

A Study in the Book of II Peter

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Excellencies for L.I.F.E

A Contextual Study of II Peter 1:3

The L.I.F.E. committee has chosen to put all ministry among Berachah ladies under the umbrella of II Peter 1:3. It is a brave and shocking claim. What are the implications if we believe this verse?

Seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

The knowledge of God stays close to concrete details of life or remains abstract and useless.

Does it connect to the way I view my body? To days I am tired? To wanting a prettier house? To the way I use my free time? To choosing companions? To the way I treat a friend who hurt my feelings? To walking into a room full of people? To my sense of humor? To “white lies”? To what I pray for? To “I can’t”? To what I’m willing to fight for?

She came in with the smell of alcohol on her person, just out of checking herself into rehab. She had been diagnosed as bipolar. The list of drug involvement was long, the treatment for an STD hopefully effective. The lies and stealing had complicated every previous relationship. When asked about her faith in Christ, she replied, “Yes, I did that when I was a little girl.”

Something is dead wrong when girls who have grown up in Christianity lose the ability to connect the implications of the knowledge of God with life’s choices. We need this verse. We need this book. We will exercise our faith together in this study, further broadening our appreciation of the “Excellencies of God”.

LESSON ONE

GRACE MULTIPLIED

**Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ
to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours,
by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:
II Peter 1:1**

DAY ONE.

1. Begin memorizing II Peter 1:1 for reciting during next class. Write it out below.

DAY TWO.

Remember that we are attempting to see 1:3 in its larger setting, that which formed the message in the mind of the Writer. We are soaring over the landscape, enjoying the finished product. We must think, query ourselves, seek to understand the thought processes that God considers important enough to be preserved for the ages. Peter's experience, both good and bad, brings intensity to his writings. We are combining human with divine, with the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Thank Him now.

1. Read through the book and mark repeated words. List some of them below.
2. Do you see any contrasts? Mark them in your margin, and list some below.
3. Entitle the chapters and the book on the chart below.

Title of the Book:

Chapter 1	
Chapter 2	
Chapter 3	

Write these titles on your text sheets.

4. Lists were a common method of instruction in the ancient world, as books were not available. A children's game may have been to put one word on a coin, coins would then be won or lost, but the children were learning the contents as they played. They help us also. What lists do you see in the book?

5. Now read just Chapter 1 in one sitting. What do you see this time that you had not observed?

6. Try to determine the paragraphs in Chapter 1, changes in the flow of thought. Mark them with a straight line on your text sheet after the last verse of the paragraph.

DAY THREE.

Now let's concentrate on 1:1, 2 to finish the week's study. We may tend to overlook the greetings of biblical letters, but we must not take for granted the "everyday" truths referred to.

1. List the doctrinal words in these two verses, categories of truth represented here that the new believer in Gujarat, India, must understand.

2. What two things does Peter call himself in 1:1?

DOULOS – Peter calls himself the bond-servant of Jesus Christ. William Barclay says that this word is "...apparently a title of humiliation, and which the greatest of men took as the title of the greatest of honour." Note that briefly in the following:

Scripture	In Reference to Whom?	Significance of Those Referred To
Psalm 105:26, 27		
Psalm 78:70-72		
Amos 3:7		

Romans 1:1; James 1:1; Jude 1		
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3. There is deep meaning in the believer also being called a *doulos*. Look up Colossians 4:12 and speak to the Lord your desire to follow the example of this servant.

Barclay expands the meaning by the following explanations. To call the Christian a *doulos* means that he is these things.

Inalienably Possessed by God. In the ancient world a master possessed his slaves in the same sense as he possessed his tools.

Unqualifiedly at the Disposal of God. In the ancient world a master could do what he liked with his slave...He had the power of life and death over his slave...The Christian is the man who has no rights of his own, for all his rights are surrendered to God.

Owes an Unquestioning Obedience to God. Ancient law was such that a master's command was a slave's only law. Even if a slave was told to do something which actually broke the law, he could not protest...The command of God is the believer's only law.

He Must Be Constantly in the Service of God. The slave had literally no time of his own, no holidays, no time off, no working-hours settled by agreement, no leisure. All his time belonged to the master. The Christian cannot, either deliberately or unconsciously, compartmentalize life into the time and the activities which belong to God, and the time and the activities in which he does what he likes. The Christian is necessarily the man every moment of whose life and time is spent in the service of God.

What are the implications of the above to you? Highlight significant phrases.

4. Look up the word for "same kind" in vs. 1, translated "precious" in the KJV, you will find it under "dear", definition 2, in Vine's Expository Dictionary.
5. Look up the word "multiplied" in your expository dictionary.

Lesson Two

TRUE KNOWLEDGE

**Grace and peace be multiplied to you
in the knowledge of God
and of Jesus our Lord;
II Peter 1:2**

This week we will study in depth our L.I.F.E theme verse, II Peter 1:3, “*Seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.*”

We have just begun to see why Peter introduces his letter the way he does. It is not random. It is by design, with forethought. As you study this verse, remember that you have received a faith as precious as Peter’s, “of the same kind.” That was accomplished by righteousness that had its source in “our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.” Remember that *grace and peace* are “made to increase and accumulate” through a “super-knowledge” of God. That takes work. That is why we are here.

DAY ONE.

1. Write out 1:1 from memory and begin learning 1:2

2. Read 1:1-4 again. We are introduced in v. 3 to the concept that “life” is affected by truth. Bond-servants are not comfortable with disconnects between the Master and His desires. “Faith” and “righteousness” and “grace” and “peace” and the “knowledge of God” are linked to life. What is your biggest challenge today? Write out below how these five things affect your perspective of that. You maybe doing this automatically by the Holy Spirit, but it is good to “hear” why you do what you do.

Faith

Righteousness

Grace

Peace

Knowledge of God

3. Is there a period in the English Bible after verse 2? So what is the connection between vss. 2 and 3?

4. Look up the word “divine” in your expositor’s dictionary. Vine’s will show you where the word is used again. Mark them if you have not already. Write the definition in the margin in both places.

5. “Power” is the word DUNAMIS, meaning “ability, or might”. Look up “granted” in your dictionary. Once again, it is used twice. Mark them and write the definition in the appropriate places.

Write out the phrase “His divine power has granted to us” in words that express what you have learned thus far.

DAY TWO.

1. Grace and peace, then, are increasing in my life in direct proportion to my knowledge of God. His grace gifts are provided by means of the power that belongs to God. In light of His infinite abilities, we dare not comfort ourselves with, “God made me this way. I can’t help it.” According to 1:3, our resources are sufficient for what two things?

What are the implications of this to your present challenges?

2. “Knowledge” is a prominent theme in the book. This is the second use of the word in just three opening verses. Why do you think Peter is especially aware of the need for consciously, actively affirming truth?

3. Scan the book and write out references and phrases that mention our thought processes. Mark them all with a color. You will include “consider”, “reminder”, “call to mind”, etc.

4. Life and godliness are hopeless pursuits unless we are changing our thought patterns. Destructive thoughts that drove us last year must not be repeated. Knowing that He has called us by His “glory and excellence” shows up in our choices. So the test question is obvious, “Does this attitude or action show His glory and excellence?” Or does it show that I want my own glory and am willing to do whatever it takes to protect myself? The Christian life IS an unending series of changes in thoughts, repenting of those that are unworthy of the resources provided.

Read 1:4. Our resources are further explained. By “these”, His glory and excellence, He has given us promises. What two words describe these promises?

Do they increase your confidence in what is to come? Can you use these two words to describe promises made to you by people in your life? Can you rely on the word of those closest to you in this way? Can they rely on yours? In both cases, we must appreciate the fact that God’s promises are a “firm guarantee”. Write those two words over the word “promise” in 1:4, 3:9, 13.

5. These promises serve an important purpose in our Christian life. By them, what happens to us according to v. 4?

This brings us to the subject of God’s “communicable attributes”, those of His excellencies He shares with us to a small degree. Because man was made in the image of God (Genesis 1:29), we are given partial counterparts of His qualities. In contrast, man cannot find likenesses in His omnipresence, God’s ability to be everywhere simultaneously. That is a “non-communicable” attribute. The division is a further attempt to understand God and His expectations of bond-servants. It is merely an interpretive device, as the “mind is feeble, and the well is deep.”

There are moral implications to this truth. The “excellencies of God” are to produce “excellencies for life.” It will serve our purposes best to study now some of the 1) Mental and then 2) Moral attributes of God to deepen our understanding of being “partakers of the divine nature.” Credit goes to Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology for much of the following information.

A. Knowledge. *God fully knows himself and all things actual and possible in one simple and eternal act.* He is omniscient. We are only a miniscule shadow of His knowledge, but are nevertheless under obligation to act on this privilege.

GOD IS...	THEREFORE, I AM TO...
Job 37:16	II Peter 3:18

On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate yourself in demonstrating this family trait? _____

In what ways would you like to improve?

Will God ever fail to plan ahead, or take into account all the eventualities that occur? How is the answer to his question a blessing in your life?

B. Wisdom. *God's wisdom means that God always chooses the best goals and the best means to those goals.*

GOD IS...	THEREFORE, I AM TO...
Job 12:13	Proverbs 3:5, 6

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate yourself in living out this excellence? _____

In what ways would you like to improve? Write out one goal and ask God if it is His goal and how He would have you reach it.

Do you really believe that God is working wisely today in your life? In the world? If you find this difficult to believe at times, what might you do to change your attitude?

C. Truthfulness. *God's truthfulness means that he is the true God and that all his knowledge and words are both true and the final standard of truth.*

GOD IS...	THEREFORE, I AM TO...
I John 5:20	Colossians 3:9,10

On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate yourself in living out this excellence? _____

In what ways would you like to improve? What steps should you take to change?

Grudem includes Faithfulness under Truthfulness. *God's faithfulness means that God will always do what he has said and fulfill what he has promised.* He can be relied upon.

Why do we not very often realize that the greatest harm of all that comes from lying is the fact that God himself is dishonored? Do you need to ask God's help to more fully reflect on His truthfulness?

DAY THREE.

Yesterday we highlighted the Mental Attributes that, according to Wayne Grudem's Systematic Theology, are communicable. God is willing to share with us in part His knowledge, His wisdom, His truthfulness, in order that we may reflect Him to the "walking dead" around us. We have become "*partakers of His divine nature...*" so they may see how He would be if He were here.

Today we will look into some of the Moral Attributes that are significant marks of God-likeness. Without "family resemblance", we have every right to question legitimate relationship to the Father. He endues us with His nature, and He will show up.

1. Goodness. *The goodness of God means that God is the final standard of good, and that all God is and does is worthy of approval.* There is no higher standard of good than God's own excellencies.

GOD IS...	THEREFORE, I AM TO...
Psalm 31:19	Galatians 6:10

On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate yourself in demonstrating this family trait? _____

In what ways would you like to improve? Are there things in your life that could not be classified as good? Some may need to be changed. Others must wait until God works them out for good. Can you tell the difference?

2. Mercy. *God's goodness toward those in misery and distress.* Believers should be the most merciful people in the world, balancing this trait with God's wisdom and holiness. His grace and patience are often mentioned with His mercy (Exodus 34:6; Psalm 103:8), so keep these in mind as well.

GOD IS...	THEREFORE, I AM TO...
Exodus 34:6	Matthew 5:7

On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate yourself in demonstrating this family trait? _____

In what ways would you like to improve? Do you think the church should be involved in mercy ministries? How? Give an example of a way to teach a child to be merciful. How about patient?

3. Peace. *God’s peace means that in God’s being and in His actions he is separate from all confusion and disorder, yet he is continually active in innumerable well-ordered, fully controlled simultaneous actions.*

GOD IS...	THEREFORE, I AM TO...
I Corinthians 14:33	Ephesians 4:3

On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate yourself in demonstrating this family trait? _____

In what ways would you like to improve? Is it possible to demonstrate God’s peace even in a noisy room? Are those around you more peaceful because you are with them? At what times do you tend to lose a peaceful attitude?

4. In addition to Mental and Moral Communicable attributes, Grudem identifies Attributes of Purpose, i.e., will, freedom, and omnipotence. “His divine power” is the source of all these grace gifts (1:3), so we will refresh ourselves with this truth.

Power. *God’s omnipotence means that God is able to do all his holy will.* His holy will for us is that we “escape the corruption that is in the world by lust”, live like it, and lead others out of it.

GOD IS...	THEREFORE, I AM TO...
Ephesians 3:20	Colossians 1:10, 11

On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate yourself in demonstrating this family trait? _____

In what ways would you like to improve? Think of ways you may excuse sinful behavior in yourself, those you love, or those you hear about.

5. Our salvation is described in 1:4 as having escaped, fled from “corruption.” Look up that noun in your expositor’s dictionary. Do you believe that sin always has these characteristics?

What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.

A. W. Tozer

Lesson Three

ADD TO YOUR FAITH

II Peter 1:5

**Seeing that His divine power has granted to us
everything pertaining to life and godliness
through the true knowledge of Him
who called us by His own glory and excellence
II Peter 1:3**

Memory Verses: Write out 1:1, 2 below from memory, and being to work on 1:3.

DAY ONE.

II Peter 1:5 - ***“Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence knowledge.”***

“In this beautiful paragraph Peter orchestrates a symphony of grace. To the melody line of faith he leads believers to add harmony in a blend of seven Christian virtues which he lists without explanation or description. A carnal Christian has spiritual myopia (v. 9), but a spiritual Christian is both effective and productive (v. 8) in his understanding of the Lord Jesus and his application of biblical principles to daily life.”

Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 859

As we study this book it helps to remember that we are reading a real letter that was written by a real person to real people. Peter addressed the letter “to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours,” a way of saying “to all believers everywhere.” That’s you and me! Thank you, Peter! God knew that we need it.

God, through Peter, is addressing you and me!

1. To help us see the personal nature of this letter please re-read chapter 1-2:3, marking each personal pronoun, *you*, *we* *us*, etc.
2. Make a list of those personal pronouns including the descriptive word(s) that either precede or follow them. Example: *grace and peace multiplied to you*.

3. Our verse for today begins with the words, “*Now for this very reason...*” What very reason? To what is Peter referring?
4. What is this one entity that he says we have all received? _____

Since it is true that we believers have this saving faith, what do we do now? As Francis Schaeffer wrote in view of all that we have received from God, “How Should We Then Live?”

5. According to verses 5-7 there are seven qualities that a Christian needs to add to his faith. Mark them in your text and then list them here.
6. Do you ever feel useless or unfruitful as a Christian? Verse 8 gives us the antidote for such feelings. Please write it out here, circling the words that stand out to you.
7. What phrase in verse 5 tells us how we are to go about acquiring these qualities?

What does the word “diligence” mean?

How do you feel that you are doing in your earnest, zealous, sometimes in haste, careful adding of these qualities to your faith?

DAY TWO.

We begin our life in Christ by faith and James tells us to continue living by faith for we are not made perfect by the flesh. Yet we must apply our minds and purposefully allow God to change us while we live on earth. Peter tells us, “*in your faith supply...*”, or another translation states “*add to your faith...*”

1. In this context what does “supply” mean?
2. What is the first quality in verse 5 that we need to “add to” or “supply” in abundance to our faith?

3. One person who is an example of such moral excellence is Ruth. Please write out Ruth 3:11 which describes her future husband's estimation of her.

4. God places great worth on a "virtuous" woman or wife. Write out Proverbs 31:10.

5. What are some of those virtuous qualities that you find in the remainder of Proverbs 31:11-31? Do you see some areas where you need some work?

6. The second quality that we are to add to our faith is _____.
What does "knowledge mean?"

7. Two familiar women are contrasted in Scripture in relation to acquiring knowledge, Mary and Martha. Read Luke 10:38-42. What seems to be the difference between the two women in reference to spiritual knowledge?

DAY THREE.

1. The Scriptures are full of verses on knowledge. Let's write a few out below.

Proverbs 1:7

How should this knowledge affect your relationship with your husband?

Proverbs 10:14

How would this verse direct you in training/teaching your children about God?

Colossians 2:3

How would this verse direct you in getting to really know Christ?

I Corinthians 8:1

Once acquired, how should you use the knowledge?

Ephesians 3:19

What does this verse mean to you?

2. The one who wrote this letter, Peter, had faith in Christ. He also had weaknesses, but he grew in grace and in the knowledge of our Savior, Jesus Christ, as he admonishes us to do. When we become discouraged in our Christian walk, we must not quit, but remember Peter. If you are familiar with Peter's life, think through his life now. Or you may want to read about him in Matthew or other gospels in order to answer the following questions.
3. How may you compare your weaknesses to some of his? One question is, how have you denied belonging to Christ, which might not be as outspoken as Peter but denying Him just the same?

4. Obviously he was lacking in moral excellence/courage/conviction when he denied Christ. How can you display such moral excellence before your children?

5. Following the filling of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost in Acts 2, Peter and other disciples were speaking in other languages to Jews who were from many nations and some were mocking. (Some of those nations were modern Iraq and Iran.) Great change had taken place in Peter, you couldn't stop him now!

Let's write out the following verses which show the moral excellence, knowledge, conviction, courage of Peter now!

Acts 2:14

Acts 2:22-24

Acts 2:36

Acts 3:6

Acts 4:8-12

J. Vernon McGee says, "Out in the woods two things are happening – actually transfigurations. The vegetation that is living is growing, the vegetation that is dead is decaying. If you are a child of God you are to grow."

We may take heart about our Christian life when we look at Peter, by learning, as he did, to "*add to your faith.*" As we ask God for help He enables us to make this beautiful symphony of grace.

Our thanks to Mimi Lee for compiling this lesson.

Lesson Four

USEFUL and FRUITFUL

II Peter 1:6-9

**For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises,
in order that by them you might become
partakers of the divine nature,
having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.
II Peter 1:4**

DAY ONE.

1. Write out II Peter 1:1-3 below and begin work on 1:4.
2. Think of the times you are in the produce department, enjoying the bounty of an American grocery store. You enjoy the variety, the colors, the shapes, you think of the nutritional benefits in each. We are in the middle of the passage describing the fruits of faith (v. 5, 6), putting them into our cart so that we may assimilate them and ultimately reap the benefits from them. These qualities are not the product of human effort. They result from our connection to the “divine nature” (v. 4), made ours by faith. These are various facets of the Spirit’s work in the life. However, He commands us to extend ourselves (v. 5) in picking and preparing the fruit. Read 1:1-9 again. List the fruits of faith once more below, asking the Lord to make them flourish in your life.
3. We are ready now to add “self-control”, a curious quality unless we remember that the Holy Spirit is intimately involved with us providing the “divine power” (v. 3) for life and godliness, i.e., to escape the corruption of our own lust (v. 4). The false teachers claimed that knowledge released them from the need for self-control. Notice that in the following.

2:10

3:3

4. This quality was highly prized in Greek moral philosophy, the ability to take a grip of oneself. The word literally is an intensified form of the word “strength”, “power”, coupled with the preposition “in”, so indicating strength within. What is its significance in the following passages?

Acts 24:25

Galatians 5:23

I Corinthians 9:22-27 (v. 25)

Verse 5 tells us to do our utmost at cultivating these qualities in our lives because of what we have in Christ. In what ways do you need to use self-control to improve in the following areas? Keep in mind that you are adding moral excellence and knowledge. What hindrances can you think of?

Physical

Emotional

Mental

Spiritual

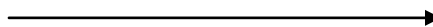
DAY TWO.

We are still “supplying” our faith with its fruits. The word “supply” was used of a wealthy donor to the Greek theater. He provided money to train, costume the entire chorus, build sets, to present lavish productions. The word speaks of abundant resources, taken in this case to mean that in our faith we are sufficiently supplied for “life and godliness.”

1. We are told in 1:6 to add “perseverance” to our self-control. Notice the interconnection between the two, especially in Hebrews 12:1, 2. What other insight do you receive from these verses to help you understand this truth?

2. The original word used here is HUPOMONE, literally, “to remain under”, translated “patience”, “endurance” in other places. It does not indicate the compliance of a martyr. It is bravery in action, refusal to retreat under pressure. It is remaining unmoved by difficulty and distress. It is actively involved in solutions. Under what circumstances are we to be patient in the following?

Hebrews 12:7



I Peter 2:20



3. What resources do we have for endurance according to Colossians 1:11? Will this help you pray more aggressively for those you love who are hurting? Be compassionate, but do not accept being “burned out”, or “I’ve had all I can take”, *et al* for normalcy.

4. What are the benefits for keeping on, according to the following?

James 1:4



James 1:12



5. What is listed after perseverance? The word seems to mean “reverence manifested in actions”, that “practical awareness of God in every aspect of life” that drives our thoughts and behavior. Peter uses the word four times in this book. Mark them on your text sheet in a color, possibly with a short definition above the word. Write out the phrases below.

1:3

1:6

1:7

3:11

6. The final two traits are “brotherly kindness” (PHILA, “love”, and DELPHIA “brother”), and “love”. What acts of kindness have you done in the last two days toward those under your roof? Those outside? How have you been the recipient of those from another?

DAY THREE.

1. Read now 1:8, 9. Notice how, in addition to lists, the author uses couplets to communicate truth. He combines two similar words, i.e., “yours...increasing” (v. 8). Comment on the use of each of these two.

Scan 1:1-10 and list other places he uses this method.

What is the significance of this? What could be some of the reasons?

2. There is another connection in v. 8 to quality of L.I.F.E and the “true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”. Look back over the list in 1:5-7 and show how each quality is true of Him. Write out exemplary verses from our Fall study of “The Excellencies of God.” Ask God to give you a “useful, true, knowledge” of Him.
3. 1:9 uses the word “blind” to describe the person who lacks these qualities. To whom does the Scripture usually refer to as “blind”? II Corinthians 4:4.

Who is referred to in this case? How has the blindness occurred? What connection does this have to the Lordship Salvation debate?

4. Go back through the list of 1:5-7 and show how being “short-sighted” affects each one. Use the back of this sheet for your answer if necessary.

Lesson Five

PAY ATTENTION

II Peter 1:10-21

**Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence,
to your faith, supply moral excellence,
and in your moral excellence, knowledge;**

II Peter 1:5

We once more affirm the truth of our L.I.F.E. theme, that “His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to L.I.F.E. and godliness through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.” We are indeed able to change, to “bend all our energy to the task of equipping ourselves” with *moral excellence, knowledge, etc.* Jay Adams reminds us,

We are certain that if a headhunting Auca Indian can change so radically that he abandons his primitive pagan life style and is able to tour the United States giving testimony to his new-found faith, then an American housewife, who may have experienced less love and security in her childhood than she might have wished, also may become a responsible Christian woman. She is not doomed inevitably to live the life of a (verbal) headhunter because of what her parents did to her.

We believe that for ourselves and those we pray for, talk to, are involved with.

DAY ONE.

1. Write out 1:1-4 from memory and begin working on 1:5.

2. Read 1:10-21, our passage for the week. Note any general observations below just from your own reading.

3. 1:10 begins with “Therefore...” The upcoming conclusions are based on what that precedes. What is the writer’s flow of thought thus far?

4. The call of v. 10 is to zeal for the purpose of making certain our “calling and choosing”. Why do you think this order is used in these two aspects of our salvation?

5. After reminding us of our resources, Peter may seem to emphasize man’s role in salvation. e.g. “apply all diligence” (v. 5), “add to your faith” (v. 5), let your knowledge of Christ be useful and fruitful (v. 8), “make certain”, (v. 10). In light of the content of Ch. 2 & 3, why is that emphasis appropriate?

6. 1:10 promises us that incorporating truth into life circumstances will keep us from stumbling in time. The next promise is an eternal result. What is it and what does it mean?

7. In 1:11, the words translated “abundantly supplied” are the same Greek word used in 1:5. Is there any connection?

DAY TWO.

Most commentators end the previous paragraph after v. 11. Draw a line on your text sheet before v. 12. Peter’s real aim for writing is beginning to unfold. His presence is powerful in this section. Circle the pronouns that include him in vss. 12-19.

1. Peter is confident of the value of repetition. What are some of the benefits of reiteration?

2. Peter is reminding them of truth even though what two things are true?

3. One of Peter's most solemn concerns is for his readers' "stability". We see his use of the word in both the negative and the positive. The same root word is used in each of the following. Are you praying for the stability of some you love? You may find some paradox in the word study below. Write out a statement to summarize what you learn from each of the following.

II Peter 2:14

3:16

3:17

Luke 22:32

Romans 16:25

I Thessalonians 3:2

Romans 1:11

James 5:8

I Thessalonians 3:11-13

DAY THREE.

1. What is Peter's point in 1:13-15?

2. Read 1:16-18. Then read Luke 9:27-36 to remind yourself of Jesus' Transfiguration. What connection does it have with "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"? Note that all three gospel accounts (Matthew 17:1-9; Mark 1:1-9) are preceded with these words:

Truly I say to you there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.

What is the significance of this prophetic word?

3. In v. 18, the mountain is referred to as the "holy" mountain. Why do you think it is described that way? Note other instances where "holy" is used to describe a place.

Exodus 3:5

Joshua 5:15

4. Peter has told us that God has, by His divine power, "*granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness through the true knowledge of Him who called us...*" He also tells us something of HOW God has done that, and how He has NOT done it. Fill in the chart below, as we "*do well to pay attention.*"

NOT BY...	BUT BY...
1:16	1:16
1:20	
1:21	1:21

4. In 1:20, why do you think Peter uses the terminology, "*Know this first of all...*"?
5. The Greek word for "moved" in v. 21 is PHERO. The same word is used in vss. 17, 18 of the audible voice of God, an "utterance made". What does this say about Scripture?

Lesson Six

FALSE WORDS

II Peter 2

**And in your knowledge, self-control,
and in your self control, perseverance,
and in your perseverance, godliness;**

II Peter 1:6

Peter has prepared us in Chapter 1 for the contrasts we will see in Chapter 2. We are “partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.” But we must *live* out those facts by our diligence. The Enemy Within, that lust from which we have escaped, is fierce.

“...the flesh hates everything about God...the more something enables us to find God and feast on him, the more violently the flesh fights against it...When the mind wants to know God, the flesh imposes ignorance, darkness, error, and trivial thoughts. The will can't move toward God without feeling the weight of stubbornness holding it back. And the affections, longing to long for God, are constantly fighting the infection of sensuality or the disease of indifference.”

This is never more obvious than when we are studying God's Word and praying. Peter is showing us now in Chapter 2 what happens when we give up the fight and follow our untrustworthy instincts. Ask God for the will to finish, the illumination to understand the significance of His truth.

DAY ONE.

1. Write out 1:1-5 from memory and begin working on 1:5.

2. Read Chapter 2 and list Peter's descriptions of false teachers. In the other column, write out opposite traits that were mentioned in Chapter 1.

False Teachers	Partakers of the Divine Nature

DAY TWO.

1. The root word for “destruction” is used twice in this verse. It basically means “ruin, waste”. Peter uses it three other times, and since it is characteristic of what false teachers produce, we should mark each occurrence with those two words. Also mark the “chain” of references so that you can follow them through the book. Write the phrases out below.

2:1

2:1

2:3

3:7

3:16

2. The word “false” is repeated three times in the first three verses also. The first two Greek words are PSEUDO, but the word to describe their words in v. 3 is PLASTOIS. Mark your text with these words and color all three.

3. To assure his readers that God’s judgment is certain, he describes it three different ways in 1-3. What are they?

God’s judgment is _____.

God’s judgment is not _____.

God’s judgment is not _____.

4. Peter then gives in v. 4-9 three Old Testament examples of God’s refusal to “spare” those who sinned. What are they? The first one is from Genesis 6. We are given revelation from Peter that is not given there. What is it? Read the account and describe it briefly below along with the other two.

5. We are given revelation from Peter that is not given in the Old Testament about Lot. What descriptive word is used for him three times? Does this surprise you in light of Genesis 19:8, 16, 33, 35? What was going on in his soul according to Peter? How does this fit in with the Lordship Salvation perspective? Once again we are reminded that the corruption within is very deep, and war against it must be maintained.

DAY THREE.

1. One of the criticisms of the authenticity of II Peter is the similarity with the book of Jude. Did Jude borrow from Peter, or did Peter borrow from Jude? Were both authors drawing from a common source, perhaps a message giving a “pattern formulated to resist the seducers of the church”? Read Jude for further understanding and note some similarities.
2. How does Jude tell his readers to avoid being duped by false teachers according to v. 20, 21? How is that accomplished?
3. How does Jude tell us to treat the three groups of people in vs. 22, 23? How is it connected to the knowledge of God in v. 21? (Look for a repeated word.)

4. Read II Peter 2:20-22. Are those referred to believers? What makes you think so or think not? Jude is talking about the same kinds of people. How does v. 19 help?

Why does he say that “it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness...” (v.21)? How do the following Scriptures help?

Luke 20:47b

Romans 2:5, 6

Revelation 20:12

5. Chapter 2:1 refers to false teachers as “even denying the Master who bought them...” Does that mean that these people are believers?

I Timothy 4:10b

6. Possibly the “way of righteousness” and the “holy commandment” in 2:2 are being contrasted with the two illustrations in 2:22. What are they?

What a dreadful warning to be so sin-soaked that virtue loses its beauty.

- Chapter 1 ends with Peter confirming the Scriptures by the eyewitness of Peter, James and John as Jesus Christ was glorified before their very eyes. Both the prophets and the transfiguration pointed to Jesus' kingdom on earth. The prophetic word is likened to a "lamp shining in a dark (squalid, murky, dismal) place." God undeniably intervened in Peter, James, and John's lives to give them spectacular confirmation of Jesus one day being King. We need nothing more like that. We have heard.

Many Christians seek to determine or assess truth by the particular way God has worked in their lives. But for Peter the splendor of his experience faded as he spoke of the surety of the written revelation of the prophets.

Kenneth Gangel

The challenge is to "pay attention". Chapter 2 shows us how false teachers turn the grace message into an excuse for their own evil purposes. They bite the nail-pierced hand of the One who offers them a chance to have their lives back. They choose instead living by their own lusts, ignoring the fact of their swift and sure destruction.

Chapter 3 is another "matter of one's own interpretation", as the false teachers add yet one more charge. Read through the chapter and write out some of your initial observations.

DAY TWO.

- Chapter 3 begins with the word "Beloved". That is not by accident, but is for emphasis. He "lets his heart go out to them and draws their hearts to him" (Lenski). Notice the other three times the word occurs in the chapter. Mark them. What is he emphasizing each time?

3:1

3:8

3:14

3:17

2. Peter once again shows his belief that a thing must be said over and over again if it is to penetrate the mind.

It is by continued repetition that the rudiments of knowledge are in the end settled in the mind of the child...It may well be that often we are too desirous of novelty, too eager to say new things, while what is needed is a repetition of the eternal truths which men so quickly forget, and the significance of which they so often refuse to see.

William Barclay

Paul speaks of the principle in Philippians 3:1. What is the benefit according to this verse?

3. Repetition is needed even for those who are of a “sincere” mind. Look up that word in your expositor’s dictionary.

4. Peter believes in the unity of Scripture. What three sources of “words spoken beforehand” agree according to v. 2?

5. Someone has translated v. 3 this way: “*First off, you need to know, mockers are going to have their heyday. Reducing everything to the level of their puny feelings, they’ll mock...*” What are two elements of their argument according to v. 4?

DAY THREE.

1. Read now 3:4-9. Peter answers the second argument first, in vs. 5-7. The false teachers “apparently held the self-sufficiency and immutability of the natural order.” On the contrary, he insists. He is showing that the “present heavens and earth” (v. 7) are vastly different from the one described before two catastrophic events, creation (v. 5) and the universal flood (v. 6). We are not in a stable universe. At the “word of God”, (vs. 5 and vs. 7) universal change occurs. Mark those two references that should have humbled those who speak “arrogant words of vanity” (2:18).
 - a. Read Proverbs 8:22, 24, 27, which also describes the presence and work of our Lord on these first three “earth-changing” days of creation. (See Morris, p. 51)
 - b. Read Genesis 1:6-8, the account of the second day of creation, referred to by Peter. What happened?

This is a description of what creationists call the “vapor canopy” that is indicated in Genesis 2:5, 6.

The reference is to a pre-flood world surrounded by water vapor that blanketed the planet, moderating the sun’s radiation. This would have created a “greenhouse effect” in the climate world-wide. Thick green vegetation probably covered most of the land masses. The presence of coal-rich areas in Antarctica indicates the possibility of such a pre-diluvian canopy. (See The Genesis Flood, p. 253-256).

This is devastating evidence that Peter’s critics were wrong. Has our world drastically changed? Does their argument of v. 4b stand?

2. The second answer to the argument that “all has remained the same” is the unleashing of God’s wrath against sin in the universal flood. Peter’s rapid reference is one of the clearest arguments against a local flood as proposed by false teachers to this day. What does he say in v. 6 that indicates a world-wide impact?

Notice the language and the promise in the following that substantiates this.

Genesis 6:1

Genesis 6:13

Genesis 6:17

Genesis 9:11, 15

*If God was trying to describe a **local** flood, He certainly could have written much more clearly, for over and over again the wording demands a **global** flood. In fact, I have counted over 100 times when the wording implies a global flood.*

John D. Morris, ICR.

The following is taken from “Answers in Genesis” website, www.aig.org.

- If the Flood was local, why did Noah have to build an Ark? He could have walked to the other side of the mountains and missed it.
- If the Flood was local, why did God send the animals to the Ark so they would escape death? There would have been other animals to reproduce that kind if these particular ones had died.
- If the Flood was local, why was the Ark big enough to hold all kinds of land vertebrate animals that have ever existed? If only Mesopotamian animals were aboard, the Ark could have been much smaller.
- If the Flood was local, why would birds have been sent on board? These could simply have winged across to a nearby mountain range.
- If the Flood was local, how could the waters rise to 15 cubits (8 meters) **above** the mountains (Genesis 7:20)? Water seeks its own level. It couldn’t rise to cover the local mountains while leaving the rest of the world untouched.

- If the Flood was local, people who did not happen to be living in the vicinity would not be affected by it. They would have *escaped God's judgment on sin*? If this happened, what did Christ mean when He likened the coming judgment of all men to the judgment of "*all*" men (Matthew 24:37-39) in the days of Noah? A partial judgment in Noah's day means a partial judgment to come.
- If the Flood was local, God would have repeatedly broken His promise never to send such a flood again.

Belief in a **world-wide** Flood, as Scripture clearly indicates, has the backing of common sense, science, and Christ Himself.

3. Now read 3:7. Why is the above argument of a universal flood a necessity for his argument?
4. 3:8 is used to "prove" that the days of Genesis 1 could be 1000 years, or more. Does this fit the context at all?

What is his point in 3:8, 9?

God is patient toward the unbeliever as He "bears with the froward and evil in spite of their long, continued disobedience." (Berkhof).

3. To review Chapter 2, please fill in the chart below. We are living in the time period of God showing that He is “patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.” (3:9). But in our praying for others and appealing to them, the content of Chapter 2 should be in our minds.

<p>Chapter 2:1-3 Destruction...</p>	<p>1. Is _____ 2. Is not _____ 3. Is not _____</p>
<p>Chapter 2:4-9 Three Illustrations of Judgment</p>	<p>1. Did not spare _____ 2. Did not spare _____ 3. Condemned _____ and _____</p>
<p>Chapter 2:10-22 Descriptions of “Useless and Unfruitful”</p>	

4. Read Chapter 3 again, preparing yourself for 3:10-18 for this week. What two huge catastrophes does Peter cite in 3:5, 6 as proof that our world does not “continue just as it was from the beginning of creation”?
5. Verse 9 reminds us that God withholds His hand of judgment, not from indifference, not from dilatoriness (tendency to delay), but to give men a chance to repent and escape destruction. Verse 10 continues, “But (strong contrast) the day of the Lord WILL come...” like what? What does the simile imply?

So we have from this chapter thus far, judgment from the Lord:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Is _____ | 3. Is not _____ |
| 2. Is not _____ | 4. Is _____ |

More in Chapter 3 will appeal to our moral ethic on the basis of this certainty, but we must first look more at what Peter calls “the day of the Lord.”

DAY TWO.

Peter begins 3:10 with a reference to the “day of the Lord”, a term he has learned from his study of the Old Testament. The defining moment of the period of time is the sudden, personal, visible, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ. He spoke of it often. “*You must also be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do expect*” (Matthew 24:44). “*I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.*” (John 14:3). Two angels said as Jesus ascended into heaven, “*This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven*” (Acts 1:11). This theme should be a driving hope of the church.

1. The language also encompasses that period of time in which God “comes down” in a dramatic way to bring wrath and judgment on the wicked and begin the eternal dimension of salvation to the righteous. It is a major theme of the Old Testament prophets. Thirteen of the sixteen prophets address this subject, so Peter had studied the matter. Look up the following to consider the capacity of God for expressing His wrath. Peter mulled these over in his mind, as our Lord did, as well.

Isaiah 13:9

Joel 2:1, 2

Joel 2:30, 31

Isaiah 13:10-13

2. Four things in verse 10 are mentioned as affected by this terrible day. What are they? List with them the repetitions in v. 12b.

Go to your window and look at the physical world, to your closet, around your house, at the “fruit of your hands”, at the television, at books and magazines, at toys and tiny clothes, at your Bible. What lasting perspective do they have?

3. Peter has given some details of the end times not revealed anywhere else. Imagine his wonder, his excitement, as he could almost “see” what God was revealing to him. What is his burning message in response? He turns in vs. 11-15 to the moral dynamic of this truth. Read over the verses and describe “what kind of people ought you to be” in light of these sure words of prophecy.

4. Verse 13 says we are “looking for a new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.” Read the following for more help in understanding that world.

Hebrews 11:10. To whom is the “he” referring? What is the repeated word in this chapter? How, then, are we to live?

Revelation 21:1-5

Revelation 21:10-27

DAY THREE.

We are reading Peter’s last recorded words, preserved for our information and well-being. They are a wonderful summary, actually, of both his letters. We will do well to listen.

1. It is interesting that Peter brings in Paul and his writings. In the past, they had a deep difference of opinion. See Galatians 2:11-14 and summarize what Paul is saying (“Cephas” is Peter).

2. How does Peter refer to Paul in v. 15?

What else does he say about his writing in vs. 15, 16?

When he refers to the “rest of Scripture”, what does that indicate that Peter believes about Paul’s writings?

3. Peter indicates in v. 16 that he and Peter agree on “these things”. What is he referring to? The Scriptures below may be representative of what he means.

Romans 9:22, 23

Romans 13:11-14

I Thessalonians 5:2-6

4. Verses 14-18 pick up many themes from this letter. Write out key words that we have seen all through the book. If you have time, document the occurrences with the references.
5. On page 40, #3 asks us to list what our responses must be in light of the end times. List them again and add the ones from vs. 17 and 18.

Pray these things into your own soul. Ask the Lord to show you how you can improve in living these things out.

Pray for those you know who are “untaught and unstable” (v. 16).

6. The challenge of v. 17 is negative, “Be on guard...lest you fall from your own steadfastness.” That of v. 18 is positive. How does I Peter 2:2, 3 help us with this growth?
7. Some have said that when Peter uses the couplet “grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” he is summarizing his first letter by “grace”, his last one by “knowledge”. Let’s end on a grace note by just recording and enjoying the references in I Peter.

1:2

4:10

1:10

5:5

1:13

5:10

3:7

5:12

Peter’s ending doxology is unique, “To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity.” “The day of eternity,” he is still struck with the majesty of glimpses in future things. His modification of the standard formula of the doxology reflects his awareness that glory belongs to Christ not simply “forever”, but throughout the endless day which will dawn when He comes in glory.

**“Your sun shall no more go down, nor your moon withdraw itself;
for the Lord will be your everlasting light.”**

Isaiah 60:19, 20