

*From the Garden to Glory*

# Second Peter

**Author:** Peter the Apostle

**Written to:** Those who have received "like precious faith"

**Timeline:** c. 66 - 67 A.D.

**Theme:** A Warning Against the Dangers from Within the Church

**Purpose of writing:** Peter wrote to warn believers about false teachers and their doctrines. He also urged Christians to grow spiritually and to look for the Lord's return.

## **Introduction:**

Peter's first letter dealt with the dangers Christians faced from without ~ persecution from the world. This second letter deals with the dangers that threaten the church from within ~ false doctrine, false prophets and teachers.

Caesar Nero's crushing persecution against the Church was still in full swing. Apostasy and false doctrine was spreading quickly in the Church as a whole. Peter had a sense that his time was drawing near; he would soon die a martyr's death. This gives us a sense of the urgency behind this letter.

As we begin our study of the book of 2 Peter consider the following questions and write your responses:

1. Since writing his first letter to the persecuted church, Peter had become increasingly concerned about the false doctrine that had infiltrated the church. Why would false teaching be especially dangerous during times of persecution?

2. Peter wanted to instruct the Christians about ways to defend themselves against false teaching. What is one way that you can protect yourself against deceptive doctrine?
3. When Peter wrote his second letter he knew that he did not have long to live. If you knew that you had only a short time to live, what two or three important messages (warnings, exhortations or encouragements) would you like to communicate to those you love? Why would you choose each of these?

## **Christian Virtues**

Read 2 Peter 1:1-11

1. In verse 1 Peter described the faith that believers have obtained as *precious*. What does that mean? In what way(s) is your faith precious to you? In your own words explain how Peter said that this *precious faith* was obtained.
2. Read verses 2-4. Write out verse 3 and circle the word *all*. As you meditate on these verses today, write your response to God's provision for you.
3. Note the progression of Christian virtues listed in verses 5-7. Look up each of these words and write the definitions. What does *giving all diligence* mean? How do you do this?
  - faith
  - virtue

- knowledge
- self-control
- perseverance
- godliness
- brotherly kindness
- love

## **Christ's Legacy**

Read 2 Peter 1:12-21

1. In verse 14 Peter used the words *put off my tent* when speaking of his death. Explain your understanding of death as it relates to the Christian.
2. Read verse 15. Peter wrote this letter so that there would be a lasting reminder of *these things*. What are the things to which he referred? What lasting reminder do you want to leave and to whom do you want to leave it?
3. Look carefully at verses 16-21. What do you learn about each member of the Godhead from these verses? How does this knowledge impact your relationship with Him?
  - God the Father

- the Lord Jesus Christ
- the Holy Spirit

## **Christless Teachers**

Read 2 Peter 2:1-12

1. Peter described false teachers in verses 1-3. List everything you learn about them from these verses.
2. Look at verses 3-9. What did Peter say would be the final end of apostates? How can you *lovingly* explain to an unbeliever that "all roads *do not* lead to heaven"?
3. In verses 10-11 Peter condemned false teachers. What did he say against them? Contrast their behavior with what you learned from Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus about the requirements for leaders in the church.

## **Christ Against the Backslider**

Read 2 Peter 2:12-22

1. In verse 15 Peter said that false teachers had *forsaken the right way and gone astray*. Phillips puts it like this: *They have abandoned the right road*. What more do you learn about false teachers from verses 13-16? List one specific thing you are doing to make sure that you remain on *the right road*.

2. Look at verses 17-18. What did false teachers offer? How did they do so? What did they deliver?
  
3. In verse 19 Peter said that false teachers promised freedom but in reality they themselves were in bondage to sin. What does it mean to be in *bondage*? Look at the following verses and list some of the things to which the false teachers were in bondage.
  - 2 Peter 2:3
  
  - 2 Peter 2:10-12
  
  - 2 Peter 2:14

### **Christ's Addressed**

Read 2 Peter 3:1-9

1. How did Peter address his readers in verse 1? What does this tell you about his heart for them? Peter spoke of their *pure minds*. What does this mean? What are you doing today to insure that your mind is pure?
  
2. Look at verse 2. Of what did Peter tell his readers to be mindful? How do *you* remain mindful of these things?
  
3. Read verses 8-9. What do you learn about the heart of the Lord from these verses?

## **Christ's Coming Assured**

Read 2 Peter 3:10-18

1. Look at verse 10. How will the day of the Lord come? How is it described?
2. Read verses 11-13. The word *look/looking* in verses 12 and 13 means *to await eagerly, to be expectant*. What are your thoughts concerning the new heaven and the new earth?
3. What was Peter's instruction for the believers in verse 14? What are you doing today to make sure that you will be found thusly by the Lord?

## **Summary**

As you conclude your study of the book of 2 Peter consider the following questions and write your answer:

1. What is the most significant thing that you have learned from your study about the Lord, His character, or His attributes? How does this encourage you? Take a few moments to thank and praise the Lord for the things that you learned about Him.
2. What is the most important lesson or new insight that you have learned from your study of this book? How can you apply this lesson in your life this week?