc.)

**True or False – It’s no big deal if false teachers and teachings are in the Church, since I know the truth. It’s better to avoid confrontation and division than to go through the difficult process of testing teachings and refuting what is false. Cf. Galatians 1:6-10, 5:9**

FALSE! False teachers introduce “destructive” heresies. It brings division and destroys faith. It gives a bad name to the “way of truth.” If we stand side by side with false teachings, we are saying either 1) I agree with them, or 2) there is no absolute truth, everyone can really believe what they want. Both are denials of God’s clear Word. There is no other Gospel! “People who drift from the Word will drift from their Savior” (Jeske).

**Agree or Disagree – It is enough to state what we believe and leave it at that.**

Disagree – We state what we believe by also stating what we reject. The key to this is because not all our enemies and false teachers are from the outside (Muslims, Buddhists, etc.). Many are inside the Christian Church.

- **God protects His faithful flock**

**2 Peter 2:4-9** <sup>4</sup> For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment; <sup>5</sup> if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; <sup>6</sup> if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; <sup>7</sup> and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men <sup>8</sup> (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)— <sup>9</sup> if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.

**Peter offers four examples of God’s gracious protection. List them. What pattern does this establish for us? What does this tell us about our God?**

1) The devil and evil angels cast into hell, protecting Adam and Eve. 2) The flood, protecting Noah. 3) Sodom and Gomorrah’s destruction – as a bold example. 4) God’s rescue of Lot and his daughters, saving them from the torment of Sodom and Gomorrah’s way of life.

Evil and wickedness is always punished. Compare Psalm 73. He is taking care of His people. He is the Shepherd of Psalm 23. He hasn’t drifted away, stopped paying attention, like Deists or others think.

**How would you respond to this statement: “I might as well give up. No one believes in Jesus, I’m the only one I know. Everyone is so involved in their lives. There’s just no point.”**

1) You are not the only one. Recall Elijah, there were 7,000 others. 2) God will punish those wicked folk. 3) God will rescue you from your trials, which are not more than you can bear (1 Cor. 10:13).

- **A description of the teachers**

**2 Peter 2:10-12** <sup>10</sup>This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature and despise authority. Bold and arrogant, these men are not afraid to slander celestial beings; <sup>11</sup>yet even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not bring slanderous accusations against such beings in the presence of the Lord. <sup>12</sup> But these men blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like brute beasts, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like beasts they too will perish.

**What is the basic sin at the heart of such behavior (cf. Genesis 3:1-6)? How is that sin revealed?**

The basic sin is pride and arrogance. I know better than God. I’m smarter. I want to be like God, to be God (Genesis 3:1-6). And this is made so perfectly clear when people stop treating the Bible

as the inerrant, inspired, holy, infallible, source and norm of doctrine and life. Look at the results. It is clear in an anti-authoritarian attitude, “Not you, not nobody can tell me what to do or what to believe. You can’t judge me!” Yet what does God say in Revelation 22:18-19?

***NB: Jeske’s thoughts on “celestial beings” better “glories.” (Greek is that literally). That is, slandering God, blaspheming His glory and authority by throwing off His authority and the authority of the Word.***

**2 Peter 2:13-16** <sup>13</sup> *They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their pleasures while they feast with you.* <sup>14</sup> *With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed—an accursed brood!* <sup>15</sup> *They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness.* <sup>16</sup> *But he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey—a beast without speech—who spoke with a man’s voice and restrained the prophet’s madness.*

**Peter says God will pay back false teachers for the harm that they do. Read Revelation 6:9-10, Psalm 137:8. Do these words make you uncomfortable? Does this mean we are called to execute God’s vengeance? Read Deuteronomy 32:35, Romans 12:19,**

It shouldn’t. God is clear. He pays back evil (Psalm 73 again). But God says we are treat our enemies with kindness (Romans 12:19).

Peter says these false teachers have followed the way of Balaam (cf. Numbers 22-25, 31:8, 16). Balaam was a fortune teller hired to curse the nation of Israel. God told him not to. He disobeyed. Later, when cursing didn’t work, he told his boss to tempt Israel with Moabite women and idolatry. This worked. 24,000 Israelites were killed in a plague as punishment. Balaam’s sin was ignoring God’s clear Word (“Don’t curse Israel”) and desiring money more than spiritual peace. How do the false teachers described by Peter “follow the way of Balaam?” Can you think of some modern day examples?

They carouse, they revel in pleasures. Eyes full of adultery, greedy – money, sex, food, drink! Think of Jim Bakker and Jimmy Swaggert. Think of the sex scandal in the Catholic Church. Think of pastors caught in adultery or embezzling.

**2 Peter 2:17-19** <sup>17</sup> *These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them.* <sup>18</sup> *For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error.* <sup>19</sup> *They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity—for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.*

**What do Peter’s words tell us about the teachings of false teachers?**

They are “waterless” – appearing to satisfy, but don’t; They are empty and boastful. They appeal to sinful lusts.

**What is “blackest darkness” referring to in verse 17? Is this a fair punishment for false teaching? Read Ezekiel 34:1-4, 10.**

Hell. Yes. Shepherds are held accountable. If they don’t take care of a flock, they will be punished. And if they are only seeking to satisfy lusts and desires, are they believers? No. Thus, Hell!

**What warning does this sound for us as individual Christians, as members of our congregation, as members of our church body?**

We must constantly be going back to the Word of God, to strengthen our own faith, to strengthen the faith of those around us. We use the Word to test the teachings of our pastors and teachers, to rebuke when necessary, teach when possible, encourage always! It is the same with our Synod as a whole.

**2 Peter 2:20-22** <sup>20</sup> *If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning.* <sup>21</sup> *It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.* <sup>22</sup> *Of them the proverbs are true: "A dog returns to its vomit," and, "A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud."*

**Some churches believe that once you are saved, you are always saved. Does Peter teach that in these verses?**

No. Look at verses 20-22.

**Does this verse teach that some people might suffer more punishment in hell than others? Cf. Luke 12:47**

Yes – “It would have been better...”

**Again, what warning does that sound for us?**

Watch out, lest you fall! God is clearly showing us the danger that exists if we turn off His path and follow the wicked ways of Balaam.

- **Examples – Then and Now!**

**Then: Gnosticism**

**Now: Scientology and Mormonism**

There's so much more than the Bible! It's for beginners. There is special knowledge to be had. Gnosticism rejected much of the Bible (the OT especially), the sacraments, that Jesus was a real person (docetism – since flesh is evil, He only appeared as a person).

Scientology and Mormonism is a modern day equivalent. The Bible is for beginners. There's more knowledge to be had. They preach new Scriptures – Dianetics, the Book of Mormon, the Pearl of Great Price, Doctrines and Covenants. They reject that Jesus is true God, thus our only Savior from sins. Their religion is based on good works. It is empty and boastful words.

**Then: Arianism**

**Now: Jehovah's Witnesses**

Arius taught that Jesus was a created being, not equal to the Father. Thus, he destroyed the doctrine of the Trinity, Justification, the Atonement, Christology, etc. Amazingly, this teaching almost gained the upper hand in the Christian Church, and lingered for hundreds of years. The Nicene Creed was formulated to defend against it, also, later, the Athanasian Creed.

The Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus is less than the Father. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was A God," is how they translate John 1:1. They are waterless springs, offering no comfort and hope, only blackest darkness.

### **Now: Issues in fellowship, unity, and tolerance**

The prevailing attitude in our country, and around the world is: "Can't we all just get along?" This has seeped into religious issues. There is an organization, the World Council of Churches, whose intent and goal is to unite all denominations into one, to achieve perfect unity. To do this, they reject most doctrinal divisions as being divisive. They say it is enough to believe in Jesus.

Now we even have to hear people tell us that all religions are the same. We must honor and respect Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Mormon's, and all non-Christian religions as legitimate, viable paths to God. This assaults us even on the television in prime time programming ("Joan of Arcadia").

### **Now: The Jesus Seminar and "Christian" Dogmatics**

The Jesus Seminar is a group of theologians who are trying to determine what, if any, of the statements attributed to Jesus in the Gospels were actually spoken by Him. This group votes on each verse of the Gospels, tagging them as words of Jesus, likely to have been spoken by Him, something He might have said, or something inserted by later writers, editors, church leaders. What a bold and arrogant renunciation of God's authority.

Two "Lutheran" theologians, professors in the ELCA, Carl Braaten and Robert Jenson, edited a dogmatics textbook which is used to instruct seminarians in the ELCA. The book denies basic doctrines of the faith, like verbal inspiration, the centrality of justification by faith, the reality of the Virgin Birth and the resurrection.

**Others...?**

## **Summary**

God tells us clearly that false teachers and teachings will emerge from within the Church. God also tells us just as clearly that they will be punished for their wickedness. Until that time, we must carefully guard the pure Word of God by testing the spirits leading us, clearly stating what God's Word teaches and doesn't teach.

**A Study of 2 Peter**  
**Lesson Three**  
**Chapter 3 – Know That the End is Near!**

**Goals**

1. To grow in our knowledge of the End Times
2. To understand God's loving patience in these Last Days
3. To turn our hearts and minds to the only place we need look – The Word

**Introduction**

**2 Peter 3:1-2** *Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. <sup>2</sup>I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles. <sup>3</sup>First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. <sup>4</sup>They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." <sup>5</sup>But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. <sup>6</sup>By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. <sup>7</sup>By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the Day of Judgment and destruction of ungodly men.*

**In the face of troubles (false teachers, those who scoff at trusting in Jesus, in anticipating Judgment Day), where does Peter tell his readers to turn?**

To the Word of God – the same Word which created the world, the same Word which will destroy this present world and destroy the ungodly.

**What are the words "in the last days" referring to?**

They refer to the time between the first and second comings of Jesus Christ – the last 2,000 years.

**How are the teachings of Deism and Evolutionism fulfillments of Peter's words in verse 4?**

Deists, like Thomas Jefferson, say that God created the world, and then stepped back to leave everything running like a wound clock.

Evolution teaches that everything happening in our world is part of a natural scientific process. Everything is developing from simple to complex creatures and it has always been going on this way, for billions of years. Evolution denies God's creation of the world in six 24-hour days. Evolution denies the reality of the flood and Noah's ark, a catastrophic event that reshaped the world as we know it today.

Both deny God's active involvement, His intervention in the universe.

**What is Peter's reason for bringing up Creation and the Flood as he talks about the last days? How is this both a preaching of law and gospel?**

The same God who "intervened" in those events, will intervene to end this world – to judge the ungodly (the goats of Matthew 25) and to take the godly to heaven (the sheep of Matthew 25).

**2 Peter 3:8-9** <sup>8</sup>*But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day.* <sup>9</sup>*The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

### **Why has God allowed 2,000 years to elapse since Jesus' life on earth?**

Because He does not want anyone to perish (v9; 1 Timothy 2:4). He wants all men to be saved. It is for our benefit, that we might know Him and His Son; and it is also so that we might take that knowledge into all the world – evangelism, preach/herald the good news!

**2 Peter 3:10-14** <sup>10</sup>*But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.* <sup>11</sup>*Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives* <sup>12</sup>*as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.* <sup>13</sup>*But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.* <sup>14</sup>*So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.*

### **What do the words “the day of the Lord” refer to?**

They refer to the day of final judgment, Judgment Day.

**There have been many teachers who claimed to know the exact day when the end of the world would come. How does this verse tell us we should respond when someone says, “I know the exact day that Jesus will return!”? Read Matthew 24:29, 42-44.**

We respond by saying, “The Lord’s day will come like a thief in the night, without warning. Even Jesus, according to His human nature, did not know the day or the hour. How can you?”

It also is a clear sign, a fruit, that a teacher is a false prophet.

### **Instead of trying to calculate when Jesus will return, what does Peter encourage his readers to do?**

He encourages them to live holy and godly lives, that we may be found spotless, blameless, and at peace with God.

### **Again, how are these verses both a message of law and gospel?**

They are law to the unbeliever, who will view the coming as dreadful and shocking, a thief breaking in and taking everything from them – ultimately, their being sent to hell. To the believer it is like a father coming home from a long trip away on business, it will be joy and gladness, something we look forward to.

**How do these passages help illuminate what Peter means when he tells us about a new heavens and a new earth, a home of righteousness: Isaiah 65:17-25, John 14:1-3, 1 John 3:2, Revelation 21:1-8, 22:1-5?**

**2 Peter 3:15-16** <sup>15</sup> *Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. <sup>16</sup>He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.*

### **How is our congregation an example that the Lord's patience means salvation?**

Our flock has grown from 90 to 160. Each day He gives us we have another chance to share the good news with a co-worker or friend, to invite them to GOD 101 or worship.

### **How do we deal with the things in Scripture that are "hard to understand?"**

By looking at clear portions of Scripture.

**2 Peter 3:17-18** <sup>17</sup> *Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position <sup>18</sup>But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.*

### **Looking back over each chapter of 2 Peter, what do we need to be on guard against?**

Chapter 1 – thinking that we somehow have saved ourselves

Chapter 2 – false teachers and their seductive teachings

Chapter 3 – losing sight of the coming Judgment Day; giving in to impatience and reason

### **What comfort does Peter give you when he calls your position "secure"?**

I'm protected by my God and Savior Jesus Christ. He is my refuge and my fortress. He covers me with His wings like a mother hen. The Church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord. It is a firm foundation. The gates of hell cannot overcome it.

### **Summary**

Pastor Mark Jeske: "As these Asia Minor Christians grew in their knowledge of the Word of God, they would grow in wisdom to discern Satan's lies, grow in power to reject those lies, grow in missionary zeal to rescue people who are lost, grow in love to minister patiently to people, grow in certainty of their own salvation, and grow in compassion to show love to people who suffer" (People's Bible, 196).