

2 Peter
Leader Guide
(NASB and ESV)

HOW TO BE KEPT
FROM FALLING

2 Peter Leader Guide (NASB and ESV)

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USING LEADER GUIDES

Leader Guides are intended for you, the leader, to guide your Precept Upon Precept® and In & Out® discussions. They are designed to help you reason through the content of the lessons and to ensure you have understood what your group should have learned from their study. The guides offer effective plans for leading discussions.

The Holy Spirit is your guide as you prepare. He is the one who knows what your group needs to apply to their lives. Pray for them as they study and for yourself as you prepare to lead the discussion.

These guides can be used for either the NASB or the ESV edition of the courses. ESV words follow the NASB after a slash / or are set off with parentheses.

Leader Guides include the following:

- Lesson emphasis
- A logical order for the discussion
- Discussion questions
- Suggested visual aid(s)

Practical tips for using the Leader Guide:

- **Don't simply "do" the lesson.**
Stay with the lesson until you have a good understanding of it. This will give you a better grasp of how the Leader Guide takes you through the lesson.
- **You don't have to ask every question in the guide.**
Often one question will be covered while discussing another question so there is no reason to ask it. Your goal is not to ask every question, but to ask enough questions to make sure your group understood the lesson and to help them apply the truths to their lives.

Using the Leader Guide with In & Out

When your entire group uses In & Out

Compare an In & Out lesson with the Leader Guide. Use what relates to the In & Out lesson as a guide for the discussion. Don't teach what's not in In & Out lessons. Remember your goal in the discussion is for your group to discuss what they've learned, not for you to lecture on what you learned.

For groups studying both Precept Upon Precept and In & Out

Use the Leader Guides as designed for PUP, knowing that the In & Out assignments will be covered in the discussion. Make a note in the Leader Guide of what is not in the In & Out.

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2 PETER LEADER GUIDE Lesson 1

Lesson focus:

- 2 Peter Overview

You might begin this discussion by asking your group what kind of literature 2 Peter is and what they learned about its author.

PETER

Focusing on what the text tells about Peter can set the foundation for the rest of this discussion. As a visual aid for this part of the discussion, tell your group to look at their “2 Peter Observations” pages along with their Observation Worksheets.

The first verse identifies the author as Simon Peter the apostle.
But he first introduced himself as Jesus’ bond-servant (ESV—servant).

He was an eyewitness of what happened on the Mount of Transfiguration, 1:16-18.
Peter was an apostle and one of only three men who saw the “Majestic Glory.”

Peter wrote this second letter, 3:1, at the end of his life, 1:13-15.

What does this information show about Peter? Let your group briefly discuss this.
Ask what they would write if they knew it was the end of their lives.

RECIPIENTS

Now ask what your group learned about the recipients of Peter’s letter.

The apostle Simon Peter, Jesus’ servant, wrote to those who had the same kind (ESV—equal standing) of faith, believers, 1:1.

They already knew the truth and were established in it, 1:12.

There were false teachers and mockers / scoffers among them or soon to be among them.

This letter is for all believers in Jesus Christ.

PURPOSE, WHY WRITTEN

Where does this letter state why Peter wrote it? What was his stated reason or purpose?

3:1-2 says Peter wrote to those believers to stir up their minds by reminder. It was the end of his life and he wanted to remind those who already were established in the truth.

He reminded them of God's Word:

- Old Testament, the words spoken beforehand (ESV—predictions) by the holy prophets
- New Testament, the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by the apostles

Why was that important to Peter at the end of his life?

Those believers were facing or about to face false teachers and mockers / scoffers. Peter knew and wanted them to remember that the solution for those situations is God's Word.

The same is true now. This letter is for believers now.

Believers face the same now, and 2 Peter tells how to combat false teachers and mockers / scoffers.

KEY WORDS

At this point, you could ask about key words repeated throughout 2 Peter and what your group learned from marking them. What are the main subjects?

Remind, remember, call to mind

Used in chapters 1 and 3—Peter reminded those who knew the truth of God's Word so that they might call it to mind after his death.

God's Word and synonyms

Throughout the letter, Peter referred to God's word or promises, prophecy of Scripture, etc., as the basis for his reminder.

Know, knowledge

These words are primarily in chapters 1 and 3. The believers already knew, but were to add more knowledge to what they knew. Peter spoke of a true knowledge.

Chapter 2 tells of those who had no knowledge and of those who knew, then turned away. The last thing he said about knowledge was to grow in it—the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Judgment, destroyed / destruction

These words are in chapter 2 primarily and in chapter 3.

The false teachers will be judged, destroyed.

The present heavens and earth will be destroyed with fire.

2 PETER 1

After discussing what was repeated in the whole of 2 Peter, then ask about each chapter to understand Peter's flow of thought and main message to believers now.

For this part of your discussion, tell your group to look at their At a Glance charts as well as their Observation Worksheets.

You can ask what they noted as the theme of this chapter. Their answer will probably be something like the following:

Be diligent in faith; Peter reminded of the sure / confirmed prophetic word

Who and what is this chapter about?

This chapter is about Peter and the believers he wrote.

Believers have everything for life and godliness in God's promises and through the knowledge of God and Jesus.

Peter called those who had faith to supply / supplement certain qualities in their faith.

Peter didn't follow tales / myths, but knew the sure / confirmed word of prophecy and wanted believers established in the truth to remember these things.

2 PETER 2

How does this chapter connect with 2 Peter 1?

Peter told about the sure / confirmed word of prophecy from God through men moved / carried along by the Holy Spirit. "But false prophets . . ." are who chapter 2 is about.

2 Peter 1 is about believers.

2 Peter 2 is about the false prophets and teachers who come among believers.

The repeated key words in this chapter are judgment and destruction.

You might ask why Peter wrote this chapter in a letter to remind believers of God's Word.

This chapter is a warning for believers to know the true because the false will come in around or among them.

Ask about the theme for this chapter.

Destruction for false teachers among believers

Ask your group if they can distinguish false from true teaching about the Word.

Continuing their study in 2 Peter will help them be able to do that.

2 PETER 3

What is a possible theme for this chapter?

Mockers / scoffers will come questioning His coming; day of the Lord; be diligent

Ask about the connection between chapters 2 and 3.

Some turned away from the holy commandment, so Peter told the believers to remember it.

In the last days mockers / scoffers will come.
They'll mock the promise of Jesus' second coming.

Peter reminded that God's Word is sure. It is what caused the heavens and earth to exist. It's also reserving them for the day of judgment of ungodly men.

God is not slow about His promise, but when He comes, so will judgment and destruction.

Verses 14-18

How did Peter end his letter of reminder to believers?

“Therefore...”

He told them of some things they needed to do because of the false teachers and mockers / scoffers, because of the promise of God's Word.

Be diligent.

Be on guard / take care.

False teachers and mockers / scoffers

The untaught / ignorant and unstable distort / twist the Scriptures.

Regard / count God's patience, in not coming yet, as salvation.

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

To end this discussion, ask about the theme of 2 Peter, the whole letter. Discuss application.

Remember the Word; grow in grace and knowledge of Lord

**2 PETER
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 2**

Lesson focus:

- 2 Peter 1
- Knowledge

REVIEW

You might begin your discussion by asking your group to review the context of the book. Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart as a visual aid.

Author: the apostle Simon Peter

Recipients: believers, those with the same kind of faith
already know and have been established in the truth

Purpose: To stir them up by way of reminder
that they would remember
the words spoken by / predictions of the holy prophets
the commandment of the Lord spoken by the apostles

When written: near the end of Peter's life

Book theme: Remember God's Word; grow in grace and knowledge

Chapter 1: Be diligent to practice qualities
Prophetic word made more sure

Chapter 2: False teachers

Chapter 3: Mockers / scoffers
God is not slow about His promise
Therefore, be on guard and grow

1 PETER 1

Verses 1-2

Who and what are these verses about?

Peter is described as a servant and apostle of Christ Jesus.

Verses 12-15 show Peter as God's servant, serving God in his service to the believers.
Verses 16-19 show him as one of the apostles.

The recipients were those who had “received a faith” just like that of Peter and the other apostles.

That is saving faith, received by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ. It is through the righteousness of our God and our Savior Jesus Christ that believers are brought into the family of God.

Jesus Christ is both God and Savior. There are some who do not believe Jesus is God, but verse 1 states that He is.

There is a visual aid at the end of this guide which can be used to note the main points of the lesson as your group discusses each.

What is multiplied to the believer and how?

Grace and peace are multiplied in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

Grace is,

“A favor done without expectation of return; the absolutely free expression of the loving kindness of God to men finding its only motive in the bounty and benevolence of the Giver; unearned and unmerited favor”¹

It is “a special manifestation of the divine presence, activity, power or glory; a favor, expression of kindness, gift, blessing.”²

The word for knowledge that is used here is *epignosis*.

It is “‘exact or full knowledge, discernment, recognition’ . . . expressing a fuller or a full ‘knowledge.’”³

Verse 2, grace and peace are multiplied in that full knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord. Such knowledge influences the one who has it.

Believers experience God’s grace and peace through this kind of knowledge of Him.

They know God and they know Jesus as their Lord or master.

At any point during this discussion, give your group opportunity to talk about relevant application.

¹ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary, New Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 1992), Greek 5485.

² Barclay M. Newman, Jr., *A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament* (Stuttgart, Germany: United Bible Societies, 1971), p. 197.

³W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996). 2:348.

Verses 3-4

According to verse 3, what do believers need to know?

His divine power has granted to us, believers, everything pertaining to life and godliness.

Believers have absolutely everything they need for life and godliness. The provision is for the life received at salvation and for daily life in Christ, as well as for godliness, a lifestyle of reverence and obedience toward God.

It has been granted through the true knowledge of Him.

“Knowledge” used here is also *epignosis*, full knowledge, as in verse 2.

NOTE: It is difficult to determine if “His” and “Him” in verse 3 refer to God the Father or Jesus.

He called us, believers, by His own glory and excellence.

“Excellence” is the same Greek word translated as “moral excellence / virtue” in verse 5.

By this glory and excellence, He has granted to believers His precious and magnificent promises, found in His Word.

Why?

So that we might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust / sinful desire

By faith and God’s promises believers partake of divine nature and escape the world’s corruption. Believers become more like the one who called them.

Ask what they learned from the cross-references about God’s promises.

John 1:12

Those who receive Him, those who believe on His name, are given the right to become children of God. Name represents character. Believing in His name means believing all He is. As partakers of the divine nature, we are His children.

Galatians 1:3-5

Jesus gave Himself for our sins, to deliver us out of this present evil age. Through Him we have escaped the corruption of the world.

John 17:14-17

Believers are not of the world and its corruption.

John 8:31-36

Everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin, but if the Son makes you free, you are free—free from sin. You have escaped the corruption in the world.

Abiding in His Word as a way of life, living in obedience to His Word, shows one is truly a disciple of Jesus.

Colossians 1:27; Galatians 2:20
Christ, the hope of glory is in us.

We are dead, crucified with Christ. It's now Christ who lives in us, partakers of the divine nature. It will be His life lived through us, not a life of lust and corruption.

1 Peter 1:3-5, 14-16

God causes us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus, to an imperishable inheritance reserved in heaven. Believers are protected by God's power through faith for a salvation to be revealed—that glorification of our bodies.

As partakers of this divine nature, we are not to be conformed to our former lusts but are to be holy in all our behavior. We have escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

Ephesians 4:20-24

Believers lay aside the old self which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit and put on the new self, new man, which in the likeness of God, has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

Colossians 3:9-11

We have laid aside the old self, the old man with its evil practices, the corruption that is in the world. We have put on the new self, the new man who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of Jesus.

Give time for your group to discuss personal application of these promises and truths.

Verses 5-11

Who and what are these verses about? Ask your group what they learned from their study.

NOTE: These verses will be studied in detail during the next two lessons.

For this very reason, the reason in verses 1-4

Believers have everything they need for life and godliness, have become partakers of the divine nature, and have escaped the corruption that that is in the world by lust.

For this reason, because of this divine enablement, there are certain things believers should do.

Peter's first instruction requires diligence / effort.

Believers need to supply something in their (ESV—supplement their faith with). But this isn't a list to add to faith, but a progressive sequence. In faith, supply moral excellence (ESV—supplement your faith with virtue). In that moral excellence supply knowledge, etc. (ESV—supplement virtue with knowledge) Each quality progresses out of and builds on the previous. What are those things (qualities)? Discuss how they progress.

Moral excellence / virtue
Knowledge

Gnosis is the Greek word for “knowledge” used in verses 5 and 6. It is “primarily ‘a seeking to know, an enquiry, investigation’ . . . in the New Testament, ‘knowledge,’ especially of spiritual truth.”⁴

Self-control
Perseverance / steadfastness
Godliness
Brotherly kindness / affection
Love

What is the contrast in verses 8-9?

If one has these qualities and they are increasing, they will render / keep that one useful / effective and fruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Knowledge” in verse 8 is again *epignosis*, full knowledge.

He who lacks these qualities is blind or short/near-sighted, having forgotten his purification / cleansing from his former sins.

What else does it say about these qualities or the lack of them? What is Peter's next instruction?

Therefore
Be all the more diligent to make certain about / confirm His calling and choosing / election of you.

As long as believers practice these qualities, they will never stumble / fall.
Also, in this way abundant entrance into the eternal kingdom will be supplied / richly provided to them.
As they supply these qualities, God will supply abundant entrance.

⁴W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996). 2:348.

As sharers of the divine nature, as those who have escaped the corruption in the world, God made it possible for believers to follow the instructions to supply these qualities and practice them.

Verses 12-21

Who and what are these verses about? How does Peter's flow of thought continue?

The believers Peter wrote this to already knew and were established in the truth. But he was ready until he died, to remind them of the things in verses 1-11.

He wanted them to remember it even after he died.

“Know” and “knowing” in verses 12 and 14 are *oida*, “have seen or perceived.”⁵

According to verses 16-21, his reason was because he knew for sure the word. He didn't follow tales / myths when he made known to them the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Known” in verse 16 is *gnorizo*, “to make known.”⁶

He was an eyewitness of Jesus' majesty.
He heard God's utterance / voice when he was with Jesus on the holy mountain.

He concludes that we have the prophetic word made more sure (ESV—more fully confirmed), and they would do well to pay attention to it.

What is his last statement about knowledge in this chapter?

Know / knowing this first of all

ginosko, “to come to know.”⁷

Peter wanted them to know that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation. Men moved / carried along by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

Peter himself was one of those men.

⁵ R. L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries*: Updated Edition, G3609a (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981).

⁶ James Strong, *The New Strong's Dictionary of Hebrew and Greek Words* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1996). G1107.

⁷ R. L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries*: Updated Edition, G1097 (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981).

KNOWLEDGE IN 2 PETER 2–3

At this point, if you have time, ask about the uses of “knowledge” and “know” in chapters 2-3.

2:9, know

oida, “to have knowledge of,” meaning absolute knowledge when referring to Divine knowledge.⁸

The Lord has knowledge of how to rescue the godly from temptation and to keep the unrighteous under punishment.

2:12, knowledge / ignorant

agnoeo, “to be ignorant, not to know.”⁹

The false teachers reviled concerning something about which they were ignorant.

2:20 and 21, knowledge, know, knowing

epignosis, “exact or full knowledge.”¹⁰

The false teachers had a full knowledge of the facts about Jesus.

It would be better for the false teachers not to have had a full knowledge of the way of righteousness than having had that full knowledge, to turn away from the holy commandment.

3:17, knowing this beforehand,

proginosko, “to know beforehand.”¹¹

Knowing all these things ahead of time, the believers were warned by Peter to be on their guard lest they fall.

3:18, knowledge

gnosis, “a seeking to know, an enquiry, investigation.”¹²

The believers were to grow in their seeking to know about Jesus.

⁸W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996). 2:346.

⁹W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996). 2:318.

¹⁰W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996). 2:348.

¹¹R. L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries: Updated Edition*, G4267 (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981).

¹²W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996). 2:348.

You could end by asking your group if their lives show that they have the same kind of faith as Peter and have become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

Believers

grace and peace
in the knowledge of God and Jesus

everything pertaining to life and godliness
by His divine power
through the true knowledge of Him

His precious and magnificent promises
by His own glory and excellence

partakers of the divine nature
escaped corruption
by believing the promises

**2 PETER
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 3**

Lesson emphasis:

- 2 Peter 1:5-7

REVIEW

You could begin your discussion by asking your group what they remember about 2 Peter. Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart.

The apostle Simon Peter wrote it to believers with the same kind of faith as he had.

He wrote to stir up their minds by reminding them of God's word, Old and New Testaments.

There were false teachers and mockers / scoffers among them.

He told them to grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord.

Then ask what they remember about 2 Peter 1:1-4.

Grace and peace multiplied in the knowledge of God and Jesus

Everything pertaining to life and godliness through the true knowledge of Him

His precious and magnificent promises

Partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust / evil desire

2 PETER 1:5-7

Ask what your group learned from their study of these verses.

for this very reason

because of all the things Peter wrote in verses 1-4

Peter first told about God's divine enablement for the believer.
Then he told of the believer's responsibility.

In verse 1, he addressed this letter to those who had received a faith, then in verse 5, he commanded them to supply / supplement certain qualities to their faith.

“Supply / supplement” is “to give lavishly and generously. In Greek culture, the word was used for a choirmaster who was responsible for supplying everything that was needed for his choir. The word never meant to equip sparingly, but to supply lavishly for a noble performance.”¹

“Supply / supplement” is an aorist active imperative verb.

Aorist tense states an action as completed without regard to its duration.

Active voice indicates that the subject produces the action.

Imperative means it’s a command.

Christians are commanded to supply these qualities.

Applying all diligence (ESV—making every effort) is how this supplying or supplementing is to be done.

What are the qualities? Discuss word definitions, cross-references and application. As a visual aid, you might list each one as your group discusses it.

moral excellence / virtue, *arete*

moral goodness, i.e. virtue²

Wiersbe says, “To the Greek philosophers, it meant ‘the fulfillment of a thing’ A Christian is supposed to glorify God because he has God’s nature within; so, when he does this, he shows ‘excellence’ because he is fulfilling his purpose in life.”³

1 Peter 2:9

Not only are Christians to have moral excellence in their own lives, but Peter said they’re to proclaim God’s excellencies.

Philippians 4:8

One way to supply this quality is to concentrate on excellent things,.

¹ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville, Tennessee: Word Publishing, 1997), p. 1952.

²Robert L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries: Updated Edition* (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981). G703

³ Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Alert* (Wheaton: Victor Press, 1984), p. 14.

knowledge, *gnosis*

Gnosis is “primarily ‘a seeking to know, an enquiry, investigation’ . . . in the New Testament, ‘knowledge,’ especially of spiritual truth.”⁴

Proverbs 1

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, and fools hate knowledge.

Knowledge from the Word explains what moral excellence is, what is pleasing in God’s sight. In exercising moral excellence / virtue, supply / supplement knowledge.

Believers are to diligently supply this knowledge—to seek to know the truth of God’s Word. This will show how to live and will enable them to recognize and combat the false. This knowledge enables believers to grow.

self-control, *egkrateia*

“the virtue of one who masters his desires and passions”⁵

Galatians 5:22-23

Part of the fruit of the Holy Spirit is self-control.

Self-control is necessary to live in a morally excellent way.

The false teachers of 2 Peter 2 lacked self-control. They were self-willed.

perseverance / steadfastness, *hupomone*

“steadfastness, constancy, endurance”⁶

“literally, ‘an abiding under’ (*hupo*, ‘under,’ *meno*, ‘to abide’)”⁷

1 Timothy 6:11

Paul commanded Timothy and all believers to pursue perseverance / steadfastness.

⁴W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996). 2:348.

⁵James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order.*, electronic ed. (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996). G1466.

⁶James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: Showing Every Word of the Text of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order.*, electronic ed. (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996). G5281.

⁷W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996). 2:462.

Luke 8:15

Perseverance is needed in the Christian life for bearing fruit.

Luke 21:19; Romans 5:4; Hebrews 6:12; James 1:3-4

Results of perseverance are

- Life
- Proven character and hope
- Inheriting God's promises
- Completion, lacking nothing

Perseverance / steadfastness is a result of self-control.

Knowledge tells about perseverance / steadfastness.

Perseverance / steadfastness is as much a part of Christian character as moral excellence / virtue is.

godliness, *eusebeia*

“denotes that piety which, characterized by a Godward attitude, does that which is well-pleasing to Him”⁸

1 Timothy

Pray for authorities so that Christians can live in peace and godliness

It's a mystery—the gospel of Jesus Christ

Discipline is needed for godliness

It's profitable for this life and the one to come

It is based on sound doctrine

Christians are to pursue it along with perseverance

He also gave a warning in 6:5-6 that men of depraved minds suppose that godliness is a means of gaining money.

Relate this to the false prophets or teachers in the cross-references.

Titus 1:10-16

There were rebellious men among the believers who professed to know God but denied Him by their deeds. They were teaching things they should not teach for the sake of sordid gain.

2 Timothy 3:5

There were men among the believers who were holding to a form of godliness, although they denied its power. Paul said to avoid such men as these.

⁸W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996). 2:272.

2 Peter 2

False teachers among the believers would secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them. They would malign the truth, indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires, and despise authority.

To live godly lives one must have moral excellence / virtue, knowledge, self-control and perseverance / steadfastness.

brotherly kindness / affection, *philadelphia*

“love of brothers, brotherly love”⁹

love, *agape*

“Love, affectionate regard, goodwill, benevolence”¹⁰

1 John 4:7-11

God is love, and love comes from Him.

Everyone who loves is born of God.

Having God’s love is evidence of true salvation.

If there is time, you can close your discussion by asking about the love described in 1 Corinthians 13:1-8.

Because believers are partakers, sharers of the divine nature and have God’s Spirit within, these qualities should be seen in their lives.

⁹ R. L. Thomas, *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries*: Updated Edition, G5360 (Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998, 1981).

¹⁰ Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary, New Testament* (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 1992), Greek 26.

2 PETER
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 4

Lesson emphasis:

- 2 Peter 1:8-21
- 2 Peter 2

REVIEW

You might begin your discussion by questioning your group to briefly review what God's provision is for believers.

faith by the righteousness of Christ
grace and peace
everything pertaining to life and godliness
precious and magnificent promises
partakers of divine nature
escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust / evil desire

Ask what believers are to do because of what God has done.

Being diligent / making every effort, in their faith they are to supply / supplement the qualities of verses 5-7.

These qualities are evidence of salvation, that the person has partaken of the divine nature.

2 PETER 1

Verses 8-11

Ask your group what they learned from their study of these verses.

To be fruitful and useful / effective in the knowledge of Christ, these qualities are to be increasing in a believer's life.

If the qualities are lacking, Peter said that one has forgotten.
Peter's whole letter is a reminder—a reminder of the truth of God's Word—so that believers grow.

Verse 10 says if the qualities are lacking, the person should make sure of his salvation. It's a serious thing.

James 2:14-26

Faith without works is dead. Abraham’s faith was proved when he offered up Isaac. “Faith was working / acting along with his works.” Rahab’s faith was proved, justified, by acting on what she believed to be true.

James says faith is more than just intellectual recognition of a fact. Works are the outward evidence of faith, salvation.

Romans 2:4-10

God will render to every man according to his deeds / works. Those who do good will receive eternal life. Those who don’t obey will receive wrath and indignation / fury.

Lead your discussion back to 2 Peter 1:10-11. What are these verses about?

Therefore—because of all the truths in verses 1-9

Peter’s command is to be all the more diligent to make certain about / confirm one’s calling and choosing / election. They can make certain by practicing these qualities. If they do, they will never stumble / fall. It’s a life style of these qualities which confirms salvation.

Obedience is security for Christians.

“Diligence / make every effort” is used in verse 5 telling of how to supply the qualities.

“More diligent” is how one is to make certain of his salvation.

And that is by being “diligent” in supplying the qualities.

Verse 11 begins with “For in this way.” It continues from verse 10.

Peter said in this way one’s entrance into the eternal kingdom will be abundantly / richly supplied / provided. Salvation is entering the eternal kingdom of Jesus.

“Supplied / provided” is the same Greek word for “supply / supplement” used in verse 5.

Christians are to supply the qualities in their faith, and their entrance into the kingdom will be abundantly supplied for them.

Ask your group what they learned from the other passages in the lesson on this subject.

1 John 2:28

By diligently, generously supplying these qualities one would abide in him and have confidence at His coming.

2 John 8

Watch yourselves, a warning as in 2 Peter, that you might not lose what was accomplished, so you might have a full reward.

Mark 4:20-25

Those who hear and accept the word bear fruit—thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.

A difference in the qualities supplied and their increase would mean the amount of fruitfulness would not be the same in everyone.

Luke 12:42-48

There is a reward for faithfulness.

NOTE: There is no need to discuss the unfaithful steward who was cut in pieces and assigned a place with the unbelievers. There is too much more to discuss in this lesson, and to divert on this point might cause you to lose time.

Ask for a summary of 2 Peter 1:5-11.

Peter commanded believers to be diligent to make certain about their calling and choosing / election. As long as practicing these qualities was their lifestyle, they would never stumble / fall. In this way they can be assured of their entrance into the eternal kingdom being abundantly supplied / richly provided.

Verses 12-15

Ask about the flow of thought from the beginning of this chapter through verse 15.

Peter addressed those who had a faith the same as his.
He told them of all that God had done for them.
Then he called them to “diligently” supply certain qualities in their faith.
He also gave a warning if the qualities were lacking.
He didn’t want them to forget.
Then he spoke of his “diligence” to remind them of “these things.”

Therefore—because of all he had told them up to this point

Peter would always be ready to remind them of these things, even though they already knew them and had been established in the truth.

Ask your students if they ever need to be reminded of the truth of God’s Word. Give time to discuss.

Verses 16-21

What is the connection between these verses and the previous ones? Why does Peter begin with “for”?

He was diligent to remind of these things until his death because he knew the truth. And these things are the truth.

Peter said they had not followed cleverly devised tales / myths when they had made known the power and coming of the Lord to the believers. This shows that Peter and others had a part in establishing them in the truth.

You could ask why he made it a point to say they didn't follow cleverly devised tales.

There were some secretly introducing destructive heresies.

NOTE: Some believe the "power and coming of our Lord" refers to His first coming, because verses 17-18 talk about that time. Others believe it refers to His second coming, which is discussed in chapter 3.

Discuss on what authority Peter spoke to the believers.

Peter and others were eyewitnesses of Jesus' majesty.

Matthew 17:1-8

Jesus took Peter, James, and John on a high mountain with Him. He was transfigured before them; His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white light. Moses and Elijah appeared and were talking with Him. A voice from heaven said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!" The voice was the Majestic Glory, God.

Jesus was the fulfillment of the Old Testament, of the Law given to Moses, and of the words of the prophets such as Elijah.

From this it seems that the "we" was Peter, James, and John. They were eyewitnesses of that incident.

Peter said they had the prophetic word made more sure (ESV—more fully confirmed), because Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophetic word of the Old Testament. They heard God Himself say Jesus is His Son. They were sure about the deity of Christ, about Who He is. The Father told them to listen to Him.

So Peter wrote for believers to pay attention to the prophetic word like they would to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns.

Discuss verses 20 and 21. Ask how these relate to what Peter had just said.

Peter wanted them to know first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will. Men moved / carried along by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

The Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus. This is not something Peter decided or came up with. He was moved by the Holy Spirit to write about what He saw and heard, God's utterance / word that Jesus is His Son.

Give your group time to discuss any application about their view of God's word and how well they pay attention to it.

2 PETER 2

Discuss the contrast between the end of chapter 1 and the beginning of 2.

False prophets were among the people of the Old Testament,
and false teachers will come in among believers.

How can Christians recognize the false?

By the true knowledge of God's Word

To end your discussion, ask what your group observed about the false teachers. It is not necessary to discuss every detail as these facts will be studied more in another lesson.

Peter described their character, behavior and teaching.

- Destructive heresies
- Sensualities
- Malign / blaspheme way of truth
- Exploit with false words

He used some Old Testament examples to talk about judgment and destruction.

- Angels when they sinned
- Righteous Noah and the ungodly ancient world
- Sodom and Gomorrah and righteous Lot
 - He rescues the righteous while destroying the ungodly.
- Balaam
- Proverbs-like a dog returning to its vomit

As you close, encourage your group to continue their study in the true knowledge of the Word of God. If they are believers, they have everything they need for life and godliness. Therefore, their character and behavior should be a life where the qualities are being practiced and are increasing.

**2 PETER
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 5**

Lesson emphasis:

- 2 Peter 2:1-10

REVIEW

Ask why Peter wrote 2 Peter.

To stir up believers to remember
the words spoken beforehand / predicted by the holy prophets
the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by their apostles

Then you might ask what 2 Peter 1 is about.

God's provision for those who have faith

The qualities believers are to supply in their faith

Peter's diligence to remind them of these things

The sure word of prophecy

2 PETER 2

Verses 1-3

What is the contrast between the end of chapter 1 and the beginning of chapter 2?

True prophecy and prophets—true knowledge for believers

False prophets and false words

How does this chapter begin?

There will be false teachers among believers just as there were false prophets among the people of Israel.

They secretly introduce / bring in destructive heresies and deny the Master.
But they are bringing destruction on themselves.

Another sad point is that many will follow their sensuality. Some people want to live by what feels good. These are people among believers who live by their senses.

The false teachers malign / blaspheme the way of truth and because of their greed, they exploit with false words. But they're facing judgment and destruction.

NOTE: The next lesson is about false prophets and teachers, so there will be much more to discuss.

Verses 4-10

What are these verses about? Ask your group what they learned from their study.

Peter then referenced several Old Testament instances of God's judgment on the ungodly while rescuing the righteous.

The first example is angels who sinned, verse 4.

God didn't spare them.

He cast them into hell and committed them to pits / chains of darkness reserved for judgment (ESV—kept until the judgment).

Jude 6-7

This seems to be the same description of the angels who sinned. Here it says they did not keep their own domain / position of authority but left their proper dwelling.

Verse 7 describes their sin more. They indulged in gross / sexual immorality, and went after strange flesh (ESV—pursued unnatural desire). Evidently, these angels took bodily form and engaged in sexual sins. The angels' sin is compared with what the people of Sodom and Gomorrah did in pursuing unnatural desire in sexual sin.

God has kept them in eternal bonds / chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day of God. They'll be judged with eternal fire.

What Jude wrote about this corresponds with 2 Peter 2:4.

Job 1:6 and Job 38:7

It seems here that "sons of God" are angelic beings. Satan was among them when they came before God's presence.

Genesis 6:1-8

Here is another use of the term "sons of God" which many consider to be angels, demonic in nature.

The sons of God took daughters of men / man as wives and children were born. Some think this refers to Jude 6-7, the angels who "did not keep their own domain (ESV—position of authority), but abandoned / left their proper abode / dwelling."

NOTE: There are at least 3 different views on the sons of God in Genesis 6. Some think they are the angels referred to in Jude and 2 Peter and the spirits in 1 Peter. Another view is that the sons of God are the ungodly line of Cain who intermarried with the godly line of Seth; however, this poses a problem in that it presents all those in Cain's line as ungodly and all those in Seth's line as godly. The third view is that the sons of God were men who were demon-possessed. If someone brings up these views, remember to keep the emphasis on the context. This is one of Peter's examples to show that the Lord will punish the unrighteous.

1 Peter 3:18-20

Christ, at His death, went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison who were disobedient in Noah's time.

This might refer to the angels in 2 Peter 2:4, Jude 6-7 and Genesis 6.

Or the spirits might refer to the spirits of ungodly dead people.

Lead your discussion back to 2 Peter 2:5.

What is the next example? Ask your group what they learned about it.

God didn't spare the ancient world but brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly. But He preserved righteous Noah and seven others.

Genesis 6-8

The Lord saw man's great wickedness and evil, and the earth was corrupt and violent. He sent the flood and destroyed every creature that lived on earth except those on the ark.

Noah found favor in the Lord's eyes. He was righteous, blameless in his time and walked with God. In obedience to God's command, Noah built the ark in which God preserved him, his family, and some animals. After the Flood, Noah built an altar and worshiped God.

Matthew 24:36-39; Luke 17:26-27

The coming of the Son of Man will be like the days of Noah. People were eating, drinking, marrying, until the flood. Judgment came and destroyed them all.

What is the next Old Testament example in 2 Peter 2:6-8?

God condemned Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction, but rescued righteous Lot.

God's destruction of these cities is an example even now to the ungodly. Many people know what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah even if they don't know much else about the Bible.

Genesis 18:16-19:38

The sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was exceedingly great (ESV—very grave). Not even 10 righteous men were found there.

The Lord sent angels to destroy the cities, raining brimstone and fire out of heaven on those cities and all the valley.

Luke 17:28-30

It will be the same on the day the Son of Man is revealed—judgment of the wicked.

According to 2 Peter 2:7-8, what happened to Lot?

The Lord rescued righteous Lot.

He is described as oppressed / greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the morally corrupt men where he lived. Living among these with their lawless deeds tormented his soul day after day.

Genesis 11–13

Lot, Abram's nephew, traveled with Abram from Ur to Haran to Canaan. When their possessions were so great that the land couldn't sustain them living together, Lot separated from Abram, choosing the well-watered valley of the Jordan.

He was probably not a righteous man, believer, at that time.

Genesis 14

Abram rescued Lot when he was captured in a war of kings.

Genesis 19

God sent angels to rescue Lot and his family before Sodom was destroyed.

Ask your group what they learned from the cross-references about the Lord's preservation of the righteous.

Ezekiel 9

The Lord called a man in linen to go through Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sighed and groaned over the abominations being committed.

He also called executioners to go after the man in linen and slay those who did not have the mark.

This was done because the iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah was very great, the land was filled with blood, and the city was full of perversion.

Ezekiel 14:1-23

Israel was involved in idolatry, abominations, iniquity, and unfaithfulness. The Lord said even though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in its midst, by their own righteousness they could only deliver themselves.

Only the righteous are rescued from judgment.

2 Thessalonians 1:3-12

God will give relief to the afflicted and repay with affliction those who afflict believers.

This will take place when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, His second coming.

He will deal out retribution / vengeance to those who don't know God and don't obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. Their penalty / punishment will be eternal destruction, away from the Lord's presence.

To end this discussion, ask your group what they learned about the Lord's justice.

THE UNRIGHTEOUS	THE RIGHTEOUS
The Lord knows how to keep under punishment for judgment angels who sinned the ancient world Sodom and Gomorrah	The Lord knows how to rescue Noah Lot

**2 PETER
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 6**

Lesson focus:

- 2 Peter 2
- False prophets and teachers

REVIEW

To begin this discussion, ask your group about Peter's purpose statement for why he wrote this letter and what it's about. Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart as a visual aid.

2 Peter 3:1-2—He wrote to stir up believers to remember God's Word.

There were false teachers and mockers / scoffers among them.

One of the key repeated words in this letter is know or knowledge.
He told them to be on guard and grow in grace and knowledge.

Chapter 1 is about believers, their knowledge of Christ and their knowledge for living.
Chapter 2 is about the false teachers who lead people away from true knowledge.

2 PETER 2

Verses 1-3

How does this chapter begin?

“But false prophets also arose among the people”

Throughout this letter, Peter referred to examples from the Old Testament and encouraged believers to remember the words spoken by (ESV—the predictions of) the holy prophets.

“The people” are the Israelites, the Jews, spoken of throughout the Old Testament.

Ask what your group learned about prophets from the Old Testament cross-references.

Deuteronomy 18:18-22

This passage begins with a prophecy about Jesus. God would put His words in Jesus' mouth and Jesus would speak all God commanded Him. If one did not listen to God's words, God would “require *it* of him” or hold that one accountable for the words heard.

The prophet whom God did not command to speak yet said he spoke in God's name would die. One could know that if the thing a prophet spoke did not come true, that prophet had not spoken for the Lord. The people were not to be afraid of him.

Deuteronomy 13:1-5

The people were not to listen to the prophet or dreamer who said to worship and serve other gods, even if that one gave a sign or wonder which came true. God was testing them to find out if they loved Him with all their heart and soul.

The prophet who taught rebellion was to be killed.

Isaiah 28:7

The false prophet was described as confused by wine, tottering when rendering judgment.

Micah 3:11

The prophets of Israel divined for money, yet they said the Lord was in their midst and calamity would not come.

2 Chronicles 18

Jehoshaphat asked Ahab for a prophet to inquire of God. Ahab called for 400 prophets who prophesied what he wanted to hear. He was reluctant to call for the prophet Micaiah, because he never prophesied good concerning the king.

When called, Micaiah told them not to go to battle. He said the Lord had put a deceiving spirit in the mouth of Ahab's prophets to entice Ahab to go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead. Ahab had Micaiah imprisoned until he returned; however, as Micaiah prophesied, Ahab was killed in battle.

Jeremiah

Jeremiah prophesied to the Southern Kingdom, warning the people that the Babylonian invasion was coming as a result of their sin. The people did not believe it because they listened to the false prophets.

Jeremiah was consecrated before he was born and appointed as a prophet to the nations. The Lord told him not to be afraid. He would put His words in Jeremiah's mouth and would be with him.

There were also false prophets who told the people what they wanted to hear. Everyone was greedy for gain and from the prophet to the priest dealt falsely. They offered peace where there was none, deception of their own minds.

The prophets were leading the people into futility, speaking a vision of their own imagination. They prophesied peace to those who despised the Lord.

The Lord said He had not sent these prophets, but they spoke as if He had. If they had stood in His council, God's Word would have turned the people from their evil ways. Instead the false prophets led the people astray with words. The Lord was against them and would punish them.

Lead your discussion back to 2 Peter 2:1-3. Ask your group what they learned about the false teachers who were among the believers, the church.

Tell them to look at the chart in the lesson as a visual for the rest of this discussion.

character and lifestyle: sensuality, malign way of truth, greedy

doctrine: destructive heresies, deny Master, exploit with false words

end: swift destruction, judgment not idle, destruction not asleep

At any point in this discussion, give opportunity for your group to talk about application.

Verses 4-10

What was Peter's main point in the illustrations?

The Lord knows how to rescue the righteous and keep the unrighteous under punishment for judgment. He rescued righteous Noah and Lot as he sent destruction all around them on the ungodly.

The same is true now. The ungodly prophets and teachers in chapter 2 are bringing destruction on themselves. But God rescues the righteous.

What is the description in verses 10-16 of the false teachers?

Indulge the flesh in corrupt desires (ESV—indulge in the lust of defiling passion)
Despise authority
Daring / bold and self-willed / willful

They are described as those who don't tremble when they revile angelic majesties (ESV—blaspheme the glorious ones) though they have no knowledge / ignorant concerning this. This is in contrast to angels who are greater in might and power, yet do not bring a reviling / blasphemous judgment against angelic majesties.

NOTE: Jude 8-10 says Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not pronounce a railing judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you."

Verse 12 compares these who revile angelic majesties (ESV—blaspheme the glorious ones) to unreasoning / irrational animals who act on instinct and are captured / caught and killed / destroyed. They will be destroyed for doing wrong.

They revel in the daytime; stains / blots and blemishes reviling in deception when they carouse / feast with “you.”

They are blatant about their sin, not even wanting to hide it in the darkness.

They have eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin. Because their hearts are trained in greed, they entice unstable / unsteady souls, evidently for some type of gain from them.

They have forsaken the right way and have gone astray, indicating that they once knew the right way. They have followed the way of Balaam.

Ask your group what they learned about Balaam.

Balaam is an example of a false prophet from the Old Testament.

He loved wages / gain from / unrighteousness doing wrong. He was a mad prophet rebuked and restrained by his donkey.

Numbers 22

The king of Moab called Balaam to come and curse Israel but he refused as God had instructed him. When the king sent the men to Balaam a second time, and offered to honor him richly, Balaam asked the men to stay and again inquired of God. God told him to go but only speak His words.

As they went, Balaam’s donkey saw the angel of the Lord with a sword and would not continue on, so Balaam struck the donkey three different times. The Lord opened the donkey’s mouth to speak to Balaam; then the Lord opened Balaam’s eyes. Balaam acknowledged his sin and said he would turn back, but the angel of the Lord told him to go with the men but speak only the word he would tell Balaam.

Deuteronomy 23:5 and Numbers 24:1-11

Balaam was not able to curse Israel but blessed them. Balak, king of Moab was angry. The Lord held back the great honor promised Balaam.

Revelation 2:14

Balaam taught Balak to put a stumbling block before Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality.

This is described in Numbers 25:1-5. The daughters of Moab invited Israel to the sacrifices of their gods. Some of the Israelites ate and bowed down to the gods of Moab, joining themselves to Baal of Peor.

Numbers 31:16

A plague broke out among Israel’s camp because of their sin with Baal of Peor. Balaam’s counsel led to the sin which caused the plague.

Lead your discussion back to 2 Peter 2:17-22. How are the false teachers described?

Springs without water and mists driven by a storm
A spring without water is of no use. It does not provide what is needed.

“Mists driven by a storm,” that mist is like a refreshing blanket over them that covered them but then it is driven away by a storm. The false teaching was unstable, though it may have seemed for a time to provide what the people needed.

The black (ESV—gloom of utter) darkness refers to their judgment. It has been reserved, kept for them.

These false teachers speak out arrogant words of vanity (ESV—loud boasts of folly). “Vanity” is “worthlessness, futility,”¹ just as springs without water are worthless.

By these words and by fleshly desires / passions and sensuality, they entice those who barely escape from the ones who live in error. They appeal to people with teaching that allows the people to hold on to their fleshly desires and sensuality.

Give time for your group to discuss application.

Ask what they learned from the New Testament cross-references about how false teachers or false prophets affect those they entice.

Matthew 7:15-20

Jesus said to beware of false prophets who come disguised in sheep’s clothing but are really ravenous wolves. 2 Peter 2:1, false teachers among believers, secretly introduce heresies. They can be recognized by their fruit; a bad tree bears bad fruit, corrupt lifestyle.

Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire—judgment.

Matthew 24:11, 24

False prophets will arise and mislead many. 2 Peter says many will follow them.

Acts 20:26-36

Savage wolves will come in among the believers; men will arise from among them, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples. This is what 2 Peter 2 is about.

In contrast to this, Paul did not shrink from declaring the whole purpose of God and in contrast to the greediness of the false teachers in 2 Peter, he coveted no one’s silver, gold, or clothes, and showed them that it is more blessed to give than receive.

¹ Barclay M. Newman, Jr. *A Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament* (Stuttgart, Germany: United Bible Societies, 1971), p. 112.

2 Timothy 3:1-13

Men in the last days are described as holding to a form of godliness but denying its power. Among these are men who captivate weak women weighed down with sins. These women, led by their impulses, are always learning but are never able to come to the true knowledge of the truth. The men who captivate them oppose the truth and have depraved minds.

2 Peter says false teachers entice the ones who barely escape from the ones who live in error and entice unstable souls. They malign / blaspheme the way of truth.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

These men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ (2 Peter: secretly introduce heresies, are among believers). They are in reality servants of Satan whose end shall be according to their deeds (judgment, destruction).

Philippians 3:17-19

Paul speaks of enemies of the cross of Christ. The cross represents death to self. 2 Peter says they deny the Master who bought them.

Their end is destruction (2 Peter: judgment, destruction), their god is their appetite (slaves of corruption, entangled and overcome by the defilements of the world), and their glory is their shame (count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime).

2 Timothy 4:1-4

Paul wrote that the time would come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but wanting to have their ears tickled, will accumulate teachers in accordance to their own desires. They will turn aside to myths.

Lead your discussion back to 2 Peter 2:19-22. How do they entice?

They entice by promising freedom; however, they themselves are slaves of corruption, because they have been overcome by it.

They had a full understanding of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and through it had escaped the pollution of the world.

“Knowledge” is “full, or thorough knowledge.”² They knew the facts about Jesus Christ.

If however, after this had happened, they were again entangled in these defilements and were overcome, the last state was worse for them than the first.

²W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996). 2:10.

“Known” in verse 21 is “to know thoroughly.”³
They knew the way of righteousness thoroughly, yet they turned from it.
It would have been better had they not known it.

Verse 22 uses Proverbs 26:11 as an analogy; “A dog returns to his own vomit.”

Peter adds his own analogy, “A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire.”

The dog is still a dog and the sow is still a sow.
Although a sow is washed, it’s still the same old sow with the nature of a sow.

It is the same with man. It is not until he partakes of, becomes a sharer in, the divine nature, 2 Peter 1:4, that he changes from the inside out.

The false teachers knew the truth but turned away. They had never become partakers of the divine nature. Therefore, they returned to living as they had, according to their sinful nature.

As you close, ask your group how, in general, they could recognize a false teacher.

³W. E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger and William White, *Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Nashville: T. Nelson, 1996). 2:10.

**2 PETER
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 7**

Lesson focus:

- 2 Peter 3
- Mockers / scoffers

REVIEW

To begin this discussion, ask your group about Peter's purpose statement for why he wrote this letter and what it's about. Tell them to look at their At a Glance chart as a visual aid.

2 Peter 3:1-2—He wrote to stir up believers to remember God's Word.

There were false teachers and mockers / scoffers among them.

One of the key repeated words in this letter is know or knowledge.
He told them to be on guard and grow in grace and knowledge.

Chapter 1 is about believers, their knowledge of Christ and their knowledge for living.
Chapter 2 is about the false teachers who lead people away from true knowledge.

2 PETER 3

You might begin by asking how this chapter is divided and the main subjects.

Verses 1-7 Peter's purpose for writing and the mockers / scoffers
Verses 8-13 The promise will be fulfilled with the day of the Lord
Verses 14-18 "Therefore"...Peter told believers what to do

Verses 1-2

How does this chapter begin?

Peter stated why he wrote this letter. It was to stir up the believers' minds.
They had false teachers and mockers / scoffers among them.
He wanted them to remember God's word—the only prevention against false doctrine.

Ask what Peter said about God's Word before 3:1-2.

- Precious and magnificent promises, by them escape corruption
- The believers Peter wrote had already been established in the truth, he reminded
- The prophetic Word is sure—the promise of the 2nd coming is prophecy
- The Holy Spirit moved men to write God's prophecy

Peter used Old Testament examples in chapter 2 to demonstrate that God knows how to keep the unrighteous under punishment for “the day of judgment”—the day of the Lord, the day of God in chapter 3.

He also knows how to rescue the righteous while judging the unrighteous.

Verses 3-7

Who and what are these verses about?

“Know this first of all”

Peter warned about false teachers, but it was equally important that he also warn about the mockers / scoffers.

Mockers / scoffers will come in the last days.

NOTE: Hebrews 1:2 says that the last days began when Jesus came.

They also are living by their sensual desires or lusts..

They mock / scoff the promise of His coming—Jesus’ second coming.

At this point you can ask your group if they can recognize a mocker / scoffer.

They’re people who treat God’s Word lightly, question the validity of it, especially things surrounding Jesus’ coming.

They live according to their own desires while true believers are no longer enslaved to such or the world’s corruption.

Ask what they learned from the cross-references about Jesus’ first and second comings.

1st coming

2 Peter 1:17-18

Peter saw Jesus as a man and also in His glory.

Hebrews 2:9

Jesus became flesh and blood to taste death, for everyone.

Hebrews 9:27-28

He was the sin offering.

2nd coming

Hebrews 9:27-28

He will appear a second time for salvation to those who eagerly await Him, to rescue the righteous.

Acts 1:10-11

He will come again the same way as He left the first time.

Matthew 25:31-46

When He comes the second time, He'll sit on His glorious throne and judge the nations—the righteous and the unrighteous.

When modern mockers / scoffers question the second coming, what might they want to deny?

The coming judgment which follows Jesus' return to earth

What error did Peter address in verses 4-6?

The mockers / scoffers didn't recognize the former judgment from God on the world—the flood.

Ask your group what they learned from Genesis 1:1-10 and the article, "The Evidence for the Flood in 2 Peter 3:3-7."

Genesis 1

When God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was formless and void, covered with water. The Spirit of God moved over the surface of the water.

2nd day

God spoke and made an expanse, heaven that separated the waters below from the waters above.

3rd day

God spoke, and the waters below the heavens were gathered into one place, and dry land appeared.

The world, as it was originally, was destroyed or perished in the flood.

Peter makes it clear that the flood destroyed the heavens and earth, and it is the present heavens and earth that will be destroyed by fire.

Ask why the mockers / scoffers might deny the flood.

The same reason they question the 2nd coming. God's judgment on the ungodly.

Verses 8-13

Ask your group what they learned from their study of these verses.

Contrasted with the mockers / scoffers, Christians are not to let it escape their notice. To God one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. He is eternal, not limited by time.

The immediate context for this statement is the future, not creation.

The Lord is not slow about His promise. He is patient toward you, believers, not wishing for any to perish but that all come to / reach repentance. Relate this to chapter 2. The Lord is just and will punish the unrighteous.

NOTE: The context shows verse 9 is about those who will be saved, not every person in the world. There are those who are facing God's judgment because they don't repent.

The final judgment hasn't yet come because God is patient.

The day of the Lord will come like a thief. Peter tells what will happen during the day of the Lord. The heavens will pass away, the elements will be destroyed, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

Discuss how knowing this judgment is coming should affect lives. Ask what sort of people believers ought to be.

Believers should be practicing holy conduct / holiness and godliness.

Believers should also be looking / waiting for and hastening the coming day of God.

The day of the Lord in verse 10 has the same description as the day of God in verse 12; the heavens and earth, elements will be destroyed with fire.

If you have time, ask your group how they might hasten the day.

Verses 14-18

How do these verses begin? And what does it signify?

“Therefore,” Peter summed up all he wrote.

Discuss what other instructions Peter gives believers.

Be diligent—Peter had been

Regard / count God's patience to be salvation—salvation for the rest of those who will be saved to be saved.

Ask what your class learned about Paul's letters.

Paul also wrote about salvation and the end times.

What he wrote was Scripture.

Some of what he wrote is hard to understand.

The untaught / ignorant and unstable distorted / twist some of what he wrote.

What were Peter's final instructions? How do they relate to the rest of 2 Peter?

"You, therefore, beloved . . ." because of all these things he said.

"knowing this beforehand" . . . It's not a surprise.
Be on your guard / take care... so as not to be carried away by error.

Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus.
The knowledge of the truth protects from error.
That's why Peter wrote to remind of God's Word.
The believers to whom he wrote had previously been established in the truth.

It is by believing the precious and magnificent promises of the Word that one can become a partaker of the divine nature. The evidence will be a life in which the qualities are practiced.

To end this discussion, ask your group if they are committed to fulfilling their responsibility to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus and to live in the light of that truth.

MOCKERS / SCOFFERS	THE WORD
<p>following their lusts / passions</p> <p>“Where is the promise of His coming?” “All continues just as ... from the beginning”</p> <p>It escapes their notice by God’s word heavens existed long ago earth formed out of water and by water world destroyed by flood</p>	<p>By His word present heavens and earth kept for day of judgment of ungodly</p> <p>Don’t let this escape your notice</p> <p>The Lord is not slow about His promise but patient</p> <p>Be on guard / take care, some distort / twist the Scriptures</p>

**2 PETER
LEADER GUIDE
Lesson 8**

Lesson focus:

- 2 Peter 3:8-18
- The day of the Lord
- Believers' responsibility

REVIEW

Ask your group what 2 Peter is all about and how each chapter fits into the whole.

Simon Peter wrote to believers to remind them of the Word.
They were facing false teachers and mockers / scoffers.
He told them they needed to grow in true knowledge.

2 Peter 1

1-4 what God did for believers

5-11 qualities that believers are to supply in their faith

12-21 Peter was about to die, but had been diligent

No prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

2 Peter 2

False teachers who secretly introduce destructive / blasphemous heresies will be among believers. Their judgment is sure.

2 Peter 3

Peter warned of mockers / scoffers who question the second coming.

God's patience has prevented His return because it brings the day of the Lord.

2 PETER 3

Verses 8-13

Ask what Peter said about the day of the Lord, the day of God.

Tell your group to look at the chart in the lesson as a visual aid for this part of the discussion.

It will come like a thief, unexpectedly.

The heavens will pass away with a roar.

The elements will be destroyed with intense heat.

The earth and its works will be burned up.

The present (ESV—that now exist) heavens and earth are being reserved / stored up for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. This shows that the day of judgment of ungodly men will also be part of the day of the Lord.

NOTE: The purpose of this discussion is merely an opportunity for your group to get a general idea of what it will be like during the day of the Lord and what will take place. If they would like to know more, encourage them to study the Precept courses available on Revelation or those on the minor prophets, e.g., Spare Your People, Lord; Prepared to Meet Your God; Understanding the Anger of God.

Ask what they learned from the Old Testament cross-references about the day of the Lord.

Isaiah 13:6-13

destruction from the Almighty
every man's heart will melt
astonishment / aghast

Like they weren't expecting it or didn't believe it would really happen.

Relate this to the mockers / scoffers.

fury / wrath and burning / fierce anger
to make the land a desolation, exterminate / destroy sinners
stars flash no light, sun dark, moon sheds no light
punish world for evil
man scarce / people rare
heavens tremble at the Lord's fury / wrath

Ezekiel 7:19

Silver and gold can't deliver in the day of the Lord's wrath.

Relate to today. Some people think money brings happiness and enough money can take care of any problem.

Ezekiel 30:1-3

clouds
doom for the nations

Joel 1:15; 2:1-11

destruction from the Almighty
darkness and gloom, clouds and thick darkness
never been anything like it
great and mighty people with fire behind and before
no escape
earth quakes, heavens tremble, and sun and moon dark
the Lord carries out / executes His Word

Relate this to 2 Peter 3:9-10. The Lord is not slow about His promise.

Who can endure it?

Joel 3:9-21

nations judged in the valley of Jehoshaphat
sun and moon grow dark, stars lose their brightness
The Lord roars, and the heavens and earth tremble.

The Lord is a refuge for His people.
He dwells in Zion. Jerusalem will be holy.

In that day the mountains will drip with sweet wine and the hills will flow with milk. This description is different than the destruction previously mentioned, but is also a part of the day of the Lord. Peter spoke of the new heavens and earth of righteousness.

Egypt and Edom will be judged because of their violence to Judah.
God will avenge their blood, and Judah will be inhabited forever and Jerusalem for all generations.

Zephaniah 1:7-18

day of the Lord's sacrifice
punishment of Jerusalem, those who say the Lord will not do good or evil
wrath, trouble, distress
destruction and desolation
the Lord will make a complete end of all the inhabitants of the earth

At this point you can ask what they learned from the New Testament references in Day Three and Day Four of the lesson.

Jesus taught that the time of His return will be just like the time before the Flood.
But those who know the Bible can understand that it's near because of certain events which must happen before "that day."

It will only be like a thief to those who don't expect Him to return.
Christians look for Him. The faithful will not be surprised.

Paul taught the Thessalonian believers, who waited for Jesus' return as all Christians should, that He will deliver from the wrath to come.

Lead your discussion back to 2 Peter 3:14-18.

How did Peter end his last letter to believers? What did he teach as the responsibilities of all Christians? How are we now to respond to the knowledge that the day of the Lord will come?

Believers should have holy conduct, living godly lives.
Believers are to be looking for and hastening the coming day of God.
Be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless.

1:2-3 says peace is multiplied by a true knowledge of Jesus.

As your group discusses these things, your might list the main points as a visual aid.
Ask what your group learned from the cross-references about one's lifestyle when Jesus comes.

Matthew 24:32-51

Faithful and sensible / wise, obedient to our Master

Luke 12:35-48

Ready / stay dressed for action, on the alert; faithful, sensible / wise, obedient

1 Thessalonians 1:9-10; 3:11-13; 5:1-11

Serving Him, waiting on Him

Increasing and abounding in love for one another and for all men

Sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love and helmet of the hope of salvation

1 John 3:1-3

Fix our hope on Him—purifies self

Luke 19:11-27

Faithful

Relate all of this to practicing the qualities in 2 Peter 1.

Practicing the qualities is evidence of salvation.

Knowing all of this beforehand, believers are to be on guard, not to be carried away by the error of unprincipled men. Knowledge should lead to steadfastness.

Therefore, grow in grace and knowledge of our Savior Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:2-3 says grace and peace are multiplied through true knowledge of Him, and knowledge is one of the qualities which should be increasing in a believer's life.

What do the New Testament cross-references add about a believer's responsibility?

1 Peter 2:2

Long for the pure milk of the Word to grow in respect to salvation.

Hebrews 5:12-14

Believers need to move on to the solid food which is for the mature.

Colossians 2:6-8

Walk in Christ, firmly rooted in Him.

There is a warning not to be taken captive through philosophy and empty deception / deceit, according to the tradition of men (ESV—human tradition) or elementary principles / spirits of the world, rather than according to Christ.

2 Timothy 2:15

Present yourselves approved to God as a workman that doesn't need to be ashamed because he is accurately / rightly handling the Word.

Ephesians 5:26-27

It is by the washing of the water of the Word that Christ cleanses the church, so that He might present the church with no spot or wrinkle, but holy and blameless.

You could close your discussion by asking your group if they have committed themselves to knowing God's Word in order to be on guard and to grow.

Ask if anyone would like to share how what they have learned in 2 Peter has helped them to be on guard and to grow in grace and knowledge.