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# 2 Peter Workbook

Commentary with Review Questions  
& Answer Key in Rear of Book



By Joshua Stucki

“<sup>20</sup> But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is *a matter* of one’s own interpretation, <sup>21</sup> for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”– 2 Peter 1:20-21 (NASB)

Restoration Movement Literature

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2 Peter is Written to Encourage Those in the Middle of the Marathon Race of Faith in Life to Finish Strong!

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## 2 Peter 1:1-4 – “An Unchanging Faith”

2 Peter 1:1-4 – “Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have received a faith of the same <sup>1</sup>kind as ours, <sup>2</sup>by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ: <sup>3</sup>Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; <sup>4</sup>seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us <sup>5</sup>by His own glory and <sup>6</sup>excellence. <sup>7</sup>For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.”

- I. Bond-servant – meaning to whom one has sworn allegiance
  - a. This term was also a favorite of the Apostle Paul’s
  - b. Same word as “minister” in the New Testament
  - c. This same term was used as an equivalent to the term “Evangelist” except here (Peter was an elder by this point, see 1 Peter 5:1-5)
- II. Peter points out His Apostleship. This was common practice: the Apostles regularly point out their Apostleship in their letters in order to:
  - a. Prove the letter’s authenticity
  - b. Prove the divine authority
  - c. Prove the uniqueness of the office
    - i. The Greek word for “Apostle” simply means “one sent out”
    - ii. The term is sometimes used in the sense of a title, as we commonly refer to it as, other times as simply referring to one sent out as a missionary (Barnabas was called “an apostle” in the New Testament without receiving the title or having the qualifications, as one example)
    - iii. What are the qualifications of a New Testament Apostle? Acts 1:21-22
      1. Eyewitness of Jesus’ ministry from beginning to end
      2. Accompany the other Apostles
      3. Approved by the Apostles
    - iv. Naturally, therefore, this cannot be any person today!
    - v. How was Paul an Apostle then? See 1 Corinthians 15:8; Acts 9:26ff; and Galatians 1:11-24. Both Paul Himself and Luke discuss Paul’s qualifications to be an Apostle. Also, notice that no one in the New

Testament ever questioned Paul's Apostleship. It is not contested in any serious sense.

- d. The Apostles were a founding office, like the New Testament prophet; these did not continue after the first generation of the church (see Ephesians 2:20, 4:11).
- III. "A faith the same kind as ours" (vs. 1)
- a. The age of political-correctness fights this reality
  - b. The Jesus as described in the New Testament is the only way to God (Acts 4:12). The New Testament never makes any apologies; there are no exceptions granted to anyone, ever. Nothing in this world, past, present, or future changes this fact!
  - c. A prevailing symptom I have noticed when a church starts to lose its New Testament "same faith", as described here, is some kind of change in communion:
    - i. Sometimes it is in communion's meaning – stripping of part or all of its New Testament significance (1 Corinthians 10:16-18, 11:23-31)
    - ii. Sometimes it is in communion's importance – the weekly gathering is THE focus of the weekly worship (Acts 20:7)
    - iii. Sometimes it is in communion's centrality – moving it to the side, or even another room, or leaving it out altogether (1 Corinthians 10:21)
    - iv. Truthfully, when one part of communion suffers, it altogether suffers, and the church with it!
    - v. As extraordinarily as it seems, Jesus initiated His Supper to forever memorialize His death, unite His disciples, and even heal church division in 1 Corinthians 11 (Paul brings up the appropriate understanding and method Lord's Supper to aid in the divisions at Corinth)
    - vi. Another common trend is to treat communion as a common commodity – recently I saw on a website of a church that communion was for all believers in Jesus – that was the only requirement – regardless of background. That kind of definition could include Muslims, cultists, and at the very least, the un-immersed. This is the very application of liberalism.
- IV. The remainder of Peter's passage is a barrage of promises for being in Christ:
- a. Christ gives Christians everything we need to be faithful

- i. This is done through true knowledge obtained through His Word
- ii. His own glory and excellence shines through the Scriptures
- b. Through His Word we learn about his many promises, described as “precious and magnificent”
  - i. Specifically, this is referring to things unique (“precious”) and things-meant-for-kings (“magnificent”)
  - ii. A careful study of heaven in Scripture shows us to be reigning with Christ, subject to the Father, for all eternity
  - iii. Promotion in Christ’s Kingdom in Christ’s way is worthy of calling we have in Him!
- c. Being partakers in the divine nature necessarily means escaping the corruption that is in the world by lust
  - i. The world says to please your flesh
  - ii. The Bible says to resist the lustful temptations of the flesh
  - iii. The world says corruption is a result of giving into that lust
  - iv. Wholeness, completeness, peace – the very anti-thesis of corruption – is only had through obeying God’s Word instead of our own flesh and the whims of man.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

All multiple choice

- 1) Minister is the same word as (pick one): a) pastor, b) bond-servant, c) secretary, d) custodian
- 2) What does the word, “Apostle”, mean? (pick one) a) dictator, b) John the Baptist, c) one sent out, d) cook
- 3) Who was called an “apostle” but did not actually have the office? (pick one) a) Matthew, b) Matthias, c) Joshua, d) Barnabas
- 4) Qualifications for an Apostle include (pick one): a) be an eyewitness of Jesus’ ministry, b) be baptized by the Holy Spirit, c) be elected by other Apostles, d) flip a coin
- 5) Apostles and prophets were \_\_\_\_\_ offices of the New Testament church (pick one): a) continuing, b) founding, c) new, d) old
- 6) We are to try to have the \_\_\_\_\_ kind of faith as the 1<sup>st</sup> century church (pick one): a) different, b) colorful, c) same, d) flavored

- 7) Name two promises we have for being in Christ (pick two): a) We have everything we need to be faithful, b) we will have lots of money, c) we will never suffer on this earth, d) we will one day reign with Christ
- 8) Magnificent, when referring to Christ's promises for us, means (pick one): a) ordinary, b) meant-for-kings, c) boring, d) nice
- 9) The world says to please our flesh. The Bible says to \_\_\_\_\_ the lustful temptations of the flesh (pick one): a) indulge, b) think about, c) resist, d) create

### BONUS QUESTION

Read carefully

- 10) In 2 Peter 1:2, what does Peter ask God would give the recipients of his letter (pick one)? a) grace and peace be multiplied to you in the heart of God, b) grace and peace be multiplied to you in the preferences of God, c) grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God, d) grace and peace be multiplied to you in the joy of God
- a. This would be a nice prayer for someone in our lives.
  - b. We gain grace and peace through the knowledge of God. The more we know the Bible, the more grace and peace we will have! And prayer can multiply it!

(All Answers in Rear of Book)

## 2 Peter 1:5-7 – “The Eight Stages of Discipleship”

This passage was shared with me by a friend which has become a major source of inspiration in my life. I have published a book about it, taught classes on it, and have developed the following charts based on it. This passage is genuinely worth of your time to study, apply, and see the benefits of. Its application is truly endless.

### Progress of Personal Discipleship from 2 Peter 1:5-7

Chart by Joshua Stucki

<b>Quality</b>	<b>Verse</b>	<b>Quality Before</b>	<b>Quality After</b>	<b>Other Scripture</b>	<b>Bible Examples</b>	<b>Application</b>
Faith	Vs. 5	--	Goodness	Hebrews 11:6	Abraham Moses	Believe God's Promises
Goodness	Vs. 5	Faith	Knowledge	Philippians 4:8	Joshua Tabitha	ObeY (or, begin to obey) God's commands
Knowledge	Vs. 5	Goodness	Self-Control	Colossians 2:3	Luke Bereans	Study the Scriptures
Self Control	Vs. 6	Knowledge	Perseverance	Galatians 5:23	Joseph Job	Resist Difficult Temptations
Perseverance	Vs. 6	Self-Control	Godliness	Hebrews 12:1	Jeremiah Daniel	Patiently wait on God's promises
Godliness	Vs. 6	Perseverance	Mutual Affection	1 Timothy 6:6	Paul John	Imitate Christ's Attitude and Behavior
Mutual Affection	Vs. 7	Godliness	Love	Romans 12:10	Barnabas Ruth	Work out difficulties with others

Love	Vs. 7	Mutual Affection	--	Colossians 3:14	Jesus	Selfless, personal sacrifice for the sake of others
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**Common Traps in Discipleship from 2 Peter 1:5-7**

Chart by Joshua Stucki

<b>Verse</b>	<b>Discipleship Quality</b>	<b>Common Trap</b>
5	Faith	Relying on “faith alone” James 2:24
5	Goodness	Legalism Philippians 3:4-9
5	Knowledge	Pride and/or Non-Application of Knowledge Ecclesiastes 1:18, 1 Corinthians 4:6
6	Self Control	Assuming others have to do what you do Colossians 2:16-18
6	Perseverance	Competition and Comparison instead of bearing one another’s burdens Galatians 6:1-3
6	Godliness	Forgetting contentment, Godliness’ other half



		1 Timothy 6:6
7	Mutual Affection	Believing the end justifies the means Hebrews 13:7+17
7	Love	“Loving” for personal glory instead of God’s glory 1 Corinthians 13:3

- See this author’s separate book, “The Eight Stages of Discipleship”, for a thorough treatment of this subject.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

All multiple choice

All answers on chart or in Scriptures referenced on the chart

- 1) Abraham and Moses were prime examples of what stage of discipleship? (pick one) a) Love, b) Mutual Affection, c) Goodness, d) Faith
- 2) What other Scripture helps us understand goodness? (pick one) a) Hebrews 11:6, b) Philippians 4:8, c) 1 Timothy 6:6, d) Hebrews 12:1
- 3) Who has all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in Colossians 2:2-3? (pick one) a) the Holy Spirit, b) God the Father, c) Jesus Christ, d) the Apostle John
- 4) What stage of discipleship precedes self-control? (pick one) a) knowledge, b) love, c) godliness, d) perseverance
- 5) What is the life application of perseverance? (pick one) a) resist difficult temptations, b) resist tasty foods, c) patiently wait on God’s promises, d) study
- 6) What stage of discipleship can we pursue after godliness? (pick one) a) faith, b) perseverance, c) knowledge, d) mutual affection
- 7) Who are examples of mutual affection in Scripture? (pick one) a) Barnabas and Ruth, b) Luke and the Bereans, c) Joseph and Job, d) Jeremiah and Daniel
- 8) What is the final stage of discipleship? (pick one) a) faith, b) love, c) mutual affection, d) knowledge

- 9) Who exemplifies love more than any other example in Scripture? (pick one) a) Job, b) Balaam, c) Jesus, d) John

#### BONUS QUESTION

- 10) In 1 Corinthians 13:13, faith, hope, and love are discussed. Which is greatest? (pick one) a) love, b) hope, c) faith

Isn't it interesting how 2 Peter 1:7 and 1 Corinthians 13:13 both believe that love is the greatest? Let us strive to love one another (John 13:34-35) but in order to do that fully, we have to follow the steps of discipleship we have learned about in this passage from 2 Peter 1:5-7.

All answers to question are in answer key in the rear of this book.

2 Peter 1:5-10 – How to Stay Faithful, ‘Never Stumble’

The following chart builds on the previous one but looking at it from the perspective of Peter who shows us how to “never stumble.” What a promise! If we want to know how to stay faithful for life, Peter summarizes it in six verses! Again, this passage and further study is genuinely worthy of your time.

Chart by Joshua Stucki

Vs. 8, 10 – The Promises	Vs. 5-7 – The How-To	Vs. 9 – The Warning
<p>“<sup>8</sup> For if these <i>qualities</i> are yours and are increasing, <b>they render you neither useless nor unfruitful</b> in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”</p> <p>“<sup>10</sup> for as long as you practice these things, <b>you will never stumble;</b>”</p>	<p>“<sup>5</sup> Now for this very reason also, <b>applying all diligence</b>, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in <i>your</i> moral excellence, knowledge, <sup>6</sup> and in <i>your</i> knowledge, self-control, and in <i>your</i> self-control, perseverance, and in <i>your</i> perseverance, godliness, <sup>7</sup> and in <i>your</i> godliness, brotherly kindness, and in <i>your</i> brotherly kindness, love.”</p>	<p>“<sup>9</sup> <b>For he who lacks these <i>qualities</i> is blind or shortsighted</b>, having forgotten <i>his</i> purification from his former sins.”</p>
<p>Promises Given:</p>	<p>What We Need to Do:</p>	<p>Consequences for Not Growing:</p>

<p>1) Not Useless</p> <p>2) Not Unfruitful</p> <p>3) These qualities define you</p> <p>4) These qualities increase</p> <p>5) Truthful knowledge about Christ</p> <p>6) As long as you practice these things, you will never stumble!</p>	<p>Apply all diligence to developing...</p> <p>1) Faith</p> <p>2) Moral excellence</p> <p>3) Knowledge</p> <p>4) Self control</p> <p>5) Persistence</p> <p>6) Godliness</p> <p>7) Brotherly kindness</p> <p>8) Love</p>	<p>1) Lacks these qualities</p> <p>2) Blind</p> <p>3) Short-sighted</p> <p>4) Forgotten forgiveness</p> <p>5) Forgotten purification</p> <p>6) Forgotten former sins</p> <p>7) Stumbling</p> <p>8) Unfruitfulness</p> <p>9) Uselessness</p>
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### REVIEW QUESTIONS

All but question #9 is multiple choice

All answers in chart

- 1) Name two promises if we grow in Christ as 2 Peter 1:5-7 says (pick two): a) never run out of money, b) never stumble, c) never be hungry, d) not unfruitful
- 2) Name two consequences if we fail to grow in Christ as 2 Peter 1:5-7 says (pick two): a) uselessness, b) a bad credit score, c) bad hearing, d) forgotten forgiveness

- 3) In 2 Peter 1:8, the verse says, “if these qualities are \_\_\_\_\_” (pick one): a) theirs, b) somebody else’s, c) yours, d) the bank’s
- 4) Also in 2 Peter 1:8, the verse mentions “true knowledge”. Is there such a thing as “false knowledge?” (Y/N): Yes or No
- 5) What might some examples in life or Scripture be of “false knowledge”? (one example would be a false advertisement, or when Satan lied to Eve in the garden)
- 6) In 2 Peter 1:9, the verse says, “for he who lacks these qualities is \_\_\_\_\_ or short-sighted” (pick one): a) good looking, b) blind, c) having a bad hair day, d) strange
- 7) In 2 Peter 1:10, the verse says, “for as long as you \_\_\_\_\_ these things” (pick one): a) practice, b) look at, c) boil, d) sew
- 8) In 2 Peter 1:8+10, we are told “the promises” for growing as Peter has instructed us in 2 Peter 1:5-7 (this could called the “how to”). What does 2 Peter 1:9 tell us? (pick one): a) the air speed, b) the volume, c) the taste, d) the warnings if we do not grow
- 9) In 2 Peter 1:10, the promise is made that we could “never stumble”. To review, we must practice the following to get there (fill in the blanks): faith, moral excellence, \_\_\_\_\_, self control, \_\_\_\_\_, godliness, mutual affection, love (pick one): a) knowledge/perseverance, b) faith/mutual affection

#### BONUS QUESTION:

- 10) 2 Peter 1:5 tells us along with verse 10 to practice/apply these things. But verse 5 tells us to apply them with all \_\_\_\_\_ (pick one): a) diligence, b) laziness, c) spice, d) gusto

Practicing is one thing. Practicing with all diligence is quite another! Let’s do the latter in our walks with Christ.

Answers for the above questions are in the answer key in the rear of this book.

## 2 Peter 1:11 – “I Can See the Gate”

- I. God does the providing; we must do the partaking.
    - a. Vs. 10 – the context
      - i. We have things we must do to receive the gift we cannot earn
        1. There is a lot of false thinking on this issue, the most common phrase I hear is: “Nothing can be added to the cross of Christ”
          - a. True, but that is missing the point:
          - b. SEE CHART AT THE END OF THIS OUTLINE
        2. Peter gives us the instructions POST-baptism, which are just as important as the ones leading up to salvation.
        3. Then, he gives us just a glimpse of the reward:
        4. Vs. 11 – “for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.”
      - ii. What we must do pales compared what is coming!
    - b. Vs. 11 – “The gate”
      - i. My family has a tradition when we part for long periods saying, “North wall, center gate”, referring to heaven.
      - ii. I dream of that gate, of that day, and I want you, the reader, to dream with me.
      - iii. I’m going to take you on a short journey of Scripture for the sole purpose of getting excited about one of God’s promises:
- II. “The New Heaven and New Earth”
  - a. It is often forgotten that Revelation 21:1 (and Isaiah 65:17) both reference:
    - i. A New Heaven
    - ii. And a New Earth
    - iii. Revelation 21:1 also says, “and there is no longer any sea”
      1. The “sea” is a symbol throughout the Bible for separation
      2. Otherwise, there will no longer be separation between “earth” (the new earth) and heaven, and no longer any separation between God and man!
      3. “Separation” is the worst punishment of hell:
        - a. Separation from God
        - b. Separation from loved ones

- c. Separation from all that is good
  - d. Separation from all that is alive
  - e. Separation from all that is worth living for
  - f. “The New Heaven and New Earth” literally contrasts that – no more separation!
- iv. Let’s talk a little bit more about the arrangement of this new heaven and new earth:
1. From verse 21, we understand there will be both
  2. We also understand from that verse that they will be connected
  3. The first heaven and first earth will pass away
    - a. The heaven that exists now will cease
    - b. Just like the earth that exists now will cease
    - c. They are both being replaced by perfect replacements, meant to co-exist!
    - d. So where is everyone who is “in heaven” (as we commonly say) now?
    - e. Jesus tells us in Luke 23:43 – “paradise”
      - i. This is a unique term in Scripture that literally means, “waiting place”
      - ii. Paul speaks of it to in 2 Corinthians 12:4
        1. He says things are spoken there too awesome for us to hear now
        2. It is a pleasant, perfect place, waiting for the even better place to come!
      - iii. In Revelation 2:7, the tree of life is in paradise.
        1. This makes sense, as how was it that Adam and Eve were to be sustained forever in the garden? The tree of life! All the same, it is in paradise, sustaining all those until “the new heaven and the new earth” comes.
        2. In Revelation 22:14, we are told we can actually eat from the tree of life now – a symbol for salvation – the promise of eternal life.

3. So what we talked about before, “what we must do”, is to receive these gifts that obviously through mere effort we would not obtain but are still gifted to us anyway!
  4. As 2 Corinthians 9:15 says, “Praise be to God for His indescribable gift!”
4. The New Earth will be a restoration of Eden
    - a. God meant for Adam and Eve to live forever, to have children, to enjoy perfection on earth, to work in the most pleasant of ways (yes, there is pleasant labor ☺).
    - b. This is the whole thrust of Genesis chapter 2.
    - c. “The New Heaven and the New Earth” is a return to that origin:
      - i. But this time, with the sacrifice of Christ, there will be no way to fall from paradise (John 10:8).
      - ii. This time, the tree of life will be the only special tree.
      - iii. This time, Satan cannot visit.
      - iv. This time, God will never stop visiting.
      - v. It says in Genesis 3:8 that God used to walk in the cool of the evening – are you looking forward to your first walk with God on the new earth?
  5. Now let’s discuss something that I strangely hear a lot of opposition for from various scholars, preachers, teachers, and commentators:
    - a. Many say there will not be any animals in heaven
    - b. However, Romans 8:22 says that “all of creation” groans for redemption.
    - c. If the new earth has many features of Eden restored, it would be odd to leave out animals.
    - d. Now, I am not an animal or nature person, so the idea of animals being in heaven is not necessarily appealing to me personally, so I am not being biased.



- e. If all of creation is groaning for redemption – but they do not get to be a part of it – would it make sense to say that they are groaning for annihilation? I think not.
  - f. Instead, the new heaven and the new earth has all the positive qualities of heaven and all the positive qualities of earth – including the nature and animals that God created before the fall of man.
  - g. God gave Adam the job of naming the animals – in Eden – will they be suspiciously absent? I don't think so.
- b. Peter mentions in today's text about "the gate".
- i. Peter obviously looked forward to the gate.
  - ii. Funny thing is that traditionally, it is said that Peter is the gatekeeper.
  - iii. So who opened the gate for Peter? 😊 Just being funny.
  - iv. Instead, Peter is an old man by this point – an Apostle, but also an elder of a local church (1 Peter 5:1-5).
  - v. He has been married a long time.
  - vi. He is very much looking forward to the reward that is to come!
  - vii. The other Apostles spoke of heaven in similar terms:
    1. The Apostle John, at the end of the book of Revelation, wrote – "Come, Lord Jesus, come."
    2. The Apostle Paul spoke of heaven in the present, paradise in the present, the third heaven in the present (a whole different subject), eternal life, and the reward to come.
  - viii. Are you looking forward to the gate?
    1. Imagine everything good here and none of the bad.
    2. Imagine love with no guilt.
    3. Imagine joy with no shame.
    4. Imagine eating without the calories! 😊
    5. Imagine tear ducts but no tears of sadness.
    6. Imagine life but never death again.
    7. Imagine emotions but never sadness or pain.
    8. Imagine this old world being gone – forevermore.
    9. Imagine this new world never ceasing – and absolutely nothing can make it end.

10. Imagine we will one day have been there for 10,000 years – bright shining as the sun – we will no less days so sing God’s praises than when we first begun!

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

All multiple choice

- 1) What does it mean to “earn” something? (pick one) a) be entitled, b) work until you are owed it
- 2) But we cannot earn our salvation because no amount of work will ever make it owed us, so God has given us His terms to receive it by grace instead of by merit. Those terms are given to us in Acts 2:38. They are (pick one): a) just believe in God, b) go to church most of the time, c) Repent and be baptized, d) give some money to the church
- 3) Acts 6:7 says that “a great many... were becoming \_\_\_\_\_ to the faith” (pick one): a) obedient, b) complacent, c) ignorant, d) oblivious
- 4) Galatians 5:6 describes “faith \_\_\_\_\_” (pick one): a) being lazy, b) being unimportant, c) being irrelevant, d) working
- 5) In 2 Peter 1:11, the Scripture tells us that “the \_\_\_\_\_ into the eternal kingdom... will be abundantly supplied to you” (pick one): a) entrance, b) ticket, c) key, d) secret passageway
- 6) People often talk about “going to heaven” but Scripture says there is going to be “a new \_\_\_\_\_ and a new \_\_\_\_\_” in Isaiah 65:17 and Revelation 21:1 (pick one): a) table, court, b) banquet, buffet, c) heaven, earth, d) book, pen
- 7) Revelation 21:1 also says there will “no longer be any sea”. Sea is a symbol for separation in the Bible. This means there will no longer be any separation between (pick two from Scripture): a) God, man, b) your preacher, gluten, c) heaven, earth, d) peanut butter, edibility
- 8) There are many awful things about hell, but the worst is \_\_\_\_\_ (pick one): a) fire, b) separation from God/loved ones/all that is good/all that is alive/all that is worth living for
- 9) What was on earth in Genesis chapters 2 and 3 but also in Revelation 2:7? (pick one) a) Adam and Eve, b) sheep, c) bushes, d) tree of life
- 10) Many debate whether there will be animals in heaven. Your preacher is not an animal person, but Romans 8:22 says that “\_\_\_\_\_ of creation” is groaning

towards redemption. Wouldn't it make sense that they are groaning for the perfection they too lost in the fall, instead of annihilation? (pick one) a) part, b) only some, c) all, d) a few

### BONUS QUESTION

- 11) This preacher's family has a tradition of saying "north wall, center gate" when we part for long periods of time, referring to meeting in heaven if not here again. Class discussion: name one thing you are looking forward to specifically in heaven!

(Answers in rear of book)

**“What We Must Do to Receive the Gift that We Could Never Earn”**

- 1) There is nothing we could have done or ever could do to obligate Christ giving Himself upon the cross. At no point in time are we “entitled” to Christ’s sacrifice.
- 2) He gave Himself freely out of love for us (Romans 5:8; John 10:17+18).
- 3) What we are told do in Scripture is not a works-based salvation or “earning” God’s love; instead, it is His terms to receive the gift we could never otherwise earn.

This is the thrust of the entire New Testament (37 verses below):

- III. Acts 6:7 – “a great many... were becoming obedient to the faith.”**
- IV. Acts 14:22 – “...continue in the faith”**
- V. Romans 1:5 – “the obedience of faith...”**
- VI. Romans 3:27 - “law of faith”**
- VII. Romans 16:26 – “obedience of faith”
- VIII. 2 Corinthians 5:7 – “walk by faith”
- IX. 2 Corinthians 8:7 – “in faith...abound in this righteous work”**
- X. Galatians 2:20 – “live by faith”
- XI. Galatians 3:11, “live by faith”
- XII. Galatians 5:6, “faith working”**
- XIII. Galatians 6:10, “do good... by faith”
- XIV. Ephesians 6:16 – “taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish...”
- XV. Colossians 1:23 – “continue in the faith”
- XVI. 1 Thessalonians 1:3 – “work of faith”
- XVII. 2 Thessalonians 1:7 – “work of faith”
- XVIII. 1 Timothy 1:19 – “keeping faith”
- XIX. 1 Timothy 2:15 – “continue in faith”
- XX. 1 Timothy 3:13 – “served well... in the faith”**
- XXI. 1 Timothy 5:8 – “does not provide... has denied the faith”
- XXII. 1 Timothy 6:12 – “the good fight of faith”
- XXIII. 2 Timothy 2:22 – “pursue... faith”**
- XXIV. 2 Timothy 4:7 – “kept the faith”**

**XXV. Hebrews 6:11-12 – “same diligence... not be sluggish, but be imitators of those who through faith...”**

XXVI. Hebrews 10:22 – “full assurance of faith... our bodies washed with pure water...”

XXVII. Hebrews 10:38 – “live by faith”

XXVIII. Hebrews 11:3 – “by faith... the worlds were prepared...”

XXIX. James 1:3 – “faith produces endurance”

**XXX. 1 Peter 1:7 – “your faith... tested by fire”**

**XXXI. 1 Peter 5:9 – “resist him [the devil]... in your faith”**

XXXII. 2 Peter 1:5 – “applying all diligence, in your faith supply...”

XXXIII. 1 John 5:4 – “whatever is born of God overcomes the world... our faith”

**XXXIV. Jude 1:3 – “contend... for the faith”**

**XXXV. Jude 1:20 – “...building yourselves up on your most holy faith”**

XXXVI. Revelation 2:13 – “did not deny My faith...”

**XXXVII. Revelation 2:19 – “I know your faith...that your deeds of late are greater...”**

XXXVIII. Revelation 13:10 – “the perseverance and the faith”

**XXXIX. Revelation 14:12 – “who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus.”**

## 2 Peter 1:12-15 – “What If We Knew”

My family has always been in computers. Growing up, we had four or more computers in the house, even in the 1980’s. It largely defined who we were.

Yet, even though we were chest-deep in computers and technology, we did not foresee the stratospheric rise of Microsoft, whose stock grew 3587% from 1986-1999.

Even when I personally was in the business 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year, I did not foresee the rise of the tablet or the smartphone taking over personal computer sales and becoming the dominant technology force on the planet.

The truth is, no matter how well informed a person is, predicting the future is not prediction at all – it’s guesswork. And sometimes people win, and sometimes they lose.

But... what if you knew your life was ending imminently? What would we be doing differently? The Apostle Peter knew that. Let us read 2 Peter 1:12-15:

“<sup>12</sup>Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you *already* know *them*, and have been established in the truth which is present with *you*. <sup>13</sup>I consider it right, as long as I am in this *earthly* dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder, <sup>14</sup>knowing that the laying aside of my *earthly* dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. <sup>15</sup>And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you will be able to call these things to mind.”

- I. The Lord revealed to Peter his passing was imminent. What did he do with his time?
  - a. First, Peter was not selfish:
    - i. He considered his work as a shepherd was not over:
      1. His letter to the church gets right to what matters.
      2. His letter describes for us how to grow in Christ in difficult times.
      3. His letter gives us a glimpse of the reward that is coming.
      4. His letter is personal, explaining to his recipients that his death was soon, but he was not the focus.
    - ii. Peter knew from previous conversations with Jesus decades ago that his death was not going to be pleasant.
      1. i.e., John 21:18-19 – “...but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you

where you do not want to go. Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God.”

2. All the Apostles were martyrs; Peter was no exception.
3. Tradition says that Peter was crucified upside down, and some extra-Biblical ancient writers state that Peter died about 34 years after Jesus was crucified. This would likely put Peter in his late 60’s or early 70’s.
4. As we know from Scripture, Peter was married.
  - a. An early church historian named Clement of Alexandria wrote about a hundred years after Peter died that Peter and his wife had a very short conversation as Peter was being tied up and dragged away for crucifixion. His last words to her were reportedly, “Remember the Lord.”
  - b. Clement says this was passed down to him, so someone had been saying it before him.
  - c. Although we will never know for sure if that is what happened, it certainly seems in character for Peter:
    - i. His last letter here is not concerned with himself.
    - ii. His last letter here is not concerned with his funeral arrangements.
    - iii. His last letter here is not even concerned with his readers’ present circumstances.
    - iv. His last words – both to the church – and supposedly to even his own wife – was to remember the Lord and what He has instructed.
    - v. It was Peter, after all, who said in John 6:68 – “Where else should we go? You have the words of eternal life.”
- b. With Peter’s last words, he does not waste time.
  - i. The Lord told Peter his death was imminent, so Peter went right to writing, and within just a few verses gives us what we need to do to prepare ourselves, be ready, for the world ahead.
  - ii. The world at the time of Peter was very like our own.
  - iii. Peter’s words therefore are just as relevant.

- iv. Notice too that after Peter writes verses 5-7 of chapter 1, he will remind us three times in his letter to be sure we focus on those things.
- c. With Peter's last words, he is kind.
  - i. I have seen it many times, and I am sure everyone else here has too – aging tends to make for a gentler man.
  - ii. This does not mean that a man's beliefs or resolve are any less – but rather most men realize with age that a gentle word really does stir away wrath, and the same point can be made without any vitriol.
  - iii. Peter seems to really understand this at this point near the end of his life:
    - 1. The beginning of Peter's ministry is wrought with saying the wrong things at the wrong time, speaking up when it would have been better off had he been silent, and even at one point in time trying to rebuke Jesus!
    - 2. Now at the end of Peter's life and ministry, he emphasizes the importance of growing in the Lord with the right words, at the right time, with the right tone.
- II. What if we knew our passing was imminent?
  - a. Do we have a tongue that needs taming like Peter's?
  - b. Are we quick to react when we should be learning patience as Peter did?
  - c. Are we quick to anger?
    - i. Now, consider something with me – if someone is pushing our buttons and already visibly angry, raising their voice, pointing fingers, etc.
    - ii. Has it ever – in the history of mankind – helped anything to start doing any of the same?
    - iii. Now, let me ask a second question – when we are angry with somebody (and I do the same thing) – is it not easy to get tunnel vision, and ignore our own actions and words at those times?
  - d. Peter helps us understand that whether our passing is imminent – gentle words really do calm a storm, and really can bring across the same point.
- III. Finally, do we recognize our immortality?
  - a. It is so easy to focus on this earth's routine:
    - i. Be born



- ii. Grow up
  - iii. Get a job
  - iv. Get married
  - v. Have children
  - vi. Work and raise kids
  - vii. Hope you can retire someday
  - viii. And then “that’s it”
- b. Christ has something much BIGGER and BETTER in mind!
- i. Because there are no guarantee’s in this world, there’s a much better, secure, and eternal one coming – “A new heaven AND a new earth.”
  - ii. Because He knew we would need support along the way, here we are – still meeting in His church – 2000 years later.
  - iii. If you are ever curious why you come to church every week and get some encouragement but then find yourself just a day or two into your week emotionally and spiritually drained, I need to tell you something:
    1. The weekly church service was never, ever meant to be your whole spiritual life.
    2. Do you only eat once a week?
    3. Do you only breathe once a day?
    4. Do you only talk to your children once a week or once a day?
    5. Then why, tell me why, would we think that spending 0.6% (1 hour of any given week) of our week with the Lord will fulfill for the rest of the week?
      - a. Here’s my pitch: commit yourself to attending a Sunday School class and/or Wednesday Night study, for 90 days.
      - b. It takes about that long to start a habit.
      - c. But then, don’t stop there!
      - d. Commit yourself to reading a chapter of the New Testament once a day, at least 5 days a week, for 90 days.
      - e. Then, talk about all of the above – let the conversation with your spouse and children include what you learned at church, in class, or when you have been reading on

your own. Read Deuteronomy 6:7-9 so you see can see this is a plan God has always endorsed.

- f. If you are like me, get a dramatized audio Bible for the car. They are all a little cheesy, but I'd rather listen than read any day of the week, personally. I also remember things better when I hear them. And believe it or not, when my kids don't control the radio, they find themselves getting sucked into the stories too.
- g. There are over 200 stories of the Bible; how many of us could even quote a quarter of them?

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

All multiple choice

- 1) Predicting the future, other than what Scripture tells us, is \_\_\_\_\_ (pick one): a) guesswork, b) easy to do, c) a matter of thinking hard enough
- 2) What did the Lord tell Peter in 2 Peter 1:14? (pick one) a) that he would live awhile longer, b) how to write 3 Peter, c) he would pass away soon
- 3) How did Peter spend his time knowing this? (pick two) a) he was not selfish, b) he created a lot of unnecessary drama, c) he played games, d) he instructed how to grow in Christ in difficult times
- 4) Peter already knew his death (John 21:18-19) would be (pick one): a) quick, b) unpleasant, c) in his sleep, d) a long time after 2 Peter would be written
- 5) All the Apostles died as (pick one): a) martyrs, b) old men, c) earthly celebrities
- 6) Peter was married. Clement of Alexandria wrote about a hundred years later that Peter's last remark to his wife before his martyrdom was: a) see you soon, b) be careful, c) remember the Lord
- 7) Notice how quickly Peter goes in how to grow in the Lord in his book – only 5 verses in! Peter knew he was going to die soon, so he wanted to \_\_\_\_\_ us, to be ready to face the world he had already faced (pick one): a) prepare, b) scold
- 8) Peter often misspoke in his younger years. Here, he is giving advice as a seasoned, weathered, veteran Christian. What might we learn from his life experience? (pick one) a) how to grow a nice beard, b) how to tame our tongue, c) how to pick apples, d) how to write Bible books

- 9) Many people unintentionally treat Sunday morning worship as the whole of their religious life. Class Discussion: what are some habits of daily Christian living that encourage us to live for the Lord every day instead of just Sunday? Try to think of five. Try to take one of those answers you don't presently do and apply it this week!

### BONUS QUESTION

- 10) About how many stories are there in the Bible? (pick one): a) 100, b) 150, c) 200, d) 250

Could we quote even a quarter of them? It is easy to think we "know" the Bible but perhaps we need to know it a bit better!

(Answer key in rear of book)

## 2 Peter 1:16-18 – “Real, Undeniable, Absolute Truth”

“<sup>16</sup> For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. <sup>17</sup> For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an **u**tterance as this was **u**made to Him by the Majestic Glory, “This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased”— <sup>18</sup> and we ourselves heard this **u**tterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.”

Most of us can remember where we were when we heard the news about the hijacked airliners crashing into the Twin Towers at the hands of Islamic terrorists on September 11th.

Since then, the number of massacres around the world caused by Islamic terrorists are almost too many to count. They seem to happen with such regularity, it is now sadly unremarkable when another occurs. It is unfortunately possible there will be another Islamic-terrorist-driven disaster between the time I am done preparing this sermon and now as I am delivering it.

September 11<sup>th</sup> made me think about two things regarding our Scripture text for today: 1) what people are living for, and 2) what people are willing to die for.

That day in history 15 years ago some Islamic men thought it was worth dying for what they believed in. As well, with all the uncertainty in the world, what are people living for? Money? Power? Fame? Sex? Alcohol and Drugs? Or a relatively-obscure motive that has found recent renewal – to force everybody in the world to “accept” them for what they think are or what they do. This is, what they call, “the new tolerance”.

Let’s read 2 Peter 1:16-18 and find out what Peter was willing to live AND die for:

2 Peter 1:16-18 – “<sup>16</sup>For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.<sup>17</sup>For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an **u**tterance as this was **u**made to Him by the Majestic Glory, “This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased”— <sup>18</sup>and we ourselves heard this **u**tterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.”

- I. Peter just got done reminding us that we are to be growing in the Lord in the way he had instructed.

- a. He told us how to grow in Christ.
- b. Then, within just a few verses, reminded us twice to make sure we do that!
- c. And now he is going to tell us why this is so important – why it is so important not to be “stuck” in our faith at any given time.

**II.** Peter’s reasons are the following:

- a. He Himself was a living eyewitness, among many, many others, as to Jesus, His works, His miracles, His words, His power, and His resurrection
- b. Peter was so certain of what he had seen and heard that he both lived His entire life for Christ and as we learned last week, was about to give His life for Christ as well
  - i. We learned last week that:
  - ii. Peter had been told decades ago that he was going to die
  - iii. Peter had been told recently when that was going to be
  - iv. Peter kept his cool, attended to the church where he was an elder, and reminded us of what is important regardless of what is going to happen in the world or even to us:
    - 1. Our identity in the Lord
    - 2. Our work for the Lord
    - 3. Our hope in the Lord’s promises
- c. The Apostles’ universal martyrdom and commitments to a life for Christ is one of the strongest lines of evidence for believing in the person of Jesus:
  - i. You will remember that the Pharisees originally tried to say that the disciples had stolen the body (Matthew 28:13).
    - 1. If this were true, then the disciples – all aware of the lie – would not have given their lives and died for what they know to be false. Simply nobody does that.
    - 2. Even the 9/11 hijackers believed what they were dying for, even as it was false. Simply nobody dies for a lie they are aware of.
  - ii. Some say Jesus really did not die on the cross, but simply fainted (or when into shock) and later “woke up” and walked out of the tomb.
    - 1. Remember that the soldiers broke the legs of the thieves hanging on the cross so they would die faster. They did not break Jesus’ legs, because it was demonstrated he was already

dead (John 19:34) by the flowing of blood and water separately from his side.

2. If he was not dead, they would have broken his legs like the others.
  3. If he had broken legs, he would not have been able “to walk” out of the tomb!
  4. And anyway, how do you singlehandedly free yourself from a rock tomb:
    - a. No light
    - b. No air
    - c. Sealed, so no way to cry for help
    - d. Had Jesus just “woke up”, he would have been in incredibly poor shape from his beating and crucifixion. One does not merely force their way out of a tomb in such condition!
- iii. Some say the women went to the wrong tomb
1. This is naturally insulting to the women
  2. Were their two “Jesus of Nazareth” tombs that looked identical and they accidentally went to the wrong one? (How desperate are the cynics getting?)
  3. Naturally, not everybody (the women, Peter, John, others) who went would have all universally gone to the wrong place (again, speculation that has no grounding in probability or fact).
- iv. Some say the disciples had mass hallucinations
1. Mass hallucinations simply do not occur. This has been debunked by medical science regarding any kind of mass phenomenon.
  2. The disciples saw Jesus at different times and together – remember Thomas saw Jesus later than the others – and he had to be convinced.
  3. The disciples were later accused of being drunk but they debunked that too (Acts 2:13, 15).
- v. There are many other theories that reject Jesus’ resurrection. However, none of them past falsification requirements under any standard of deduction.

1. J. Warner Wallace wrote a book called, “Cold Case Christianity” where he investigated the death and resurrection of Jesus as a homicide detective and skeptic and came out the other side of his investigation a believer.
2. The truth is that those who have studied Jesus’ resurrection and rejected it are doing so for philosophical reasons, not for science or logical reasons:
  - a. If you go into a study of the resurrection rejecting miracles no matter what, then you will by default have to choose one of the theories rejecting Jesus’ resurrection, no matter how outrageous they might be.
  - b. C.S. Lewis put it this way: if a sister who is typically truthful tells a story of miraculous proportions versus a brother who typically lies rejecting her story, who are we to believe? Why, the sister who told us the miraculous story. If we do not have a problem with miracles, why would we believe the liar, just because his story lacks miracles?
  - c. Lewis finishes by saying, “Rejecting miracles is what you call logic? What do they teach in schools these days? Logic does not demand whether something is true or not just based on what it is. Logic demands us to go to truth, no matter where it leads us, even the spectacular, the outrageous, the miraculous. What, after all, would we call the cosmos than spectacular? Or its sheer size outrageous? Or its origins anything other than miraculous?”

### III. Peter recounts Jesus’ baptism and transfiguration on the mountain

- a. At both events, the voice of the Father spoke from heaven and said, “This is My Son, in whom I am well pleased”
- b. At his baptism, what looked like a dove came down and anointed Jesus:
  - i. At his baptism, Jesus was ordained a prophet, a preacher. His ministry began then.

- ii. At his coronation after His ascension, He was ordained a king. Interestingly, he was named a king on the cross on which He died. They had no idea how right they were.
- iii. At the end of His coronation, He was ordained our High Priest.
- c. Peter brings up the transfiguration because again, He was an eyewitness of it:
  - i. He saw Moses (from the priestly tribe - Levi)
  - ii. He saw Elijah (the greatest Old Testament prophet)
  - iii. He saw Jesus transfigured (representing His glory, Lordship, Kingdom to come)
  - iv. In the transfiguration we see the whole work of God culminating in the person of Jesus Christ:
    - 1. He was a prophet, but so much more:
    - 2. He is our King
    - 3. He is our High Priest
    - 4. He is the only Biblical character to be all three:
      - a. A king after the tribe of Judah
      - b. A priest after the order of Melchizedek
      - c. A prophet like Elijah who was foretold, but greater

**IV.** Is Jesus the king of person you can both live and die for?

- a. Yes – as we live, He is our priest, king, and prophet, giving us help, instruction, purpose, identity, and hope
- b. Yes, when we die, He has prepared a place for us – which is secure, everlasting, with no more pain, death, sorrow, or tears
- c. Paul said in Philippians 1:21 – “To live is Christ and to die is gain”
- d. Will we commit ourselves to He who gives us all we need for now, and all we want when we are welcomed into His Kingdom – “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

All multiple choice

- 1) According to verse 16, Peter and the other Apostles all were (pick one):  
 a) professors, b) eyewitnesses, c) authors, d) religious lawyers



- 2) In the Lord, Peter reminds us that we have (pick three): a) cheesecake, b) identity, c) insulation, d) work, e) hope, f) good eyesight
- 3) The Pharisees originally said that the disciples had stolen the body (Matthew 28:13). If this were true, Jesus would not have resurrected, and the disciples would not have (pick one): a) been martyred for what they knew was a lie, b) went fishing, c) hid in the upper room
- 4) Some say that Jesus did not really die on the cross but just “fainted” and later “woke up”. If this were true (pick one): a) the Pharisees would have stopped plotting against the rest of Jesus’ disciples, b) blood and water would not have flowed from his side, indicating death (John 19:34)
- 5) Jesus’ legs were not broken on the cross because (pick one): a) the soldiers couldn’t reach them, b) they couldn’t find the club, c) he was already dead
- 6) If Jesus was merely unconscious when laid in the tomb, what would He have had to do to get out of a sealed rock tomb (pick three): a) move an extremely heavy, pitch-sealed rock on his own, b) breathe where there was no fresh air getting in, c) see in absolute blackness (yes, this is a ridiculous theory!)
- 7) Some say the women went to the wrong tomb. This is insulting to (pick any one): a) the women, b) the women, c) the women (yes, another ridiculous theory)
- 8) If the women, all the disciples, the soldiers, and everybody else went to the wrong tomb, then (pick any): a) the liberal scholars are making up any excuse they can think of, b) liberals must think all ancient people were equally deficient in navigating their own countryside, c) maybe we should stop listening to silly theories that make no sense
- 9) Some say the disciples had mass hallucinations (pick one): a) there is no such thing; there is zero medical science to back this up (universally accepted)

### BONUS QUESTION

- 10) J. Warner Wallace, a homicide detective, investigated the death and resurrection of Jesus as a skeptical non-believer. He came out of his investigation a believer in Jesus Christ. We do not have to, as Christians (pick all): a) check our brains at the door of the church building, b) believe in wild theories, c) live out a lie, d) do anything but believe and act on the facts of Jesus’ death and resurrection!

## BONUS QUESTION #2

- 11) Jesus is (pick three): a) just a moral man, b) just a good teacher, c) a Prophet like Elijah and after Moses but greater than both, d) High Priest after Melchizedek, e) King of Judah

Our Lord was really born as a baby, grew into a man, lived a perfect life, died an innocent, perfect sacrifice, was buried, raised again, and ascended into heaven. These are facts, established by history, eyewitness accounts, and the affect it has had on all of history and countless individual lives since. Praise God!

(Answer key in rear of book)

## 2 Peter 1:19-21 – “Prophecy for the Living and the Thinking”

INTRO: “Prophecy” is a strange word to the modern ear:

In history, there are characters like Nostradamus or Mirza Ahmad famous for their writings many call “prophecy”.

Some religious organizations like the Mormons believe they have prophets among them today.

Even movies like the Lord of the Rings and even the recent “Lego Movie” invoke the word, “prophecy.”

But – in truth – prophecy is unique to God’s Word when it comes to prophecy which is always true, always right, always relevant, and always going to come true.

2 Peter 1:19-21 (NASB):

“<sup>19</sup> **¶** So we have the prophetic word *made* more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. <sup>20</sup> But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is *a matter* of one’s own interpretation, <sup>21</sup> for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”

- I. My goal to convey today from this passage of God’s Word is this:
  - a. Prophecy brings hope
  - b. Prophecy matters to each us; it is relevant!
  - c. Prophecy is real
  - d. Prophecy is true
  - e. And your Bible has a lot of it!
- II. Why study prophecy?
  - 1) God put prophecy **all** over the Bible
    - a. 18 total books in your Bible are primarily prophetic books. Plus, just about every other book has some prophecy in it (or fulfilled in it).
    - b. No other genre in the Bible is given more exclusive attention. To reject prophecy is to reject the Bible, which is to reject God’s written Word.
    - c. There are over 330 prophecies about Jesus in the Bible alone, most of them written hundreds (some thousands) of years before His coming
    - d. Jesus himself prophesied about future events; this is often overlooked.

- e. One of the most misunderstood books in the Bible is a book of Prophecy – the Book of Revelation – and yet we know from just the third verse of the whole book that the entire book’s purpose is HOPE (Revelation 1:3)
  - f. Prophecy as preaching, which was a role of the prophet in both Old and New Testaments – it’s multiple purposes (not just to tell the future) (Romans 12:6; Ephesians 4:11; Hebrews 1:1-2)
- 2) If there is any subject in the Bible that is abused repeatedly, it’s prophecy.
- a. I would personally put it right below the abuse that baptism and the Lord’s Supper receives.
  - b. Those misunderstood, out of context, and abused interpretations of prophecy have served to make false teachers rich, poor people poorer (both in the pocketbook and in knowledge), Christianity divided, and the world led astray.
  - c. A Christian’s ability to understand and interpret prophecy, through the lens of Christ, is essential to understanding over 27% of your Bible!
  - d. There is much to be gained from applying prophecy to our lives. There are lots of simply practical teachings from the prophets.
  - e. The early church used the Old Testament extensively to persuade people to faith (“Proving Christ through the Scriptures” is a phrase used over and over in the book of Acts).
- 3) Also, our ability to identify false prophets is important: being able to answer questions like:
- a. Are there prophets today?
  - b. Have there been any genuine prophets since the 1<sup>st</sup> century church?
- 4) The New Testament instructs us to identify and eradicate false prophets and teachers:
- a. Paul warns about them: Romans 16:17-18; 2 Timothy 4:3-4
  - b. Peter warns about them: 2 Peter 2:1
  - c. Jesus warns about them: Matthew 7:15
  - d. The Apostle John warns about them: 1 John 4:1; 2 John 1:10-11; Revelation 2:2
  - e. The Apostle John warns against anti-christs (plural): 2 John 1:7; 1 John 2:18 (a commonly misunderstood subject)
  - f. Moses warns about them (and provided a test of genuineness): Deuteronomy 13:1-5

- g. Isaiah presents a test of genuineness for prophets: Isaiah 8:20
  - h. Jeremiah presents tests of genuineness for prophets: Jeremiah 23:14, 28:9
  - i. John the Baptist was the last prophet imminently before Christ, but took no credit for himself (exalting God above self, another test for a prophet): John 1:15; John 3:30
  - j. Using the above warnings and tests, we can rightly judge good or false prophets. But who are we to judge? Actually, we are commanded to judge all messengers, to see if they be from God:
    - i. By example: the church in Berea judged Paul rightly by his teaching: Acts 17:11
    - ii. By commandment: Luke 12:57, John 8:26, 1 Corinthians 2:10-16, 2 Corinthians 10:6, Hebrews 5:14, 1 Corinthians 11:19, 1 Corinthians 14:29, 1 Thessalonians 5:21, 2 Timothy 2:15, Titus 1:9, Titus 2:15, 1 John 4:1, Jude 3, 1 Timothy 1:3, among others!
- III. Now that we have given some attention to prophecy for thinking, let's look at prophecy for living:
- a. The first thing Peter says in verse 19 is that prophecy brings HOPE:
    - i. You will do well to pay attention
    - ii. A lamp shining in a dark place
    - iii. The day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts
      1. Christ is called the "morning star" in various parts of Scripture
      2. The idea of a "day dawning" is symbolic language for a hope that is certain
      3. Remember where Peter is right now – about to face a gruesome, imminent death – and what is he focused on? His HOPE in Christ.
      4. That's really the beautiful thing – absolutely nothing can take our hope away:
        5. Romans 8:31-38 – “<sup>31</sup>What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *is* against us? <sup>32</sup>He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? <sup>33</sup>Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; <sup>34</sup>who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who

was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.<sup>35</sup> Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?<sup>36</sup> Just as it is written, “FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED.”<sup>37</sup> But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.<sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,<sup>39</sup> nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- b. The second thing Peter says about prophecy is that its interpretation is not up to us:
- i. Many so-called prophecies from outside the Bible have a naturally-generic nature to them
  - ii. This was so those who received the prophecy could do what they wanted with it and feel like it did them some good
  - iii. The Bible is nothing like this – it is not concerned with our opinion of it. There is only one understanding of prophecy, and that comes from God’s Word, from His inspired authors in that Word.
  - iv. This is actually very comforting – that Biblical prophecy is so real, so unchangeable, so immutable, that it is free from human interpretation. God said it, and that’s it.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

All multiple choice

- 1) Prophecy is unique to God’s Word because it is always true, always right, always relevant, and (pick one): a) it is something the liberals are always going to like, b) it is always going to come true, c) it is always going to be what we want it to be
- 2) Prophecy (pick three): a) brings hope, b) spells out recipes, c) is real, d) makes for a boring TV show, e) is relevant, f) validates Nostradamus
- 3) How many books of the Bible are primarily prophetic books (pick one): a) 2, b) 10, c) 66, d) 18

- 4) The genre in the Bible given the most attention (i.e. the most prolific) is: a) prophecy, b) history, c) poetry, d) wisdom
- 5) To reject prophecy is to reject (pick one): a) interesting theories, b) irrelevant writings, c) God's Word
- 6) Jesus fulfilled over \_\_\_\_\_ prophecies, many out of his control while he was on earth (pick one): a) 5, b) 50, c) 200, d) 330+
- 7) Jesus himself \_\_\_\_\_ about future events (pick one): a) prophesied, b) guessed
- 8) Prophecy is not just about telling the future, but is also (pick one): a) wild guesses, b) preaching, c) teaching a class at your local community college
- 9) A Christian's ability to understand and interpret prophecy is essential to understanding \_\_\_\_ of your Bible: a) 1%, b) 5%, c) 15%, d) 27%
- 10) What people in Scripture warn us about false prophets (pick three): a) Paul, b) Barnabas, c) Timothy, d) Peter, e) Jesus, f) Bartholomew
- 11) Isaiah and Jeremiah give us Scriptural tests for genuine prophets in the following Scriptures (pick three): a) John 3:16, b) Isaiah 8:20, c) Genesis 1:1, d) Jeremiah 23:14, e) Revelation 21:1, f) Jeremiah 28:9

#### BONUS QUESTION

- 12) Peter tells us that prophecy's interpretation is not up to (pick one): a) us, b) God

Studying prophecy may not be the easiest thing, but it is certainly rewarding: the promises for studying prophecy include increasing hope, building up faith, encouraging our hearts, and cementing faithfulness!

(Answer key in rear of book)

“The World’s Way” – 2 Peter 2:1-10

This passage reminded this author, of all things, of an episode of the Andy Griffith Show called, “Aunt Bee’s Medicine Man”, aired first in 1963.

In short, the episode features Aunt Bee who recently had a friend pass away and she was naturally grieving. Along comes a man selling a supposed health tonic called, “Colonel Harvey’s Elixir”, which the salesman claims can cure any ill.

Of course, Aunt Bee is in the audience, but so is Andy. The salesman tries to appeal to Andy first (convince the Sheriff, convince the rest), but Andy says he feels fine. The salesman replies with such pity in his voice, “None so blind as those who cannot see...”

So Aunt Bee buys two bottles, begins to drink them, and suddenly feels a lot better. In fact, Andy and Opey come home to a singing, smiling, not-quite-with-it, Aunt Bee. Even Barney notices that this happy Aunt Bee is really not herself.

Andy is concerned, not because Aunt Bee is happy of course, but because she is not quite herself, and not handling her duties with as much care as she normally, meticulously does.

All of the salesman’s permits are in order, so there seems to be nothing anybody can do to stop this salesman from peddling his questionable wares.

That is until Andy decides to investigate the tonic itself and it turns out it is 170-proof, or 85% alcohol.

What Aunt Bee thought was a cure was really a drug, a poison, had she kept imbibing to drown her sorrows. This is a lot like we are going to talk about today – lies from the world that sound good, look good, are legal to peddle, are oh-so appealing – promising quick fixes to deep problems – but in end, it’s all snake oil.

Let’s focus on 2 Peter 1:-10 –

“But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. <sup>2</sup>Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; <sup>3</sup>and in *their* greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.



<sup>4</sup>For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment; <sup>5</sup>and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a <sup>[a]</sup>preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; <sup>6</sup>and *if* He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing *them* to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly *lives* thereafter; <sup>7</sup>and *if* He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men <sup>8</sup>(for by what he saw and heard *that* righteous man, while living among them, felt *his* righteous soul tormented day after day by *their* lawless deeds), <sup>9</sup>*then* the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from <sup>[b]</sup>temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment,<sup>10</sup>and especially those who <sup>[c]</sup>indulge the flesh in *its* corrupt desires and despise authority.

Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic <sup>[d]</sup>majesties,”

I. False preachers & teachers

a. Many will follow their sensuality

- i. Do not be deceived: modern social values are not based on science, logic, or history
- ii. They are entirely based on feelings, that have then become politicized:
- iii. The APA, or American Psychological Association, has, since 2009, said the there is no evidence for a gay gene, and in fact, all evidence points to the fact that orientation is, what-they-call, “fluid” (otherwise, ultimately chosen, influenced by a variety of circumstances and environmental factors).
- iv. Otherwise, the truth is already out there, but society has not kept up with it yet. But that day is coming.

b. Because of these false teachers, the truth will be maligned

- i. Truth is what it is – nothing can change it.
- ii. Laws do not change truth.
- iii. People do not change truth.
- iv. 2+2 still equals 4, regardless of how much effort (or sincerity) goes into making it 5.

1. If congress decided to legislate that a baseball is really a tomato, does that suddenly make all the baseballs in the nation tomatoes? No.
  2. Does this translate to the real world at all on any level?! It does not.
- c. The Scripture says that in their greed false teachers (and false preachers) will take advantage with false words
- i. Lies always sound good
  - ii. Lies always feel good, at first
  - iii. Lies are commonly mixed up with truth (this is what makes them sound so good in the beginning)
  - iv. Peddlers of lies are experts at twisting truth
  - v. Some of the most popular preachers today are false preachers
    1. Promising wealth where the only ones getting wealthy are them
    2. Promising hope when their false Gospel does not even save
    3. Promising peace when their lack of faith is blamed for their poor circumstances
  - vi. Had a good preacher explain it to me this way – Lies are like brownies mixed with hemlock
    1. The lie looks good
    2. The lie even tastes good upon first consumption
    3. But the lie still ends up a lie and causing great harm
    4. If we can only be convinced by eating the hemlock-brownies (to give into the lies), truth is not the problem, but our unwillingness to investigate it beforehand
  - vii. This is the nature of the twisted-truths our society is being bombarded with today. One twisted-truth that is not discussed near-enough today are how fathers are simultaneously told they are needed for their kids, but also not needed if, or some example, the child suddenly has two legal moms. This is absurdity.
- d. Therefore, in this passage, Peter tells us that God’s judgment is real
- e. And the destruction of those who promote falsehood is coming
- II. Peter Explains How God’s Justice Works in Times of Great Moral Depravity
- a. If God did not spare the sinful angels (CHECK TIME)
    - i. Genesis 2 (Satan in the garden)

- ii. Genesis 6; Jude 1 (Angels who went after strange flesh)
  - b. If God condemned Sodom and Gomorrah
    - i. God made them an example for those who live ungodly lives thereafter
    - ii. You can see that these “new morals” in our culture are as old as humanity itself
  - c. If God rescued Lot
    - i. Funny enough, this is the only positive thing said about Lot in the entire Bible. His entire record in Genesis is just one piece of trouble He got himself and others in after another.
    - ii. However, Peter informs us of something that Genesis does not – that He was oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men in his community
    - iii. Peter tells us that Lot was tortured day by day by their lifestyle
    - iv. And as we know, Lot was eventually affected by it himself
  - d. Then the Lord knows how to rescue the righteous and judge the unrighteous
    - i. He rescues the righteous from temptation and judgment
    - ii. He especially judges those who were evil through the indulgence of their flesh and despise authority
- III. God is just, His judgment is coming, and so is His rescue!
- a. I want speak a moment about how God rescues
    - i. We never see it coming
    - ii. All seems lost and hopeless
    - iii. The rescue, when it arrives, comes in a form we did not anticipate
    - iv. The rescue is not dictated by us
    - v. The day does come where He have to decide if we are going to accept His rescue on His terms or keep floundering on our own
    - vi. If we accept God’s terms, then the rescue works!
      - 1. Because it is not driven by our flesh
      - 2. Because it is not driven by human wisdom
      - 3. Because it is truly God’s truth, done in God’s way, that leads to freedom and life abundant
      - 4. The truth is there is nobody who rescues like God
- IV. There is another myth I want to dispel this morning:

- a. Churches in general are under a critical eye in our culture for our charity
- b. Some secular, so-called freethought, and atheist organizations are saying that Christians do not reflect their values in their giving
- c. So I did some research to find out if what they are saying is true.
- d. First, I cannot assume their accusation is false just because they made it. If Christian charity is not living up to its potential, we should know about it. If it is, we should be able to back that up with truth in love, as truth and love is what we preach.
  - i. Now, there is a lot of data to sort through. Some of these numbers are approximates because there is no way to put a finger on exact figures in some cases. Some of the numbers out there are eschewed, unfortunately by both sides.
  - ii. So I went to first-hand resources – not conservative sites, not liberal sites – just the organizations themselves and assembled the numbers as best as I could do.
  - iii. Let us start with looking at secular, free-thought, and atheist organizations charitable giving.
    - 1. The largest charitable organization that does not have any expressed religious message is The Red Cross.
      - a. Naturally, the name and symbol of The Red Cross seems Christian. Its origin is the Swiss flag color-reversed, which in turn the Swiss Flag was originally based in the early Christian movements during the Protestant Reformation.
    - 2. The Red Cross does do a lot of good. No one really doubts this. Their total worldwide revenue is \$3 billion, 90% of which goes to the actual charity work.
    - 3. The next largest charitable organization is the United Way, which is about \$100 million (so, about 30x smaller).
    - 4. And of course, there are lots of other smaller examples from there.
  - iv. Now let us look, objectively, at Christian giving, but we are just going to look at the United States in comparison to the entire world (like we did for the above charities).
    - 1. Giving to churches alone in the US was about \$100 billion.

2. The vast majority of churches give 10% (some significantly more) to various charitable missions around the world.
  3. So, excluding any good churches do in their communities and their own members alone, external charitable giving was at least \$10 billion last year, or more than 3x the Red Cross.
  4. If worldwide giving is included, the number is exponentially higher. If what Christians give besides their giving to the church is included, the number is again much higher.
  5. There really is no comparison.
- v. Now this is not meant to make a good organization like the Red Cross look bad – of course not. Rather, it is to dispel the myth that Christians are not giving in line with their mission, because they (we) objectively are. And we should.
- e. Now let us continue on this good work, from generation to generation, showing generosity, love, and most of all the Gospel of Jesus Christ with every person we possibly can.

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

All multiple choice

- 1) False teachers and preachers will appeal to a person's (pick one): a) sense of God-given self-worth, b) common sense, c) sensuality
- 2) Modern social "values" are not based on (pick three): a) science, b) logic, c) history (yes all three!)
- 3) Instead, society's sense of morality has become entirely based on: a) fact, b) common sense, c) feelings, d) scientific analysis
- 4) Truth is (pick one): a) what it is, nothing can change it, b) relative to the situation, c) in the eyes of the beholder, d) always changing
- 5) Name two things that do not change truth (pick two): a) laws, b) people
- 6) Name one other common motivation for false teachers, preachers, and prophets: a) food, b) better hours, c) greed
- 7) Name three reasons why lies are often accepted (pick three): a) they warranty our cars against defects for 3 years/36,000 miles, b) they always sound good, c) they always feel good (at first), d) they are commonly mixed up with truth

- 8) If God did not spare the angels when they sinned, condemned Sodom and Gomorrah, and rescued Lot, then He also knows how to (pick one): a) rescue the righteous from temptation and judgment, b) God really does not know how to

### BONUS QUESTION

- 9) Average giving of churches to external charitable organizations (otherwise, not to fund their own internal expenses) is about (pick one): a) about 1/10<sup>th</sup> of what the Red Cross receives, b) about the same as the Red Cross, c) about 3x what the Red Cross receives

This question was not asked to bash the Red Cross at all, but simply to show that Christian charity exceeds secular charity to its largest organization by a long shot; otherwise we are living up to our mission in Christ to help others AND spread the Gospel! (We do not and should not compromise either; these are, by nature, mutually-inclusive goals)

(Answer key in rear of book)

## 2 Peter 2:10-17 – “A Dying Man’s Warning”

“Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties, <sup>11</sup> whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord. <sup>12</sup> But these, like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed, <sup>13</sup> suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong. They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you, <sup>14</sup> having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children; <sup>15</sup> forsaking the right way, they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the *son* of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; <sup>16</sup> but he received a rebuke for his own transgression, *for* a mute donkey, speaking with a voice of a man, restrained the madness of the prophet. <sup>17</sup> These are springs without water and mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been reserved.”

- I. The Sheer Power of Angels, Even Just One!
  - a. 2 Kings 19:35; Isaiah 37:36; 2 Chronicles 32:21
  - b. An angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers
  - c. And yet:
    - i. They do not bring judgments against men (vs. 11)
    - ii. They, even archangels, do not even bring judgement against the devil (Jude 1:9)
    - iii. Angels serve men (Hebrews 1:14)
    - iv. Nonetheless, angels can deliver the judgment OF GOD upon men as He instructs (various passages and stories in the Bible)
- II. Good characteristics gone bad
  - a. Daring – in English, “daring” is not necessarily bad
    - i. But in Greek – this is a bad kind of daring, bold to a serious fault:
      1. Foolish daring – making a decision without counsel

2. Thoughtless daring – acting without thinking
3. Careless daring – acting without concern for others (neglect)
4. Destructive daring – acting knowing such a decision will cause harm or grief to others (deliberate)

b. Self-willed

- i. Like “daring”, this is a bad kind of self-willed, as in initiating conduct based on your own wisdom instead of the Lord’s
- ii. Titus 1:7 uses this same word to describe something a church leader should not be
- iii. It means to be self-satisfied, arrogant, stubborn
- iv. This is the evil twin of being firm or unmoved – this is being stubborn to accept correction, or too proud to receive instruction
- v. The book of Proverbs talks about this kind of individual as a “fool” so often it would be almost impossible to list all of the uses of the word
- vi. This is one trait to definitely be avoided – but is not our world “self-willed” to a serious fault?

c. Tremble

- i. This same Greek word is used in Mark 5:33 and Luke 8:47:
  1. Mark 5:33 – “But the woman fearing and trembling, aware of what had happened to her, came and fell down before Him and told Him the whole truth.”
  2. Luke 8:47 – “When the woman saw that she had not escaped notice, she came trembling and fell down before Him, and declared in the presence of all the people the reason why she had touched Him, and how she had been immediately healed.”
  3. We can see this word does not mean anything short of genuine fear:
    - a. Do not let anyone fool you into thinking your fear of God should just be “respect”



- b. Real fear is “trembling” – realizing Almighty God is who He is, and He, His Son, His Spirit, and His Word are NOT to be trifled with
  - ii. So when it says in 2 Peter 2:11 that these false teachers and preachers do not tremble before God or His powerful angels, they are fools, straight in line for judgment.
- III. Verse 12-13a – the world says we are animals – the Bible says we are so much more
  - a. I must say it is a tragedy beyond words how so much of Christendom has embraced the theory of evolution
  - b. The Catholic Church has swallowed it hook, line, and sinker
  - c. The majority of denominations have surrendered to it
  - d. Outside of a minority of conservative holdouts, it would seem this is another battle lost in the culture wars
  - e. This is honestly ridiculous: evolution is unobservable and unrepeatable (and thus, by definition, unscientific). Evolution has never helped in any medicine; it has never helped in any rehabilitation. It has never given hope, it has never soothed the soul, it has never saved anyone. Evolution has never done a bit of good anywhere.
  - f. So why do we embrace it? Just because the world says so? This world that in just our country alone is \$20 trillion in debt? This world that has more war, racial conflict, persecution, and immorality than it ever has before? Why would we believe anything the world tells us? Especially, if it conflicts directly with the Bible?
  - g. The Bible and evolution are not friends. Anyone or any church that says so is ignoring the plain words repeated so many times in the Scripture, Old Testament or New, they have simply entered a state of denial.
  - h. Peter here makes a point that the people in the world who reject God are like unreasoning animals. Since the people of the world say they have evolved from such, I guess they have proved right, despite their intent!
- IV. Verses 13b-14 –

- a. There is going to be a lot of surprised people on judgment day.
- b. I heard a line from a song on the radio recently that said, “when I woke I knew it was time to pray  
To make amends before the end, before my judgment day  
I looked around, I stood alone, I knew what I had to say  
I said "It's all my fault"
- c. This was not a Christian song mind you, or a Christian band. Nonetheless, the author of the lyrics honestly knows his sins are his own.
- d. Now, the only question is, what will he, or us do about them?
- e. The Bible says eternity in in the hearts of men. The Bible says God is patient, waiting for every man to come to repentance. The Bible says every man is without excuse.
- f. That day grows closer; every day, it nears. There are times in prayer and Bible study where I feel it could be right now. In fact, I’m convinced Jesus is anxiously-awaiting. All of God’s plan since Adam and Eve fell from grace was to bring man back into the relationship He had always intended.
- g. One day, God will walk in the cool of the garden with us in the evening.
- h. One day, all of this stress and difficulty will be finally be done.
- i. So be ready for that day. It is coming; one day it will be past, it will genuinely be too late, and there will not be any second chances.
- j. God has given us terms; He has given us His Son. What will we do?

V. Verses 15-17 –

- a. Peter uses Balaam as an illustration of these present-day false teachers and preachers
- b. Keep in mind that Balaam was called of God, in the Old Testament, as a Gentile prophet
- c. Balaam had a successful ministry up to that point
- d. But we are told in Numbers how Balaam allowed the temptation of greed to blind him, to let himself be led into both sin and betrayal, and then to watch his prayers fall on deaf ear and then his body fall on a sword.

- e. Balaam met his judgment. He met it because he chose to sin instead to honor God.
- f. Balaam would not listen to the voice of God. God's voice was not enough! So God had Balaam's donkey speak to Him. If you have heard the voice of God AND your donkey, and we are still not convinced, is the problem of God's Word or us?
- g. Balaam is used in the New Testament three times as an illustration of how to fail in all the things that matter, ending up in judgment. Let us not forget this story; let us be warned by Balaam's error!

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

All multiple choice

- 1) Angels are incredibly, physically powerful. A single angel killed, according to Scripture (2 Kings 19:35; Isaiah 37:26; 2 Chronicles 32:21) (pick one): a) ten soldiers, b) a hundred soldiers, c) a thousand soldiers, d) 185,000 soldiers
- 2) Yet, faithful angels show incredible restraint by (pick three): a) not bring judgments against men, b) not bringing judgments against the devil, c) appearing on earth only once in a while, d) serving men
- 3) Name four kinds of bad "daring" (pick four): a) foolish, b) creative, c) thoughtless, d) colorful, e) careless, f) tasty, g) destructive
- 4) "Self-willed" means, in Scripture (pick three): a) arrogant, b) stubborn, c) a go-getter, d) too proud to receive correction
- 5) The word "tremble", in Scripture, means (pick one): a) just simple respect, b) to shake because you are cold, c) genuine fear
- 6) The Bible and the theory of evolution are (pick one): a) opposed, b) compatible
- 7) The Bible says (pick one): a) men have reasonable excuses to live wrongly, b) are without excuse to acknowledge God
- 8) What Bible character does Peter use as an example of a false teacher (pick one): a) Simon the Sorcerer, b) the priests of Diana, c) Balaam
- 9) Balaam was tempted and gave into greed, even to his own demise. Yet he was baptized by the Holy Spirit three times! This helps us understand, along with the rest of Scripture, that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is only for: a) fulfilling God's purpose in a person, b) saving them and making them more moral as a result

### BONUS QUESTION

- 10) Balaam is used \_\_\_\_\_ times in the New Testament as an illustration of how to fail in all the things that matter, ending up in judgment. Let us not forget his story, of what not to do and who not to be! (pick one): a) once, b) twice, c) three

The story of Balaam teaches us that believing and living out God's Word is what is important, not receiving special spiritual gifts or having any kind of particular designation.

(Answer key in rear of book)

## 2 Peter 2:17-22 – “The Greater Sorrow”

2 Peter 2:17-22 –

“<sup>17</sup> These people 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 the flesh, 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 “people are slaves to whatever has mastered them.” <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 are 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,”<sup>[a]</sup> and, “A sow that is washed returns to her wallowing in the mud.”

This is a Scripture where a couple of warnings are given:

Warnings in Scripture are meant as an encouragement to do what is right – but also a firm warning to those who do wrong.

It’s a lot like the book of Revelation – lots of frightening imagery and symbolism – but we are told in the beginning of the book (chapter 1, verse 3), that it is a book of hope for the faithful.

Same here. These verses are heavy, but only for those who are unfaithful. To the faithful, we can take courage and receive these warnings and encouragements to stay on the narrow path.

- I. Verse 17 – Blackest darkness
  - a. Same said of fallen angels in Jude 1:13
  - b. Darkness in the Bible is a symbol for warning:
    - i. This is why the 9<sup>th</sup> plague of Egypt was darkness
    - ii. Darkness, without any context, does not seem like it would be much of a plague
    - iii. But with the understanding that darkness means, “Repent, because the worst is coming”, then its full meaning is understood.

- c. Peter uses the Greek word “zophos” here
    - i. By itself, “zophos” can mean just darkness
    - ii. But when combined with “skotous” above, it means “the deepest darkness”, or “utter doom”
  - d. This is the most severe word in the Greek for a warning. Why is it used here and in Jude 1:13?
    - i. The angels that left their proper home and cohabitated here on earth brought so much evil as a result of their actions that the verses immediately following in Genesis 6, God sent the flood to destroy the world.
    - ii. The false teachers and preachers who spread a false Gospel (or an anti-Gospel) are leading not only themselves away, but others.
    - iii. This is also why being a “right teacher” is so important, and emphasized in James 3:1 – “doubly judged”
- II. Verse 19 – What makes a false teacher so bad?
- a. They direct people towards trying to satisfy their flesh
  - b. They entice to stay those who are about to leave their error
  - c. This is yet another place where you can be certain the Bible is right:
    - i. Our world right now is absolutely obsessed with trying to satisfy the flesh
    - ii. All of these changes in social morality are all about “do what you feel”, “follow your heart”, “do what feels right”
    - iii. None of it is based on science, logic, history or anything else objective
    - iv. It’s the old world acting worldly – what’s “new” about that?
    - v. The world thinks that if you give your heart its every desire, you can know contentment and satisfaction
      - 1. But what do you we know from the Scriptures? “Death and the eyes of man are never satisfied.” Proverbs 27:20
      - 2. Contentment comes from godliness – 1 Timothy 6:6
      - 3. Many other references, and right here in 2 Peter, that satisfying the flesh leads to destruction, nothing else
      - 4. Verse 19 tells us that trying to satisfy the flesh is slavery – and indeed it is!
  - d. Something else you should know – false teachers know they are false

- i. Peter tells us that God warned Balaam many times before his destruction; we can confirm this in the book of Numbers
- ii. We are told in the Exodus that God warned Pharaoh through Moses and Aaron 13 times before his destruction
- iii. Simon the Sorcerer in Acts 8 was warned by Philip
- iv. Demas was trained by Paul but still left in 2 Timothy
- v. Before a fall, God tries to save all (the thrust of 2 Peter chapter 3), but a man can choose not to listen, and therefore, many choose not to

### III. Verses 20-22

- a. Today's sermon title is based on this verse
- b. Absolutely the whole world should be preached the Gospel
- c. We are told in the Scriptures that many will respond fully and completely (faith, repentance, confession, and baptism) – but not all will remain faithful
- d. For those who do not, it is actually a worse fate
- e. The book of Hebrews gives us five warnings in it saying the same thing:
  - i. Hebrews 6:4-6 in particular
  - ii. “<sup>4</sup>It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, <sup>5</sup>who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age <sup>6</sup>and who have fallen<sup>□</sup> away, to be brought back to repentance. To their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.”
- f. There is no greater sorrow
- g. How does one reach this state?
  - i. This does NOT happen just because we sin (we all sin – 1 John 1:8)
  - ii. This is context to false preachers and teachers in 2 Peter 2
  - iii. And in Hebrews 6, it is in reference to those who have:
    1. Been enlightened (been taught the Word of God)
    2. Tasted the heavenly gift (seen results of their repentance)
    3. Shared in the Holy Spirit (fully immersed believers, who understand what their baptism was about)
    4. Tasted the goodness of the Word of God (those who have seen their own study of the Scripture bear fruit)

5. Tasted the powers of the coming age (been an active part of a church reaching others for Christ)
6. These people who fall away cannot come back. They are worse off than those never saved, because they knew salvation, and squandered it to not only their own destruction, but to the influential destruction of others (like false teachers)

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

All multiple choice

- 1) Warnings in Scripture are meant as (pick one): a) to depress us, b) to worry us, c) to encourage us to do what is right but also serve as a firm warning to those are doing wrong
- 2) The book of Revelation is a book of \_\_\_\_\_ according to Revelation 1:3 (pick one): a) random images, b) hope, c) illegible symbols
- 3) “Blackest darkness” is also said of fallen angels in Jude 1:13. Darkness is a symbol in the Bible for (pick one): a) warning, b) sin, c) a dark cloth
- 4) The warning spoken of here is (pick one): a) not a big deal, b) a little scar, c) a bit worrisome, d) “utter doom”
- 5) Name two things that make a false teacher so terrible (pick two): a) they have a suspicious side job, b) they direct people towards trying to satisfy their flesh, c) they entice to stay those who are about to leave their error
- 6) What does Proverbs 27:20 say about what are never satisfied (pick two): a) hunger, b) death, c) the eyes of man, d) thirst
- 7) 1 Timothy 6:6 says that \_\_\_\_\_ with contentment is great gain (pick one): a) godliness, b) faith, c) good food, d) a good book
- 8) The book of Hebrews gives how many warnings about falling away (pick one): a) 1, b) 2, c) 3, d) 4, e) 5
- 9) We do not fall away just because we sin, because we all sin (1 John 1:8), but rather because we have rejected (pick four): a) certain translation of the Bible, b) enlightenment by God’s Word, c) shape of the church building, d) the heavenly gift (the Holy Spirit), e) the Word of God, f) whether we like the color of the carpet, g) God in exchange for the false powers of this coming age



## BONUS QUESTION

- 10) Those who genuinely fall away cannot \_\_\_\_\_ (pick one): a) read the Bible anymore, b) come back [to salvation], c) pray, d) be good citizens. They have squandered salvation to their own destruction and even then have influenced others to the same destruction.

Jude 1:23 says to “save others, snatching them out of the fire”. Let us do all we can to save ourselves and each other from falling away as this passage of Scripture has described.

(Answer key in rear of book)

## 2 Peter 3:1-9 – “Be a Watchman”

My mother would say one word in particular that drove us kids crazy – “agiven”. Everything was always “agiven”. If we did not do something we were supposed to do, it was “agiven” we were supposed to do that (meaning we should have known better). For years as an adult, I could not stand or use that word. As I grew older, I understood she was RIGHT. “Agiven” was not the problem. I was!

- I. Attitudes about reminders
  - a. It is easy to gloss over, even roll our eyes over constant reminders
  - b. But Scripture does not include them so we can ignore them:
    - i. Peter writes TWO letters unto this purpose
    - ii. He reminds us multiple times about remembering what it is important when life is in crisis:
      1. The Word of God is the only firm foundation
      2. Life can be known or unknown, certain or uncertain – that does not change what we are to do
      3. False teachers and preachers are influencing Christians and non-Christians alike and we need to guard our hearts and minds against their teachings
- II. Biblical Identifiers of False Preachers and Teachers (CHART)

Biblical Identifiers of False Preachers and Teachers	
Matthew 5:11, 24:24; Mark 13:22; Luke 6:26	<b>A constant, pessimistic gossip</b>
Matthew 5:33; Mark 10:19	Excuses broken promises
Matthew 7:15	Appears innocent
Matthew 15:19; Galatians 2:4	<b>Dogmatic about unverifiable information</b>
Matthew 24:11	Has a following who thinks this person can do or say no wrong
Matthew 26:59; Mark 14:57	Rushes decisions to avoid investigation

Acts 6:13; 1 John 4:1; Revelation 2:2	<b>Does not permit questioning</b>
2 Corinthians 11:13	Boastful
2 Corinthians 11:26	Refuses to seek peace with opposition
Ephesians 4:25	Sees a fellow member(s) of the body of Christ as having no redeeming value
Philippians 3:2	Emphasizes the carnal over the eternal
2 Thessalonians 2:9	Has seemingly supernatural or extraordinary talent
2 Thessalonians 2:11	Has many closet sins
1 Timothy 6:20	Constantly mixes worldly knowledge with Scripture (preferring it)
2 Peter 2:1	<b>Denies some (or all) of Jesus' essential, Scriptural qualities: divinity, virgin birth, miracles, teachings, equating the Apostles' teachings, death, burial, resurrection, or ascension, etc.</b>
2 Peter 2:1	<b>Will do the above secretly, privately</b>
2 Peter 2:3	Greedy

III. It is in our hands whether we are going to let the FACTS of God's Word guide us or not:

- a. The scoffers let the FACTS escape
- b. The faithful bind the FACTS of Scripture to their minds and hearts
- c. Proverbs 1:20-24 – “Wisdom shouts in the street,  
She **l**ifts her voice in the square;  
<sup>21</sup> At the head of the noisy *streets* she cries out;  
At the entrance of the gates in the city she utters her sayings:  
<sup>22</sup> “How long, O **l**naive ones, will you love **l**being simple-minded?  
And scoffers delight themselves in scoffing  
And fools hate knowledge?”

<sup>23</sup> “Turn to my reproof,  
Behold, I will pour out my spirit on you;  
I will make my words known to you.  
<sup>24</sup> “Because I called and you refused,  
I stretched out my hand and no one paid attention.”

- IV. Christ has not yet returned because of MERCY
- a. God is the Lord of time; He is more interested in saving as many as He can versus rushing things along
  - b. “Ruthlessly remove haste from your life”, “Haste makes waste”
  - c. God loves ALL; He is willing to wait.
  - d. But the day will come when all opportunities and warnings have been presented and all people will be without excuse (Romans 1:20).

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) It is human nature to roll our eyes – to gloss over – \_\_\_\_\_ (pick one): a) advertisements, b) reminders, c) bumper stickers
- 2) However, Peter does remind us about (pick three): a) the Word of God is the only firm foundation, b) practicing good hygiene, c) that life can be certain or uncertain, but that does not change what we are to do, d) that we need to guard our hearts and minds against false teacher and preachers, e) bringing our Bibles to worship each week
- 3) Name four Biblical identifiers of false teachers/preachers (pick four): a) a tall man, b) rushes decisions to avoid investigation, c) bald, d) pale, e) refuses to seek peace with opposition, f) will do many things privately/secretly, g) greedy, h) short in height
- 4) Scoffers (pick one): a) embrace facts, b) love history, c) enjoy poetry, d) let the facts escape
- 5) The faithful bind the facts of Scripture to (pick two): a) bulletin boards, b) their minds, c) craft paper, d) their hearts, e) walls
- 6) Proverbs 1:22 equates naïve people to (pick one): a) loving simple-mindedness, b) blissfully ignorant, c) good cooks

- 7) Proverbs 1:22 also equates fools to (pick one): a) loving knowledge, b) hating knowledge, c) writing, d) talking
- 8) Proverbs 1:23 encourages us to (pick one): a) figure out things on our own, b) embrace worldly wisdom, c) turn to God's reproof, d) read a lot more
- 9) Christ has not yet returned because of (pick one): a) waiting on signs and portents, b) still busy with other things, c) mercy

### BONUS QUESTION

- 10) The day will come when all opportunities to receive Christ and all warnings have been given. What Scripture tells us that all people are without excuse (pick one): 1) Genesis 1:1, b) Romans 1:20, c) John 3:16, d) Jeremiah 17:34

Peter is about to end his letter, his last letter. He is about to die. He wants to make sure we know what to do in his (and soon the other Apostles') absences. Isn't it good to have the full Word of God right in front of us? The early church did not enjoy this privilege until well in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century when the New Testament was not only completed but compiled and began to be distributed (but even then, widespread access to the Scriptures would not come for nearly another 1,500 years with the invention of the printing press). What a privilege to own a Bible!

## 2 Peter 3:10-18 – “The Better Things”

2 Peter 3:10-18 (NASB) –

<sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

<sup>11</sup>Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, <sup>12</sup>looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!<sup>13</sup>But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

<sup>14</sup>Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, <sup>15</sup>and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, <sup>16</sup>as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. <sup>17</sup>You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, <sup>18</sup>but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”

- I. Vs. 10-11 – Understand the Future God has Planned
  - A. These first couple of verses sound negative but keep reading:
  - B. It is a very good thing taken as a whole:
  - C. Fire, destruction – what could come from that?
  - D. This is a cleansing! This is getting rid of all the harmful stuff!
- II. What is that cleansing going to look like when it is all said and done?
  - A. If we are honest with ourselves, we nor our kids really want to clean everyday household items – but when we are done cleaning – the result is always worthwhile!
  - B. God has a plan to cleanse existence from sin, shame, guilt, and negativity – all bad things – to bring it into perfection.

- C. He is not going to fix this planet. He is going to remove it and replace it – a new heaven and a new earth – bigger and grander than anything we can imagine.
  - D. Everything that is good here is going to be there and is going to be perfected and there are things there we cannot even imagine. We have a new heaven AND a new earth coming!
  - E. “Day of the Lord” – this is judgment, the destruction of all things bad; we are not on the end of this! We will inherit what is good!
  - F. We will be vindicated by the blood of Christ.
  - G. Removal of all the pain, all the shame, all the negativity – replacing it with something new, perfect, and complete!
- III. What kind of people should we be?
- A. A heavenward bound kind of thinking: the daily grind tries to bring us down.
  - B. Holiness & Godliness –
    - i. Holy – separate, distinct, set aside for a purpose of God
    - ii. Peculiar – weird, different, significantly, visibly, obviously different
  - C. Example: when at work – everybody is gossip, complaining – be the person who doesn’t do those things. You will stick out – in a good way. Be the weird one in the room.
- IV. Godliness is always tied to contentment and peace.
- A. The world does not know contentment and peace. And a lot of Christians don’t know it because of Biblical ignorance. The Bible speaks of it; do we live it?
  - B. We have the ability through Jesus Christ to endure those things, to stand firm on those things.
  - C. To be godly means to have contentment and peace. Discontentment can destroy a person – not knowing the peace of Christ. I know many faithful Christians who leave in fear, not peace. This is not God’s intent.
  - D. If we are the kind of people who do those things – we are looking for and hastening the coming of the Lord according to vs. 12!
  - E. “Heaven” is the same word as “sky” and “outer space” – see Genesis 1, and Paul speaks of going to the third heaven

- F. The ancients had only one word for heaven/sky/outer space – we have multiple. They have multiple words for love – we only have one. This kind of language barrier makes translation (and therefore understanding) sometimes difficult.
- V. Vs. 13 – we are looking forward to a new heaven and new earth where righteousness dwells
  - A. “No sea” – no separation between heaven and earth (there is now)
  - B. God designed earth for us. We were meant to be here. We will then be meant for both places.
  - C. It is ignorant to say that only some will get to go to the new heaven. All are equally vindicated through the blood of Christ. Only Christ paid the price.
- VI. Vs. 14 – Be diligent to be found by Him
  - A. Does God see peace when He looks upon us?
  - B. Your preacher was having negative thoughts on day when I was working in my home and I hit my head on a 2x4 really hard – it was a good wake-up call! Hebrews 12 talks about God’s discipline. All of us have negative thoughts about others and have the temptation to gossip. We need to stop this completely and fully and forever!
  - C. Finding fault is not God’s will.
  - D. Vs. 15 – Peter compliments Paul! “A beloved brother who has divine wisdom”
  - E. Paul had previously rebuked Peter. There was no bitterness here!
  - F. Peter took correction graciously. He as an Apostle, evangelist, elder. And he still was learning! Are we mature like Peter to take correction graciously?
  - G. Peter defends Paul, even his tough writings. If we read Peter (i.e. the Gospel of Mark), then we should read Paul!
  - H. Peter warns against rejecting Paul’s writings. Paul wrote half of your New Testament. Jesus Himself called Paul. If you reject Paul, you reject your faith.
  - I. I understand how Peter feels. Romans confounds me. An honest preacher will say “I don’t know” sometimes. Deuteronomy 29:29 – the secret things belong to God.



- VII. Vs. 17-18 – be on your guard so you are not carried away by unprincipled men
- A. Complacency is the root of failure here.
  - B. The temptation to let down our guard is always there.
  - C. The Scripture never says, “drop your guard, take a break, you’re safe” from outside influences.
  - D. I’m wired to be pragmatic. The Bible’s solutions are not always pragmatic.
  - E. God is principled but not always practical, by our definition. Jericho is a notable example. Obeying Him works because things happen because of God’s power, not ours.
  - F. Weekly church attendance is mandatory and possible otherwise God would not have commanded it. The Lord’s Supper demands it. We need the fellowship, encouragement, the Word every week. To be on guard, we have to do what He says, even if it is impractical and doesn’t fit on a worldly level.
  - G. Age has taught me that it doesn’t have to make sense to me. I simply need to obey.
  - H. Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Why? Because be to Him the glory!
  - I. We must grow! Are we in a mindset of growth? Do we have a plan to grow? Are we executing that plan?
  - J. Build up your Bible knowledge! Build up in grace! Learn confidence, peace, and contentment in the Lord. Find peace, find contentment, grow in the Lord!
  - K. It’s opposite of our traditions, habits, how we grew up, our feelings, our heart but at the end of that journey is peace, contentment, eternity with the Lord – keep your eyes set on the prize!
  - L. Forget what is behind – move towards what is ahead!
  - M. Paul had a lot of things to forget (Philippians 3:13-14) but he did!
  - N. Forgiveness is in the mind of God – not ours. He knows everything but still forgets our sins! The pain is gone; the shame is gone!
  - O. Hebrews 12 – we are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses cheering each other on! Go, Christian, go!

## REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1) Fire and destruction in this passage are referring specifically to (pick one): a) judgment, b) baptism, c) cleansing, d) internal combustion
- 2) God has a plan to cleanse from existence (pick four): a) ugly things, b) sin, c) shame, c) things that taste bad, d) guilt, e) negativity
- 3) “Everything that is \_\_\_\_\_ here is going to be there and is going to be perfected and there are things there we cannot even imagine. We have a new heaven and a new earth coming!” (Pick one) a) colorful, b) good, c) creative, d) tasty
- 4) Faithful Christians are vindicated by (pick one): a) good works, b) money, c) fame, d) earthly blessings, e) the blood of Christ
- 5) Name three things that Peter says we should be (pick three): a) have heavenward bound kind of thinking, b) wealthy, c) holy, d) godly, e) good looking
- 6) Godliness and \_\_\_\_\_ are tied together in 1 Timothy 6:6 (pick one): a) right living, b) contentment, c) freckles, d) salsa
- 7) 2 Peter 3:14 says we are to (pick one): a) be diligent, b) be lazy, c) be relaxed, d) not pay attention
- 8) We need to stop thinking negatively about others and gossiping fully, completely, and \_\_\_\_\_ (pick one): a) temporarily, b) for a while, c) for a long while, d) forever
- 9) Finding faults in others is not God’s (pick one): a) preference, b) option, c) will (Proverbs 11:12-13)

## BONUS QUESTION

- 10) Hebrews 12:1 says we are surrounded by a cloud of witnesses cheering us on. What is the prize this verse speaks of? (pick one) a) a victory wreath, b) a trophy, c) money, d) fame, e) power, f) salvation in Jesus Christ, the hope of eternal life

So Peter’s last letter – his last words – is done. The imminence of his unpleasant death was upon him, but he was more concerned about you and me (just like Christ). In good times, and especially hard times, this is the example set before us. Let us strive onto the prize that is in Christ Jesus! (Philippians 3:13-14)

## ANSWER KEY

2 Peter 1:1-4

1) b, 2) c, 3) d, 4) a, 5) b, 6) c, 7) a&d, 8) b, 9) c, 10) c

2 Peter 1:5-7

1) d, 2) b, 3) c, 4) a, 5) c, 6) d, 7) a, 8) b, 9) c, 10) c

2 Peter 1:5-10

1) b&d, 2) a&d, 3) c, 4) Yes, 5) (discussion question), 6) b, 7) a, 8) d, 9) a, 10) a

2 Peter 1:11

1) b, 2) c, 3) a, 4) d, 5) a, 6) c, 7) a&c, 8) b, 9) d, 10) (class discussion)

2 Peter 1:12-15

1) a, 2) c, 3) a &d, 4) b, 5) a, 6) c, 7) a, 8) b, 9) (class discussion), 10) c

2 Peter 1:16-18

1) b, 2) b&d&e, 3) a, 4) b, 5) c, 6) a&b&c, 7) a&b&c, 8) a&b&c, 9) a, 10) a&b&c&d,  
11) c&d&e

2 Peter 1:19-21

1) b, 2) a&c&e, 3) d, 4) a, 5) c, 6) d, 7) a, 8) b, 9) d, 10) a&d&e, 11) b&d&f, 12) a

2 Peter 2:1-10

1) c, 2) a&b&c, 3) c, 4) a, 5) a&b, 6) c, 7) b&c&d, 8) a, 9) c

2 Peter 2:10-17

1) d, 2) a&b&d, 3) a&c&e&g, 4) a&b&d, 5) c, 6) a, 7) b, 8) c, 9) a, 10) c

2 Peter 2:17-22

1) c, 2) b, 3) a, 4) d, 5) b&c, 6) b&c, 7) a, 8) e, 9) b&d&e&g, 10) b

2 Peter 3:1-9

1) c, 2) b&c&de, 3) b, 4) e, 5) a&c&d, 6) b, 7) a, 8) d, 9) c, 10) f

2 Peter 3:10-18

1) c, 2) b&c&d&e, 3) b, 4) e, 5) a&c&d, 6) b, 7) a, 8) d, 9) c, 10) f