

FIRST AND SECOND

PETER

Materials compiled from

The Letters of James and Peter
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by

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SYLLABUS

BIB381

First and Second Peter

1. Introduction
2. First Peter Chapter 1
3. First Peter Chapter 2 – Chapter 3:17
4. First Peter Chapter 3:18 – Chapter 4:13
5. First Peter Chapter 4:14 - Chapter 5
6. Second Peter Chapter 1
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Class Requirements

1. Class attendance and participation.
2. Read books covered.
3. Reaction Paper
4. Final Exam

LESSON ONE

Introduction to the First Letter of Peter

Intro

1. First Peter belongs to *Catholic* or *General* Epistles.
2. Two explanations for classification.
 - a. Addressed to Church at large; Paul's letters to individual churches.
 - i. Actually, First Peter is written to the strangers scattered abroad through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.
 - ii. Wider range than Paul's letters; but a definite community in mind.
 - b. These were accepted as Scripture by the whole Church.
 - i. Large number of letters enjoyed a local and temporary authority but never universally ranked as Scripture.
 - ii. Some of the other letters of this time.
 1. Letter of Clement of Rome to Corinth.
 2. The letter of Barnabas.
 3. The letters of Ignatius.
 4. Letters of Polycarp.
 - iii. The General Epistles gradually won a place in Scripture and were accepted by the whole Church.

Characteristics of the Letter

1. The lovely letter.
 - a. Of all the General Epistles, First Peter is best known and loved; most read.
 - b. It is written out of the love of a pastor's heart to help people who were going through some of the worst days of persecution.
2. Authorship.
 - a. Written from Rome by Peter about the year A.D. 67, in the days following the first persecution of the Christians by Nero.
 - b. Some doubt the authorship of First Peter by Peter himself.
 - i. Scholars at one in praising the Greek.
 1. Written in excellent Greek, which is not likely to be by a fisherman of Galilee.
 2. Would likely be the work of a man of letters, skilled in all the devices of rhetoric, and be able to draw on an extensive, and even learned, vocabulary.
 - ii. "By Silvanus...I have written briefly." (1 Peter 5:12).
 1. Silvanus was Peter's agent in the writing of the letter; more than Peter's stenographer.
 2. Silvanus was highly regarded in the early Church.
 - a. Likely the Silas of the Book of Acts.
 - b. He was a prophet (Acts 15:32).

- c. Was one of the “chief among the brethren” at the council of Jerusalem; one of the two chosen to deliver the decisions of the council to the Church at Antioch (Acts 15:22, 27).
 - d. Paul’s companion of second missionary journey.
 - e. Was with Paul both in Philippi and in Corinth (Acts 15:37-40).
 - f. He was a Roman citizen (Acts 16:37).
 - i. As a Roman citizen, likely that he was a man of education and culture.
 - iii. When a missionary can speak a language well enough but cannot write it very well, it is quite common for him to do one of two things.
 - 1. Writes it out in as good a style as he can, and then get a native speaker to correct his mistakes and to polish his style.
 - 2. If he has a native colleague whom he can fully trust, he tells him what he wishes said, leaves him to put the message into written form and then vets the result.
 - iv. The thought is that of Peter; the style that of Silvanus.
- 3. Recipients of the Letter.
 - a. To the exiles scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.
 - i. These areas embraced a large area with a very large population.
 - ii. Proof of immense missionary activity of the early church, apart from the missionary activities of Paul.
 - b. Recipients were mainly Gentiles.
 - i. No mention or question of the law (usually always brought up where there is a Jewish background).
 - ii. Their previous condition had been one of fleshly passion (1:14; 4:3,4), which fits gentiles far better than Jews.
 - iii. Previously they had been no people—Gentiles, outside the covenant—but now are the people of God (2:9,10)
 - iv. Based on the name Peter uses; since he used his Greek name, likely he was addressing Gentiles.
 - 1. Peter is a Greek name.
 - 2. Paul calls him Cephas.
 - 3. Among his fellow Jews, he was known as Simeon (Acts 15:14).
- 4. Theology of the Early Church
 - a. The theology of First Peter is the theology of the very early church.
 - b. Same as is recorded in early chapters of Acts.
 - c. The preaching of the early church was based on five main ideas—framework of all the sermons of the early church—Foundation of the thought of all the New Testament writers.
 - i. The age of fulfillment has dawned; the Messianic age has begun. A new order is being inaugurated and the elect are summoned to join the new community.
 - 1. Acts.
 - a. 2:14-16.
 - b. 3:12-26.
 - c. 4:8-12.
 - d. 10:34-43.

- 2. First Peter.
 - a. 1:3, 10-12.
 - b. 4:7.
- ii. This new age has come through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; all direct fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament—the result of the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.
 - 1. Acts.
 - a. 2:20-31.
 - b. 3:13-14.
 - c. 10:43.
 - 2. First Peter.
 - a. 1:20, 21.
- iii. By virtue of the resurrection Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of God and is the Messianic head of the new Israel.
 - 1. The Book of Acts.
 - a. 2:22-26.
 - b. 3:13.
 - c. 4:11.
 - d. 5:30,31.
 - e. 10:39-42.
 - 2. First Peter.
 - a. 1:21.
 - b. 2:7.
 - c. 2:24.
 - d. 3:22.
- iv. These Messianic events will shortly reach their consummation in the return of Christ in glory and the judgment of the living and the dead.
 - 1. The Book of Acts.
 - a. 3:19-23.
 - b. 10:42.
 - 2. First Peter.
 - a. 1:5,7, 13
 - b. 4:5, 13, 17, 18.
 - c. 5:1, 4.
- v. These facts are made the grounds for an appeal for repentance—offer of forgiveness and of the Holy Spirit—and the promise of eternal life.
 - 1. The Book of Acts.
 - a. 2:38, 39.
 - b. 3:19.
 - c. 5:31.
 - d. 10:43.
 - 2. First Peter.
 - a. 1:13-25.
 - b. 2:1-3.
 - c. 4:1-5.

The Circumstances Behind the Letter

1. This letter was written when persecution threatened.
 - a. Midst of various trials (1:6).
 - b. Likely to be falsely accused as evil-doers (3:16).
 - c. A fiery ordeal is going to try them (4:12).
 - d. When they suffer, they are to commit themselves to God (4:19).
 - e. May well have to suffer for righteousness' sake (3:14).
 - f. There are fiery trial, a campaign of slander, and suffering for the sake of Christ.
2. There was a time when Christians had little to fear from the Roman government.
 - a. In the Book of Acts it is repeatedly the Roman magistrates and the Roman soldiers and officials who save Paul from the fury of Jews and pagans alike.
 - b. The Roman government did not distinguish between Christianity and Judaism.
 - i. Judaism was a permitted religion.
 - ii. Jews had full liberty to worship as they pleased.
 - iii. Romans regarded the Christians as a Jewish sect; therefore, did not molest them.
 - c. Persecution began when Rome recognized Christianity as being separate from Judaism.
3. Change came in the days of Nero.
 - a. July 19, 64, the great fire of Rome broke out.
 - b. Citizens put blame on Nero.
 - i. The resentment of the people was bitter.
 - ii. Nero had to divert attention away from himself and find a scapegoat.
4. Why did Nero pick on the Christians?
 - a. Christians were already victims of slander.
 - i. Associated with Jews—there was an anti-Semitic sentiment already.
 - ii. The Lord's Supper was secret—allowed only by members of the church.
 1. Associated with eating someone's body and drinking someone's blood.
 2. Rumor that Christians were cannibals; became a story that the Christians killed and ate a Gentile or a newly born child.
 3. At the Lord's Table the Christians gave each other the kiss of peace.
 - a. Called the *Agape*, the Love Feast.
 - b. Rumored that Christian meetings were orgies of vice.
 - iii. It was always a charge against Christians that they tampered with family relationships.
 1. A sword to split families.
 2. A religion that split homes was bound to be unpopular.
 - iv. Christians spoke of a coming day when the world would dissolve in flames.
 - b. The Jewish faith had always appealed especially to women because of its moral standards in a world where chastity did not exist.
 - i. Many well-born women joined Judaism.
 - ii. Jews worked on these women to influence their husbands against the Christians.
 1. Acts 13:50. Through women Jews stirred up actions against Paul.

2. Nero had a Jewish mistress, which could have had an influence on Nero to take action against the Christians.
5. Savage outbreak of persecution occurred.
 - a. A huge multitude of Christians perished in the most sadistic ways.
 - i. Nero rolled the Christians in pitch, set light to them and used them as living torches to light his garden.
 - ii. He sewed them up in the skins of wild animals and set his hunting dogs upon them, to tear them limb from limb while they still lived.
 - b. For ever after the Christians were to live under threat.
 - i. The Christian was in peril of his life.
 - ii. For years nothing might happen; then a spark might set off the explosion.
 - c. First Peter was written to strengthen men and women in jeopardy of their lives.
6. Persecution was not constant and consistent.
 - a. In one area a Christian might live a whole lifetime at peace; in another, there might be outbreaks of persecution every few months.
 - b. Christian was liable to execution at any time.
 - c. Whether persecuted or not depended on two things.
 - i. Depended on the governor himself.
 1. May not want to act against Christians, but when information was laid against a Christian, he had to.
 2. There were times the mob was out for blood.
 - ii. Depended on informers.

First Peter and Ephesians

1. Salutations.
 - a. (1 Peter 1:3) “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
 - b. (Ephesians 1:3) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.
2. Gird up Mind.
 - a. (1 Peter 1:13). Therefore, gird up your minds, be sober, set your hope fully upon the grace that is coming to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
 - b. (Ephesians 6:14). Stand, therefore, having girded your loins with truth.
3. Before the Foundation of the World.
 - a. (1 Peter 1:20). Jesus Christ, was destined before the foundation of the world, but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake.
 - b. (Ephesians 1:4). Even as he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world.
4. Jesus at the Right Hand of God.
 - a. (1 Peter 3:22). Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven, and is at the right hand of God, with angels and authorities and powers subject to him.
 - b. (Ephesians 1:20, 21). God made him sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority, and power and dominion.

Summary

1. People were undergoing various trials.
2. Their faith is liable to be tried as metal is tested with fire.
3. Underwent a campaign of slander in which baseless charges were directed against them.
4. In persecution because they were Christians.
 - a. Not only expected; they were not surprised by it.
 - b. Gives satisfaction for being for Christ's sake.
5. One of letters to Seven Churches of Asia (Smyrna). "Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life." (Rev. 2:10).

LESSON TWO

First Peter Chapter One

The Great Inheritance

1 Peter 1:1-2.

1. Clear that the letter was written to people who were Gentiles.
 - a. They had been released from the futile way of life which they had learned from their father (1:18).
 - b. Those who were once not a people had become nothing less than the people of God (2:10).
 - c. In previous times they had walked after the will and the lusts of the Gentiles (4:3).
 - d. Addressed with words previously used only for the Jews.
 - i. The Chosen Nation.
 - ii. Once were outside of God's mercy.
 1. Once said, "God created the Gentiles to be fuel for the fires of Hell."
 2. "God loved only Israel of all nations upon the earth." Now the mercy, the privileges, and the grace of God have gone out to all the earth and to all men.
 - iii. Peter calls them *the elect, God's Chosen People*.
 1. "You are a people holy to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his own possession, out of all the peoples that are on the face of the earth." (Deut. 7:6).
 2. "The Chosen..." (Is. 45:4; Psalm 105:6, 43).
 - iv. The mercy of God has gone out to the ends of the earth, and all nations have seen the glory and experienced the grace of God.
2. Three Great Facts of the Christian Life
 - a. The Christian is chosen according to the foreknowledge of God.
 - i. Our election is according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.
 - ii. The Christian Church came into being according to the purpose and plan of God; it cannot ultimately fail.
 - b. The Christian is chosen to be consecrated by the Spirit.
 - i. Holy Spirit awakens within us the first faint longings for God and goodness.
 - ii. The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sins and leads us to the Cross.
 - iii. The Holy Spirit enables us to be freed from the sins which have us in their grip.
 - iv. The Holy Spirit gives us the assurance that Jesus Christ is Lord.
 - c. The Christian is chosen for obedience and for sprinkling by the blood of Jesus Christ.
 - i. When a leper was cleansed, he was sprinkled with the blood of a bird (Lev. 14:1-7).
 - ii. Sprinkling with blood was part of the ritual of the setting apart of Aaron and the priests.

- iii. The great picture of the sprinkling comes from the covenant relationship between Israel and God.

The Rebirth of the Christian

1 Peter 1:3-5

1. Few passages in the New Testament where more of the great fundamental Christian ideas come together.
 - a. Begins with doxology. Prayer, not to an unknown God far away, but praying to a God who is like Jesus and to whom, through Jesus, he may come with a childlike confidence.
 - b. Begins with idea of rebirth.
 - i. Rebirth happens by the will and by the act of God (John 1:13; James 1:18).
 - ii. Rebirth happens, not by one's own efforts, but by the Spirit.
 - iii. Rebirth happens by the creative word of God in Jesus Christ.
 - iv. He who is reborn becomes the first fruits of a new creation (Jam. 1:18).
 - v. Reborn to a living hope (1 Peter 1:3).
 1. To the heathen, no hope.
 2. Sophocles: "Not to be born at all—that is by far the best fortune; the second best is as soon as one is born with all speed to return thither whence one has come."
 3. The Christian characteristic was hope.
 - a. The Christian was born of incorruptible seed.
 - b. It came by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - vi. Reborn to righteousness.
 1. Cleansed from sins and given power to walk in righteousness.
 2. Every time one falls, he will be given the power and the grace to rise again.
 - vii. Rebirth to love (1 John 4:7)
 - viii. Rebirth to victory (1 John 5:4).
2. An inheritance.
 - a. Inheritance is a word used regularly in the Greek New Testament for the inheritance of Canaan.
 - i. It is imperishable (unravaged by any invading army).
 - ii. Undefiable.
 - iii. Unfading. There is a world of peace and joy untouched by the chances and the changes of life.
 - b. Protected in time and safe in eternity.
 - i. Present life protected by the power of God through faith.
 - ii. The final salvation revealed at the last time.
 1. Jews broke time into two ages; the present which is wicked; the future which was good.
 2. In between are the last days; the time when the world as we know it will come to an end.
 - iii. The last times.

1. “The fullness of the revelation which has come to men in Christ in these last days (Hebrews 1:2).
2. Times of the outpouring of God’s Spirit upon men (Acts 2:17).
3. The dead would be resurrected.
4. A time of judgment when God’s justice would be exercised and his enemies find their just condemnation and punishment.

The Secret of Endurance

1 Peter 1:6-7

1. Can stand in time of persecution for three reasons.
 - a. What they are able to look forward to.
 - i. Persecution and trouble are not the end.
 - ii. Beyond lies the glory.
 - b. By remembering that every trial is, in fact, a test.
 - i. Process of refining the gold.
 - ii. The rigors of the athlete’s training is not designed to make him collapse but to make him able to develop more strength and staying-power.
 - iii. *Various* trials. The word is *poikilos*, which literally means *many-colored*.
 1. Only other time used—describing the grace of God (1 Peter 4:10).
 2. There is a grace to match every trial and there is no trial without its grace.
 - c. At the end, he will receive praise and glory and honor.
2. With every trial there is another test to strengthen and to purify our faith.

Four stages in man’s apprehension of Christ

1 Peter 1:8-9

1. Stage of hope and desire. “Many prophets and kings desired to see what you see, and did not see it.” (Luke 10:23-24).
2. The second stage came to those who knew Christ in the flesh.
3. The third stage is when we see Jesus through the eye of faith.
4. The fourth stage is when we see him as he is (1 John 3:2).

The Foretelling of the Glory

1 Peter 1:10-12

1. We are told two things about the prophets.
 - a. They searched and enquired about the salvation which was to come.
 - b. The Spirit of Christ told them about Christ.
2. Inspiration depends on two things.
 - a. The searching mind of man.
 - b. The revealing Spirit of God.

3. Inspiration.
 - a. God's truth comes only to those who search for it.
 - b. In inspiration, there is an element which is human and an element which is divine.
 - c. Product of the search of man's mind and the revelation of God's Spirit.
4. This passage tells us that the Holy Spirit was always operative in this world.
 - a. Wherever men have glimpsed beauty.
 - b. Wherever they have laid hold on truth.
 - c. Wherever they have had longings for God, the Spirit of Christ was there.
5. This passage tells us that the prophets spoke of the sufferings and the glory of Christ.
 - a. Sufferings of Christ.
 - i. Psalm 22.
 - ii. Isaiah 52:13-53.
 - b. Glory of Christ.
 - i. Psalm 2.
 - ii. Psalm 16:8-11.
 - iii. Psalm 110.
 - c. The prophets foresaw the one who would come to fulfill all their dreams and visions.
6. This passage tells us for whom the prophets spoke.
 - a. The message of the glorious deliverance of God that they brought to men.
 - b. A deliverance they themselves did not see in their lifetime.
7. This passage tells us the message of the preacher.
 - a. Preaching is the announcement of salvation.
 - b. It tells us that preaching is through the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven.
 - c. The preacher's message is not his own; not his own opinions or prejudices.
8. This passage tells us that the preacher's message is of things of which the angels long to catch a glimpse.

The Necessary Virility of the Christian Faith

1 Peter 1:13

1. Three challenges to the people.
 - a. Gird up the loins of their mind.
 - i. Men wore long flowing robes which hindered fast progress or strenuous actions.
 - ii. Around the waist was a broad belt or girdle.
 - iii. When strenuous action was necessary they shortened the long robe by pulling it up within the belt in order to give them freedom of movement.
 - iv. Roll up your sleeves; take off your jacket.
 - v. Get ready for strenuous mental endeavor.
 - b. Be sober.
 - i. Must refrain from drunkenness in the literal sense (intoxicating liquor).
 1. Preserve a balanced judgment.
 2. Don't become intoxicated with the latest fashion and the newest craze.
 - ii. Must be steady in their minds (intoxicating thoughts)

- c. Set your hope on the grace which is going to be given to them when Jesus Christ comes.
 - i. Because you live in hope, you can endure the trials of the present.
 - ii. The Christian can live with gratitude for all the mercies of the past.
 - iii. With resolution to meet the challenge of the present.
 - iv. With certain hope that in Christ the best is yet to be.

The Christless Life and the Christ-filled Life

1 Peter 1:14-25

Three great lines of approach in this passage:

1. Jesus Christ Redeemer and Lord
 - a. Jesus Christ is the emancipator; men are delivered from the bondage of sin and death.
 - i. He is the lamb without blemish and without spot.
 - ii. The Passover in Egypt.
 - iii. Slain from foundation of the earth.
 - b. Jesus is the eternal purpose of God.
 - i. Predestined before the creation of the world.
 1. God was not Creator and then Redeemer.
 2. His redeeming purpose was not an emergency measure to which he was compelled when things went wrong.
 - c. Peter has a connection of thought which is universal in the New Testament.
 - i. Jesus not just the slain Lamb; he is the resurrected and triumphant one to whom God gave glory.
 1. New Testament thinkers seldom separate the Cross and the Resurrection.
 2. Seldom think of the sacrifice without the triumph.
 - ii. Through his death Jesus emancipated men from their bondage to slavery and death.
 - iii. Through His resurrection, he gives them a life which is as glorious and indestructible as his own.
 1. Jesus, the eternal redeeming purpose of God
 2. Jesus, the triumphant victor over death.
 3. Jesus, the giver of life which death cannot touch.
 4. Jesus, the bringer of hope which nothing can take away.
2. The Christless Life
 - a. Three characteristics of the Christless life.
 - i. A life of ignorance (v. 14).
 1. Plato: "It is hard to investigate and to find the framer and the father of the universe; and, if one did find him, it would be impossible to express him in terms which all could understand.
 2. Aristotle spoke of God as the supreme cause, by all men dreamed of and by no man known.
 - ii. A life dominated by desire (v. 14).

1. Desires almost insatiable.
 2. Multiple marriages (10-20)
 3. Homosexuality in Greece and Rome so common that they had come to be looked on as natural.
 4. A world mastered by desire.
 - iii. A life characterized by futility.
 1. Basic trouble was that it was not going anywhere.
 2. Catullus pleads with lover for a moment with its fleeting joys. "Suns can rise and set again; but once our brief light is dead, there is nothing left but one long night from which we never shall awake."
 3. There was nothing for which to live; nor which to die.
3. The Christ-filled Life
- a. The life of obedience and of holiness (vv. 14-16).
 - i. The word for holy means *different*.
 1. The Temple is different from other buildings.
 2. The Sabbath is holy because it is different from other days.
 - ii. There is laid on the Christian the task of being different.
 - b. The life of reverence (vv. 17-21)
 - i. Reverence is the attitude of mind of the man who is always aware that he is in the presence of God.
 1. The Christian is a sojourner in this world.
 2. He is going to God; a God of justice.
 3. The Christian must live life in reverence because it cost so much, nothing less than the life and death of Jesus Christ.
 - ii. No honorable man squanders what is of infinite human worth.
 - c. The life of brotherly love.
 - i. A Christian is reborn with the seed of God in him.
 - ii. Because he is reborn, the life of God is in him.
 - iii. The life of God is love.

LESSON THREE

Chapter 2-3:17

1 Peter 2:1-3

The Silent Preaching of a Lovely Life

1 Peter 3:1-2

1. Inevitable that one marriage partner won to Christ and the other not.
 - a. If the husband became a Christian, he would automatically bring his wife with him.
 - b. A different situation when wife became a Christian and the husband not.
2. In every phase of ancient civilization, women had no rights at all.
 - a. Under Jewish law a woman was a thing; owned by her husband.
 - i. The wife could never leave the husband, but the husband could for just about any cause.
 - b. In Greek civilization, the duty of the woman was “to remain indoors and to be obedient to her husband.”
 - c. Under Roman law a woman had no rights.
 - i. First under her father.
 - ii. Then under her husband.
 - iii. If you caught your wife in infidelity, you could kill her without a trial.
3. Difficult to realize what problems the wife faced if she became a Christian.
4. What Peter does not advise.
 - a. To leave her husband so long as he doesn't send her away.
 - b. Peter does not tell the wife to preach to him or to argue.
5. What he does say.
 - a. Be a good wife.
 - b. By silent preaching and the loveliness of her life, break down the barriers of prejudice and hostility—win her husband to her Lord.
 - c. She must be submissive.
 - d. She must be pure.
 - e. She must be reverent.

The True Adornment

1 Peter 3:3-6

1. In the ancient world women had no part in public life; had nothing to pass their time; for that reason sometimes argued that they must be allowed an interest in dress and adornment.
2. In the Greek and Roman world, there many ways of dressing the hair.
 - a. Hair was waved and dyed, sometimes black, more often auburn.
 - b. Wigs were worn, especially blonde wigs.
 - c. Hair to manufacture wigs imported from Germany.

- d. Hairbands, pins and combs were made of ivory, and boxwood; tortoise shell; sometimes gold
 - e. Purple was the favorite color for clothing.
 - f. Silks, pearls, scents and jewelry were imported from India.
 - g. Diamonds, emeralds, topazes, opals and the sardonyx were favorite stones.
3. Christianity came into a world of luxury and decadence combined.
- a. In the face of all this Peter pleads for the graces which adorn the heart—which are precious in the sight of God.
 - b. These were the jewels that adorned the holy women of old.

The Husband's Obligation

1 Peter 3:7

1. A marriage must be based on reciprocal obligation.
 - a. A new conception in the ancient world.
 - b. Under Roman law, all the obligation was on the wife and all the privilege with the husband.
 - c. The Christian ethic never grants a privilege without a corresponding obligation.
2. Obligations of the husband.
 - a. He must be understanding.
 - i. Must be considerate and sensitive to the feelings of his wife.
 - b. He must be chivalrous.
 - i. Remember that women are the weaker sex (?) and treat them with courtesy.
 - ii. In the ancient world chivalry to women was well-nigh unknown.
 - iii. A common sight in the East to see the man riding on a donkey while the woman trudges by his side.
 - iv. Christianity introduced chivalry into the relationship between men and women.
 - c. He must remember that the woman has equal spiritual rights.
 - i. She is a fellow-heir of the grace of life.
 - ii. Women did not share in the worship of the Greeks and the Romans.
 - iii. No share of service in Jewish synagogue.
 - iv. In Christianity emerged the revolutionary principle that women had equal spiritual rights and with that the relationship between the sexes was changed.
 - d. If a husband did not fulfilled these obligations, their prayers would be hindered.

The Marks of a Christian Life

1 Peter 3:8-12

1. Qualities of the Christian life.
 - a. Christian unity.
 - i. Jn 17:21-23. "That they might be one as you and I are one."
 - ii. "They were all of one heart and of soul" (Acts 4:32).
 - iii. "Be of one mind." (Rom 12:4, 16).

- iv. “Be of one mind and live in peace.” (2 Cor. 13:11).
- v. The Church cannot be Christian if there are divisions within it.
- b. Sympathy.
 - i. “Rejoice with those who rejoice and to weep with those who weep.” (Rom 12:15).
 - ii. Sympathy and selfishness cannot co-exist.
- c. Brotherly love.
 - i. “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another...By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34,35).
 - ii. “We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren.” (I Joh 3:14, 15).
- d. Compassion.
- e. Humility.
 - i. Comes from two things.
 - 1. Sense of creatureliness. Humble because constantly aware of his utter dependence on God, and that of himself he can do nothing.
 - 2. The Christian has a new standard of comparison.
 - ii. When the Christian remembers his dependence on God and keeps before him the standard of Christ, he must remain humble.
- f. Forgiveness.
 - i. Receive forgiveness from God; give forgiveness to men.
 - ii. Only when we forgive others that we are forgiven.
 - iii. A Christian forgives others as Christ has forgiven him.
- 2. He that would love life and see good days.
 - a. Let him keep his tongue from evil.
 - b. Keep his lips from speaking guile.
 - c. Let him turn away from evil and do right.
 - d. Let him seek peace, and pursue it.
- 3. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous; his ears are open to their prayer.

The Christian’s Security in a Threatening World

1 Peter 3:13-16

- 1. Three conceptions in this passage.
 - a. Peter begins by insisting on a passionate love of goodness.
 - i. Love goodness with that passionate intensity with which the most fanatical patriot loves his country.
 - ii. It is only when a man falls in love with goodness that the wrong things lose their fascination and their power.
 - b. Peter speaks about the Christian attitude to suffering.
 - i. Suffering involved in because of our humanity.
 - ii. Suffering involved in because of our Christianity.

1. Unpopularity, persecution, sacrifice for principle and the deliberate choosing of the difficult way, the necessary discipline and toil of the Christian life.
- c. The Christian is the man to whom God and Jesus Christ are the supremacies in life.
 - i. If relationship with God is supreme, nothing can take that from him.
 - ii. In suffering the Christian is still blessed.
2. Peter has certain things to say about a Christian's defense of his faith.
 - a. It must be reasonable.
 - i. Must know what we believe.
 - ii. Must have thought it out.
 - iii. Must be able to state it intelligently and intelligibly.
 - b. Defense must be given with gentleness.
 - i. Can't state with attitude of arrogance.
 - ii. Can't ram our beliefs down someone's throat.
 - iii. Case for Christianity must be presented with winsomeness and with love.
 - c. Defense must be given with reverence.
 - i. Given in a tone which God can hear with joy.
 - ii. Must be given with the accent of love.
 - d. The only compelling argument is the argument of the Christian life.

The Saving Work of Christ

1 Peter 3:27-4:6

1. The example of the work of Christ (1 Peter 3:17-18a).
 - a. If the Christian is compelled to suffer unjustly for his faith, he is only walking the way that his Lord has already walked.
 - b. The work of Christ.
 - i. The work of Christ was unique and never need be repeated.
 1. Christ died once and for all for sins.
 2. Christ made the perfect sacrifice once and for all when he offered himself up (Heb. 7:27).
 - ii. That sacrifice was for sin.
 1. Died once and for all for sins.
 2. He died for our sins according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. 15:3).
 3. Sin is that which separates men from God. Christ reconciled us to God.
 - iii. That sacrifice was vicarious.
 1. "... the just for the unjust."
 2. He who deserved no suffering bore that suffering for us who deserved to suffer.
 - iv. The work of Christ was to bring us to God.
 - v. Jesus preached to the spirits in prison.
 1. 4:6. The gospel was preached to them that are dead.
 2. Jesus actually preached the gospel in the abode of the dead; to those who in their lifetime had never had the opportunity to hear it.

- a. The work of Christ is infinite in its range.
 - b. No man who ever lived is outside the grace of God.
- vi. Peter sees the work of Christ in terms of complete triumph.
 - 1. There is nothing in earth and heaven outside the empire of Christ.
 - 2. To all men he brought the new relationship between man and God.
 - 3. In his death he even brought good news to the dead.
 - 4. In his resurrection he conquered death.
 - 5. Even the angelic and the demonic powers are subject to him.
 - 6. He shares the very power and throne of God.
 - 7. Christ the sufferer has become Christ the victor.
 - 8. Christ the crucified has become Christ the crowned.

LESSON FOUR

Chapter 3:18-Chapter 4:13

The Descent into Hell (1 Peter 3:18b-20; 4:6)

2. Descended into *Hades* (Acts 2:27).
 - a. “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell.”
 - b. Jews’ conception of life beyond the grave was that of a shadowy world, where the spirits of men moved like grey ghosts in an everlasting twilight and where there was neither strength nor joy.
3. The doctrine of the descent into Hades based on two phrases in this passage:
 - a. Jesus went and preached to the spirits who are in prison (3:19).
 - b. The gospel was preached to the dead (4:6)
4. Differing attitudes concerning this passage.
 - a. The attitude of *elimination*.
 - i. It was in the time of Noah himself that Christ did this preaching.
 - ii. This would completely do away with the idea of the descent into Hades.
 - b. The attitude of *limitation*.
 - i. Peter is saying that Jesus went to Hades and preached, but that he by no means preached to all the inhabitants of Hades.
 1. Jesus preached only to the spirits of the men who were disobedient in the days of Noah.
 2. Leads to believe that no man is outside the mercy of God.
 - a. They were the worst of all sinners and yet they were given another chance of repentance.
 - b. The worst of men still have a chance in Christ.
 3. Argued that Jesus preached to the fallen angels, and preached, not salvation, but final and awful doom.
 - a. Christ did not preach mercy and another chance, but he preached terrible doom to those angels who had sinned.
 4. Argued that Jesus preached only to those who had been righteous and that he led them out of Hades into the paradise of God.
 - a. Jews believed the dead went to Hades because the gate to heaven was not yet opened.
 - b. Jesus went to Hades and told the glad news to all the righteous men of all past generations and led them out to God.
 - c. Now, because of Christ, there is no time spent in the shadows of Hades and the way to paradise is open as soon as this world closes on us.
 - c. The attitude that Jesus Christ, between his death and resurrection, went to the world of the dead and preached the gospel there.
 - i. If Christ descended into Hades, then his death was no sham.
 1. This lays down the complete identity of Christ with our human condition, even to the experience of death.

- ii. If Christ descended into Hades, his triumph is universal.
 - 1. Every knee shall bow—of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth (Phil. 2:10).
 - 2. “The song of praise comes from every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth (Rev. 5:13).
 - 3. He who ascended into Heaven is he who first descended into the lower parts of the earth (Eph. 4:9, 10).
 - 4. The total submission of the universe to Christ is woven into the thought of the New Testament.
- iii. If Christ descended into Hades and preached there, there is no corner of the universe into which the message of grace has not come.
 - 1. Answers these questions:
 - a. What is to happen to those who lived before Jesus Christ and to those to whom the gospel never came?
 - i. No salvation without repentance.
 - ii. No repentance until confronted with the love and holiness of God.
 - iii. No other name; what if you haven’t heard that name?
 - 2. Justin Martyr: “The Lord, the Holy God of Israel, remembered his dead, those sleeping in the earth, and came down to them to tell them the good news of salvation.”
 - 3. No man who ever lived is left without a sight of Christ and without the offer of the salvation of God.
- iv. Three great truths:
 - 1. Jesus Christ not only tasted death but drained the cup of death.
 - 2. The triumph of Christ is universal.
 - 3. There is no corner of the universe into which the grace of God has not reached.

The Baptism of the Christian

1 Peter 3:18-22

- 1. In the destruction of the flood eight people were brought to safety in the ark.
 - a. Being brought to safety through the water is parallel to bringing to safety through the water of baptism.
 - b. What Peter says is that baptism is an antitype of Noah and his people in the ark.
- 2. Three things to say about baptism:
 - a. Baptism is not merely a physical cleansing; it is a spiritual cleansing of the whole heart and soul and life.
 - b. Peter calls baptism the pledge of a good conscience to God.
 - i. In every business contract, there is a question and answer that makes the contract binding.
 - 1. “Do you accept the terms of this contract, and bind yourself to observe them?”
 - 2. “Yes.”

- ii. In baptism, God is saying, “Do you accept the terms of my service? Do you accept its privileges and promises, and do you undertake its responsibilities and its demands?”
- c. The whole idea and effectiveness of baptism is dependent on the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - i. It is the grace of the Risen Lord which cleanses us.
 - ii. It is to the Risen, Living Lord that we pledge ourselves.
 - iii. It is to the Risen Living Lord that we look for strength to keep the pledge that we have given.

The Obligation of the Christian

1 Peter 4:1-5

1. “He who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin.” Three possible explanations:
 - a. There is a strong line in Jewish thought that suffering is in itself a great purifier.
 - i. He who has been disciplined by suffering has been cured of sin.
 - ii. Allows one to thank God for the experiences which hurt but save the soul.
 - b. He who has endured all that persecution can do to him rather than join in wicked ways can be trusted to do right.
 - i. Temptation has no power over him.
 - ii. If a man has come through persecution and not denied the name of Christ, he come out on the other side with a character so tested and a faith so strengthened, that temptation cannot touch him any more.
 - c. Peter has just been talking about baptism.
 - i. He who has shared the sufferings and the death of Christ, is risen to such newness of life with him that sin has no more dominion over him (Rom. 6:14).
 - ii. In act of baptism, one is identified with Christ; he shares his sufferings and even his death; and he shares his risen life and power, and is, therefore, victor over sin.
 - iii. When this happens, a man has said good-bye to his former way of life with its pleasure, pride, and passion; the rule of God has begun.

The Ultimate Chance

1 Peter 4:6

1. For this is the reason why the gospel was preached to the dead, so that, although they have been judged in the flesh like men, they may live in the Spirit like God.
2. Three different meanings.
 - a. The dead are those dead in sin.
 - b. Those who died before the Second Coming of Christ.
 - i. They heard the gospel before they died.
 - ii. Will not miss the glory.
 - c. All the dead.

- i. “Sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned” (Rom 5:12)
- ii. If there had been no sin, there would have been no death; therefore, death in itself is a judgment.
- iii. All men have already been judged when they die.
- iv. In spite of that, Christ descended to the world of the dead and preached the gospel there, giving them another chance to live in the Spirit of God.

The Approaching End

1 Peter 4:7a

1. A theme consistent through the New Testament.
 - a. “Time to wake out of sleep, for the night is far spent and the day is at hand” (Rom 13:12).
 - b. “The Lord is at hand.” (Phil. 4:3)
 - c. “The coming of the Lord is at hand” (James 5:8).
 - d. John says that the days in which his people are living are the last hour (1 John 2:18).
 - e. “The time is near.” “Surely I am coming soon” (Rev. 1:3; 22:20)
2. Four ways of looking at this.
 - a. New Testament writers were mistaken.
 - b. The end has already come.
 - i. The consummation of history was the coming of Jesus Christ.
 - ii. In him time was invaded by eternity.
 - iii. In him the prophecies were all fulfilled.
 - iv. In him the end has come.
 1. Paul speaks of himself and his people as those on whom the ends of the ages have come (1 Cor. 10:11).
 2. Peter speaks of the outpouring of the Spirit in the last days.
 - c. Interpret *near* in the light of history’s being a process of almost unimaginable length.
 - i. “Near” becomes an entirely relative word.
 - ii. A thousand years were just like a watch in the night (Ps. 90:4).
 - iii. “Near” can cover centuries and still be correctly used.
 - d. For everyone of us, the time is near.
 - i. Every man is going to die.
 - ii. For every one of us the Lord is at hand.
 - iii. For every one of us personally the end is near.

The Life Lived in the Shadow of Eternity

1 Peter 4:7b, 8

1. In light of the nearness of Jesus Christ, man is bound to commit himself to a certain kind of life.
 - a. Must be steady in mind.
 - b. The great characteristic of sanity is that it sees things in their proper proportions.

1. It sees what things are important and what are not.
 2. It is not swept away by sudden and transitory enthusiasms.
 3. It is prone neither to unbalanced fanaticism nor to unrealizing indifference.
 4. It is only when we see the affairs of earth in the light of eternity that we see them in their proper proportions.
 5. It is when God is given his proper place that everything takes its proper place.
- ii. Must be sober in mind.
 1. Does not mean that the Christian is to be lost in a gloomy joylessness.
 2. Means that his approach to life must not be frivolous and irresponsible.
 3. To take things seriously is to be aware of their real importance and to be ever mindful of their consequences in time and in eternity.
 - iii. We do this in order to pray as we ought.
 1. When a man's mind is unbalanced and his approach to life is frivolous and irresponsible, he cannot pray as he ought.
 2. We learn to pray only when we take life so wisely and so seriously that we begin to say in all things: "Thy will be done."
 - iv. We must cherish for each other a love that is constant and intense.
 1. A love that never fails.
 2. Our love must be energetic.
 - a. Christian love is not an easy, sentimental reaction.
 - b. It demands everything a man has of mental and spiritual energy.
 - c. Means loving the unlovely and the unlovable.
 - d. It means loving in spite of insult and injury.
 - e. It means loving when love is not returned.
2. Love hides a multitude of sins.
 - a. Our love can overlook many sins.
 - i. If we love a person, it is easy to forgive.
 - ii. Love a person as they are.
 - iii. If we love our fellow-men, we can accept their faults, and bear with their foolishness, and even endure their unkindness.
 - b. If we love others, God will overlook a multitude of sins in us.
 - i. Those who have no faults at which the finger may be pointed.
 1. They are moral and respectable.
 2. They are hard and austere and unable to understand why others make mistakes and fall into sin.
 - ii. Those who have many faults.
 1. They are kind and sympathetic and they seldom or never condemn.
 2. This is the kind of person to whom the heart more readily warms.
 - c. God's love covers the multitude of our sins.

Christian Responsibility

1 Peter 4:9, 10

1. Be hospitable.
 - a. Missionaries needed places to stay.
 - b. The local churches needed it.
 - i. For 200 years, no church buildings; met in homes.
 - ii. The church in the house of Aquila and Priscilla (Rom 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19).
 - iii. Church in the house of Philemon (Philemon 2).
 - c. Characteristic of leaders.
 - i. Bishop (1 Tim 5:10; Titus 1:8).
 - ii. "I was a stranger, and you did not welcome me" (Mat. 25:35, 43).
2. Gifts must be placed ungrudgingly at the service of the community.
 - a. Must be faithful steward of the gifts of God.
 - b. Nothing we possess is our own.

The Source and Object of All Christian Endeavor

1 Peter 4:11

1. Two great activities of the Christian Church.
 - a. Preaching.
 - b. Practical service.
2. When one preaches, don't offer own opinion or propagate own prejudices
3. If a Christian is engaged in practical service, he must render that service in the strength which God supplies.
4. The aim of everything is that God should be glorified.

The Inevitability of Persecution

1 Peter 4:12, 13

1. It is Peter's view that persecution is inevitable.
 - a. Human nature to dislike and to regard with suspicion anyone who is different.
 - b. To the world the Christian brings the standards of Jesus Christ; becomes a kind of conscience to any society in which he moves.
 - c. The goodness of Christianity can be an offence to a world in which goodness is regarded as a handicap.
2. It is Peter's view that persecution is a test.
 - a. A man's devotion to a principle can be measured by his willingness to suffer for it.
 - b. Any kind of persecution is a test of a man's faith.
3. Persecution is a sharing in the sufferings of Jesus Christ.
 - a. If we suffer with him, we will be glorified with him (Rom 8:17).
 - b. Paul's desire to enter into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ (Phil. 3:10).
 - c. If we suffer with him, we shall reign with him (2 Tim. 2:12)
4. Persecution is the way to glory.

LESSON FIVE

First Peter 4:14 – Chapter 5

The Blessedness of Suffering for Christ

1 Peter 4:14-16

1. The Jews had the conception of the Shekinah, the luminous glow of the very presence of God.
 - a. “In the morning, you shall see the glory of the Lord” (Ex. 16:7)
 - b. “The glory of the Lord settled upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days.” (Ex. 24:16).
 - c. In the tabernacle, God was to meet with Israel and it was to be sanctified with his glory (Ex. 29:43).
 - d. When the tabernacle was completed, “then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle” (Ex. 40:34).
2. As a Christian, a man must not suffer as an evil-doer.
 - a. Looking upon that which is someone else’s—casting a covetous eye upon it.
 - b. Looking upon that which belongs to another might well mean to be too interested in other people’s affairs and to be a meddling busybody.
 - c. Entering upon undertakings which do not befit the Christian life.
3. If a Christian has to suffer for Christ, he must do so in such a way that his sufferings brings glory to God and to the name he bears.
 - a. His life and conduct must be the best argument that he does not deserve the suffering which has come upon him.
 - b. His attitude to it must commend the name he bears.

Entrusting All Life to God

1 Peter 4:17-19

1. Judgment begins in the house of God.
 - a. “Begin at my sanctuary.” (Ezek. 9:6)
 - b. “If the righteous is requited on earth, how much more the wicked and the sinner.” (Prov. 11:31).
2. Peter exhorts his people to continue to do good and whatever happens to them to entrust their lives to God.

The Elders of the Church

1 Peter 5:1-4

1. Background and history of eldership.
 - a. It has a Jewish background.

- i. Days when the children of Israel were journeying through the wilderness to the Promised Land.
 - ii. Moses chose seventy elders to help share in the ministry (Num 11:16-30).
 - iii. Elders were friends of the prophets (2 Kings 6:32).
 - iv. Advisers of kings (1 Kings 20:8; 21:11)
 - v. Every village and city had its elders; they met at the gate and dispensed justice to the people (Deut. 25:7).
 - vi. The elders were the administrators of the synagogue; did not preach.
 - 1. Saw to the good government and order of the synagogue.
 - 2. They exercised discipline over its members.
 - vii. Elders formed a large section of the Sanhedrin, the supreme court of the Jews.
 - viii. Regularly mentioned along with the Chief Priests and the rulers and the Scribes and the Pharisees.
 - ix. In Revelation, there were 24 elders around the throne.
 - b. Eldership has a Greek background.
 - i. Especially in Egyptian communities we find that elders are the leaders of the community and responsible for the conduct of public affairs.
 - ii. Connected with issuing of public edicts, the leasing of land for pasture, the ingathering of taxation.
 - iii. In Asia Minor the members of councils were called elders.
2. Eldership is the basic office of the Christian Church.
- a. Paul's custom to ordain elders in every community where he preached and established a church.
 - i. Acts 14:23. First missionary journey.
 - ii. Titus was left in Crete to ordain elders in every city. (Titus 1:5)
 - b. The elders had charge of the financial administration of the Church.
 - c. The elders were the counselors and administrators of the Church.
 - d. At the Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15), elders and apostles are spoken of together as the chief authorities of the Church.
 - e. In Paul's farewell to the elders of Ephesus, the elders are the overseers of the flock of God and the defenders of the faith (Acts 20:28, 29).
 - f. Elders had a healing function in the Church through prayers and anointing with oil (James 5:14).
 - g. From the Pastoral Epistles we learn that they were rulers and teachers, and by that time paid officials (1 Timothy 5:17).
3. Perils and Privileges of the Eldership
- a. The elder is to accept office, not under coercion, but willingly.
 - b. The elder is to accept office, not to make a shameful profit out of it, but eagerly.
 - c. The elder is to accept office, not as a petty tyrant, but to be the shepherd and the example of the flock.
 - i. For some, prestige and power is more important than money.
 - ii. The great characteristic of the shepherd is his selfless care and his sacrificial love for the sheep.
4. The Ideal of the Eldership.
- a. Shepherd the flock of God as God would do it.

- b. It is our task to show to people God's forbearance, his forgiveness, his seeking love, his illimitable service.
 - c. Do the task God has given us as God himself would do it.
5. Memories of Jesus.
- a. Peter as a witness of his sufferings.
 - b. Peter as a sharer of his glory.
 - i. Mount of Transfiguration.
 - ii. Glory to come.
 - c. Concerning shepherding the flock, Peter is reminded of Jesus' command to him to feed his sheep.
 - d. Peter speaks of Jesus as the Chief Shepherd.
 - i. Jesus likened himself as the shepherd who went out to find the lost sheep.
 - ii. Jesus saw the multitudes as sheep without a shepherd.
 - iii. Jesus was the Good Shepherd, who was willing to lay down his life for his sheep (John 10:1-18).

The Laws of the Christian Life

1 Peter 5:5-11

1. The law of humility.
2. The law of Christian serenity in God.
 - a. The Christian is to cast all his anxiety upon God.
 - b. "Cast your burden on the Lord" (Ps. 55:22).
 - c. "Do not be anxious about tomorrow." (Mat 6:25-34).
3. The law of Christian effort and of Christian vigilance.
 - a. Must be sober and watchful.
 - b. The Christian was trust and at the same time put all his effort and all his vigilance into the business of living for Christ.
 - c. Cromwell's advice to his troops was: "Trust in God, and keep your powder dry."
4. There is the law of Christian resistance.
 - a. A man's faith must be like a solid wall against which the attacks of the devil exhaust themselves in vain.
 - b. The devil retreats when he is bravely resisted in the strength of Jesus Christ.
5. The law of Christian suffering.
 - a. Through suffering, God will restore a man.
 - i. Supply that which is missing.
 - ii. To mend that which is broken.
 - b. Through suffering God will establish a man.
 - i. Make as solid as granite.
 - ii. Suffering will do one of two things.
 1. Make him collapse.
 2. Leave him with a solidity of character which he could never have gained anywhere else.
 - iii. Through suffering, God will strengthen a man.

1. A life with no effort and no discipline almost inevitably becomes a flabby life.
2. No one really knows what his faith means to him until it has been tried in the furnace of affliction.
- iv. Through suffering, God will settle a man.
 1. When we have to meet sorrow and suffering we are driven down to the very bedrock of faith.
 2. We discover the things which cannot be shaken.
- c. Suffering may well drive a man to bitterness and despair; may well take away such faith as he has.

Conclusion

1. 1 Peter 5:12. Written by the hand of Silvanus (Silas), who was willing to take second seat with a bare mention of his name.
2. 1 Peter 5:13. Two explanations for feminine
 - a. The Authorized Version: “The Church that is” at Babylon greets you.
 - i. “the Church that is” is in italics; phrase is feminine.
 - ii. Moffatt translates “your sister Church in Babylon.
 - iii. The Church is the Bride of Christ.
 - b. Could also refer to some well-known Christian lady.
 - i. Could have been Peter’s wife.
 - ii. Peter’s wife was a well known figure in the early Church.
 1. She accompanied Peter on his preaching journeys (1 Cor. 9:5)
 2. According to Clement of Alexandria, she died a martyr, executed in Peter’s own sight, while he encouraged her by saying, “Remember the Lord.”
 - c. Who is Mark, whom Peter calls his son?
 - i. If the elect lady is Peter’s wife, Mark could have been his natural son.
 - ii. Much more likely that it was Mark who wrote the gospel.
 1. Tradition has always closely connected Peter with mark, and Peter was intimately involved with Mark’s gospel.
 2. Papias, who lived towards the end of the second century and was a great collector of early traditions, describes Mark’s goseil in this way: “Mark, who was Peter’s interpreter, wrote down accurately though not in order, all that he recollected of what Christ had said or done.
 3. Irenaeus says that after the death of Peter and Paul at Rome, “Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, also handed down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter.”
 4. It is the consistent story of tradition that Mark, the evangelist, was indeed a son to Peter, and all the likelihood is that these greetings are from him.
3. 1 Peter 5:14. Greet each other with a kiss of love. Peace be to you all that are in Christ.
 - a. For centuries a kiss of love was an integral and precious part of Christian fellowship and worship.

- b. With the Jews it was the custom for a disciple to kiss his Rabbi on the cheek and to lay his hands upon his shoulder.
 - i. That is what Judas did to Jesus.
 - ii. The kiss was the greeting of welcome and respect
- c. Paul's letters frequently end with the injunction to salute each other with a holy kiss.
 - i. Romans 16:16.
 - ii. 1 Corinthians 16:20.
 - iii. 2 Corinthians 13:12.
 - iv. 1 Thessalonians 5:26.
- d. In the early Christian Church the kiss became an essential part of Christian worship.
 - i. Tertullian: "What prayer is complete from which the hol kiss is divorced?"
 - ii. Augustine: "When Christians were about to communicate, they demonstrated their inward peace by the outward kiss."
 - iii. Justin Martyr: "When we have ceased from prayer, we salute one another with a kiss. There is then brought to the president bread and a cup of wine."
- e. Lovely custom became open to abuse.
- f. By the time of the Apostolic Constitutions in the fourth century, the kiss is confined to those of the same sex—clergy are to salute the bishop, the men the men and the women the women.
 - i. This kiss of peace lasted in the Church of the west until the thirteenth century.
 - ii. In the Oriental Church the custom still obtains.
 - iii. It is not extinct in the Greek Church.
 - iv. The Armenian Church substituted a courteous bow.
- g. The kiss of peace came from the day when the Church was a real family and fellowship, when Christians really did know and love one another.

LESSON SIX

Second Letter of Peter

Introduction

1. Second Peter was written to combat the beliefs and activities of certain men who were a threat to the Church.
2. Christian.
 - a. A man who has escaped from the corruption of the world.
 - b. He has been purged of his old sins.
 - c. There is laid upon him the duty of moral goodness, which culminates in the great Christian virtue of love.
3. Characteristics of men whom Second Peter rebukes.
 - a. They twist Scripture to make it suit their own purpose. (1:20; 3:16)
 - b. They bring the Christian faith into disrepute. (2:2)
 - c. They are covetous of gain and exploiters of their fellow-men. (2:3; 2:14,15)
 - d. They are doomed and will share the fate of the sinning angels. (2:4)
 - e. The men before the Flood. (2:5)
 - f. The citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah. (2:6)
 - g. The false prophet Balaam. (2:15)
 - h. They are bestial creatures, ruled by their brute instincts. (2:12)
 - i. They are dominated by their lusts. (2:10; 2:18)
 - j. Their eyes are full of adultery. (2:14)
 - k. They are presumptuous, self-willed and arrogant. (2:10, 18)
 - l. They spend event he daylight hours in unrestrained and luxurious revelry. (2:13)
 - m. They speak of liberty but what they call liberty is unbridled license. (2:19)
 - n. They are slaves of their own lusts. (2:19)
 - o. They are deluded. (2:14; 2:18)
 - p. They delude others and lead them astray.
 - q. Like a dog returning to its vomit and a sow returning to the mud after it has been washed (2:20-22)
4. Clear that Peter is describing antinomians, men who used God's grace as a justification for sinning.
5. The denial of the Second Coming.
 - a. Argued that this is a stable world in which things remained unalterably the same; assume that the Second Coming was never going to happen at all.
 - b. Not a stable world.
 - i. Destroyed by water in the Flood.
 - ii. Will be destroyed by fire in the final conflagration (3:5-7).
 - iii. A new heaven and a new earth are on the way; wherein dwells righteousness.
 - c. The duty of the Christian is to stand fast, firmly founded in the faith, and to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ (3:17, 18).
6. The doubts of the early Church.
 - a. No trace of Second Peter until after A.D. 200.

- b. Not included in the Muratorian Canon of A.D. 170 which was the first official list of new Testament books.
- c. It did not exist in the Old Latin Version of the Scriptures; nor in the New Testament of the early Syrian Church.
- d. The great scholars of Alexandria either did not know it or were doubtful about it.
- e. Clement of Alexandria, who wrote outlines of the books of Scripture, does not appear to have included Second Peter.
- f. Origen says that Peter left behind one epistle which is generally acknowledged; a second a disputed question.
- g. Eusebius, the great scholar of Caesarea, made a careful investigation of the Christian literature of his day. He concluded: "Of Peter, one Epistle, which is called his former Epistle, is acknowledged by all; of this the ancient presbyters have made frequent use in their writings as indisputably genuine; but that which is circulated as his second Epistle we have received to be not canonical although, since it appeared to be useful to many, it has been diligently read with the other Scriptures."
- h. It was not until well into the fourth century that *Second Peter* came to rest in the canon of the New Testament.

7. The Objections.

- a. Well-nigh universal judgment of scholars, both ancient and modern, that Peter is not the author of *Second Peter*.
 - i. John Calvin regarded it as impossible that Peter could have spoken of Paul as *Second Peter* speaks of him (3:15, 16).
 - ii. John Calvin believed that someone else wrote the letter at Peter's request.
- b. Arguments against Peter's authorship.
 - i. Extreme slowness, and even reluctance, of the early church to accept it.
 - 1. If undoubtedly Peter's, the early Church would have readily accepted it.
 - 2. For the first two centuries the letter is never quoted at all in any certain instance.
 - 3. It was doubted and suspicioned for more than another century; only late in the fourth century is it accepted.
 - ii. The contents make it difficult to believe that it is Peter's.
 - 1. No mention of the Passion, the Resurrection and the Ascension of Jesus Christ.
 - 2. No mention of the Church as the true Israel.
 - 3. No mention of that faith which is undefeatable hope and trust combined.
 - 4. No mention of the Holy Spirit.
 - 5. No mention of prayer, baptism; no passionate desire to call men to the supreme example of Jesus Christ.
 - iii. It is wholly different in character and style from *First Peter*.
 - 1. Jerome wrote: "Simon Peter wrote two Epistles which are called Catholic, of which the authenticity of the second is denied by many because of difference of the style from the first."
 - 2. Clogg calls it ambitious, artificial and often obscure; remarked that it is the only book in the New Testament which is improved by translation.

3. Second Peter lacks the intense sympathy, that flame of love, which marks *First Peter*.
4. The extreme differences in style between the two books leads one to conclude that they were written by two different authors.
- iv. Certain things in *Second Peter* point well-nigh to a late date.
 1. So much time has passed that men have begun to abandon hope of the Second Coming altogether (3:4).
 2. The apostles are spoken of as figures of the past (3:2).
 3. The fathers, that is the founders of the Christian faith, are now figures of the almost dim and distant past; there have been generations between this letter and the first coming of the Christian faith (3:4).
- v. References made to the letters of Paul (3:15, 16) indicates that Paul's letters are known and used throughout all the Church.
 1. Paul's letters are public property; regarded as Scripture and on a level with "the other Scriptures" (3:16).
 2. It was not until at least 90 A.D. that Paul's letters were collected; it would have taken significant time for them to acquire the position of sacred Scripture.
 3. It is not until the third century that it is quoted.
 4. The letter has references which require the passing of the years to explain them.
 5. It was the last book in the New Testament to be written and the last to gain entry into the New Testament.
8. Second Peter is important inasmuch as it was written to men who were undermining the Christian ethic and the Christian doctrine.

2 Peter 1:1

1. Letter written to "whom there has been allotted a faith equal in honor and privilege with our own, through the impartial justice of our God and Savior Jesus Christ."
 - a. No doubt addressed to Gentiles.
 - b. Jews were uniquely God's chosen.
 - c. Now a people who were not a people have obtained equal honor and privilege by the grace of God (1 Peter 2:10).
 - i. New citizenship all of grace; not earned or merited.
 - ii. It came because of the impartial judgment of God.
 1. There is no most favored nation clause.
 2. God's grace and favor go out impartially to every nation upon earth.
 - d. Peter was a man who opened doors.
 - i. House of Cornelius.
 - ii. The Council of Jerusalem.
2. Peter calls himself a servant (*doulos*) of Jesus Christ
 - a. Literally a slave.
 - b. Unquestioned allegiance and loyalty to Jesus.

The All Important Knowledge

2 Peter 1:2

1. Grace and peace are to come from knowledge.
 - a. Increasing knowledge—knowledge that is always moving further in the direction of that which it seeks to know. (grace and peace comes as we know Jesus Christ better and better).
 - b. Knowledge of God not through intellectual endeavor.
 - i. If God is ever to be known, he must be known, not because man's mind discovers him but because he chooses to reveal himself.
 - ii. If knowledge of God is through philosophy, this knowledge would be limited to a few.
 - c. Knowledge of Jesus Christ does not come by philosophic speculation or by mystical experience—it is personal knowledge.
 - i. I know *whom* I have believed (2 Tim. 1:12), not *what* I have believed.
 - ii. Christian knowledge of Christ is personal acquaintance with him; it is knowing him as a person and entering day by day into a more intimate relationship with him.

The Greatness of Jesus Christ for Men

2 Peter 1:3-7

1. In verses 3 and 4, there is a tremendous and comprehensive picture of Jesus Christ.
 - a. He is the Christ of power.
 - b. He is the Christ of generosity.
 - i. Bestows on us all things necessary for true life and true religion.
 - ii. Christ tells us what life is and then enables us to live it as it ought to be lived.
 - c. He is the Christ of the precious and great promises.
 - d. He is the Christ by whom we escape the world's corruption.
 - e. He is the Christ who makes us sharers in the divine nature.
 - i. "He became what we are to make us what he is."
 - ii. Man has it in him to share the nature of God—but only in Jesus Christ can that potentiality be realized.
2. Peter urges his people to equip their lives with every virtue, and that equipment is not simply a necessary minimum, but lavish and generous.
3. Verses 5 and 6, we are to add virtue to virtue, until the whole culminates in Christian love.
 - a. There should be steady moral advance.
 - b. There is progression in the life of a Christian.
4. God is the giver of gifts, but man must co-operate with the grace of God.
 - a. We do not merit salvation but at the same time we have to bend every energy towards the Christian objective of a lovely life.
 - b. Faith does not exempt a man from works; the generosity of God does not absolve a man from effort.

- c. Life is at its noblest and its best when our effort co-operates with God's grace to produce the necessary loveliness.
- 5. In the ancient world, lists of virtues were common.
 - a. Fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Gal. 5:22, 23)
 - b. In the Pastoral Epistles the man of God is bidden to follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness (1 Tim. 6:11).
 - c. In *The Shepherd of Hermas* (*Visions* 3.8.1-7) faith, self-control, simplicity, innocence and reverence, understanding and love are daughters one of another
 - d. In the *Epistle of Barnabus* fear and endurance are the helpers of faith; patience and self-control are our allies; and when these are present a man can develop and possess wisdom, prudence, understanding and knowledge.
- 6. 2 Peter 1:3-7.
 - a. Begins with faith—everything begins with faith.
 - b. To faith must be added *virtue* or *courage*.
 - c. To courage must be added *knowledge*
 - i. *Sophia* is wisdom, “knowledge of things both human and divine—the knowledge of first causes and of deep and ultimate things.
 - ii. Gnosis is *practical knowledge*; it is the ability to apply to particular situations the ultimate knowledge which *Sophia* gives.
 - d. To knowledge must be added *self-control*, or *self-mastery*—
 - i. The ability to take a grip of oneself.
 - ii. Aristotle distinguishes four states in life.
 - 1. There is *sophrosune*, in which passion has been entirely subjugated to reason—we might call it *perfect temperance*.
 - 2. There is *akolasia*, which is the precise opposite; it is the state in which reason is entirely subjugated to passion—we might call it *unbridled lust*.
 - 3. There is *akrasia*, in which reason fights but passion prevails—we might call it *incontinence*.
 - 4. There is *egkrateia*, in which reason fights against passion and prevails—we call it *self-control*, or *self-mastery*.
 - iii. *Egkrateia* is one of the great Christian virtues.
 - 1. Man is not void of all passion.
 - 2. His passions remain, but are under perfect control and so become his servants, not his tyrants.
 - e. To this self-control must be added *steadfastness*.
 - i. The word is *hupomone*, usually translated *patience*.
 - ii. *Patience* is too passive a word; *hupomone* has always a background of courage.
 - iii. *Hupomone* does not simply accept and endure: “For the joy that was set before him, he *endured* the Cross, despising the shame (Heb. 12:2).
 - iv. This is Christian steadfastness; it is the courageous acceptance of everything that life can do to us and the transmuting of even the worst event into another step on the upward way.
 - f. To this steadfastness must be added *piety*.

- i. The word is *eusebeia*, which is difficult to translate.
 - ii. The great characteristic of *eusebeia* is that correctly worships God and give him his due; but he always correctly serves his fellow-men and gives them their due.
 - iii. *Eusebeia* is the nearest Greek word for *religion*, and when a man becomes a Christian, he acknowledges a double duty, to God and to his fellow men.
- g. To this piety must be added *brotherly affection*.
 - i. The word is *philadelphia*, which literally means *love of the brethren*.
 - ii. Something is wrong with the religion which finds the claims of personal relationships a nuisance.
- h. The ladder of Christian virtue must end in Christian love.
 - i. More than brotherly love.
 - ii. Must show the love of God.

On the Way

2 Peter 1:8-11

1. Must continue to climb the ladder of virtues.
 - a. To keep climbing up the ladder of virtues is to come ever nearer to knowing Jesus Christ.
 - b. The further we climb, the further we are able to climb.
2. To not make the effort to upward climb,
 - a. We become short-sighted—to see things only as they appear at the moment and to be unable to take the long view of things, to have our eyes fixed upon earth that we never think of the things beyond.
 - b. Easy to forget that the sins of the old way of life have been cleansed away.
3. The gracious free offer and the personal hard work have to combine before the privilege becomes fully effective.
 - a. God has called us in his free mercy and his unmerited grace; but at the same time we have to bend every effort to toil upwards and onwards on the way.
 - b. If we follow this upward way, Peter says, we shall in the end be richly gifted with the right of entry into his Kingdom.
4. (Hosea 6:3 KJV) Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth.

The Pastor's Care

2 Peter 1:12-15

1. The ministry of teaching and preaching.
 - a. Preaching is very often reminding a man of what he already knows—it is bringing back to his memory that truth which he has forgotten—or meaning he has not fully appreciated.
 - b. Peter says the people possess the truth and are firmly established in it.

2. Peter looks forward to his early death.
 - a. Speaks of his body as a tent (a temporary dwelling).
 - b. Jesus spoke of his manner of death (John 21:18, 19).

1. 2 Peter 1:16-18
 - a. The power of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - b. We were eye witnesses of His majesty. (Mount of Transfiguration).
2. 2 Peter 1:19-21.
 - a. No prophecy of private interpretation.
 - b. Prophecy is not by the will of man; but men spoke from God by the Holy Spirit.
 - i. Mark of Old Testament false prophet was that he was speaking of himself.
 - ii. Jeremiah condemns the false prophets: “They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the Lord.” (Jeremiah 23:16).
 - iii. Ezekiel: “Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing” (Ezek. 13:3).
 - c. We can not have private interpretation of the prophets.
 - i. Heretics and evil men were interpreting the prophets to suit themselves.
 - ii. Peter is saying, “No man can go to Scripture and interpret it as it suits himself.”
 - d. Prophets received their message from the Holy Spirit; only through the Holy Spirit can the message be interpreted or understood.
 - i. Through accepting the consensus of men of God through the ages.
 - ii. Scripture must be interpreted in the light of the teaching, the belief and the tradition of the Church.
 - iii. God is our Father in the faith; the Church is our mother in the faith.

LESSON SEVEN

False Prophets

2 Peter 2:1

1. Characteristics of false prophets of the Old Testament.
 - a. More interested in gaining popularity than in telling the truth
 - i. Tell people what they wanted to hear.
 - ii. The false prophets said, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace." (Jer. 6:14)
 - iii. They saw visions of peace, when the Lord God was saying that there was no peace (Ez. 13:16).
 - iv. In the days of Jehosaphat:
 1. Zedekiah, the false prophet, donned his horns of iron and said that Israel would push the Syrians out of the way as he pushed with these horns.
 2. Micaiah the true prophet foretold disaster if Jehosaphat went to war.
 - v. In the days of Jeremiah:
 1. Hananiah prophesied the swift end of the power of Babylon.
 2. Jeremiah prophesied the servitude of the nation to her.
 - b. False prophets were interested in personal gain.
 - i. Micah: "Its priests teach for hire, and its prophets divine for money." (Micah 3:11).
 - ii. They teach for filthy lucre's sake (Titus 1:11).
 - iii. Identify godliness and gain; making their religion a money-making thing (1 Tim. 6:5).
 - c. The false prophets were dissolute in their personal life.
 - i. Isaiah: "The priest and the prophet reel with strong drink; they are confused with wine" (Is. 28:7).
 - ii. Jeremiah: "In the prophets of Jerusalem I have seen a horrible thing; they commit adultery and walk I lies; they strengthen the hands of evil-doers...they lead my people astray by their lies and their recklessness" (Jer. 23:14, 32).
 - d. The false prophet was above all a man who led other men further away from God instead of closer to him.
2. What Peter says about false prophets and their actions.
 - a. The insidiously introduce destructive heresies.
 - i. Originally not a bad word; meant what a man had chosen for himself.
 - ii. After Jesus, there was a definite, God-given truth; a heretic then became a man who believed what he wished to believe instead of accepting truth of God which he ought to believe.
 - iii. Men were lured away from God's truth to other men's private opinions, which is what heresy is.
 - b. These men denied the Lord who had bought them.
 - i. We have been purchased.
 1. "You were bought with a price." (1 Cor. 7:23).

2. “Christ redeemed us (bought us out) from the curse of the law.” (Gal. 3:13).
3. In *Revelation*, the hosts of heaven tell how Jesus Christ bought them with his blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation (Rev. 5:9).
 - ii. To deny.
 1. Never knew him.
 2. Denied his authority.
 3. More than likely, denied him through their actions though they claimed to know him.
 - c. Their end was destruction.
3. 2 Peter 2,3. The Work of Falsehood
 - a. The cause of false teaching.
 - i. Evil ambition.
 - ii. Coveting what other’s have.
 - iii. Unholy ambition for prestige and power.
 - iv. Desire to put own ideas in the place of the truth of Jesus Christ.
 - b. The method of false teaching.
 - i. Use of cunningly forged arguments.
 - ii. Falsehood easily resisted if presented as falsehood.
 - iii. When it is disguised as truth is when it becomes menacing.
 - iv. Any teacher’s teaching must be tested by the words and presence of Jesus Christ himself.
 - c. The effect of the false teaching.
 - i. Encouraged men to take the way of blatant immorality.
 - ii. It brought Christianity into disrepute.
 - d. The ultimate end of false teaching: Destruction
4. 2 Peter 2:4-11. Fate of the Wicked and the Rescue of the Righteous
 - a. Three examples of sin and its destruction.
 - i. Angels who sinned sentenced to lowest hell.
 1. The Lowest Hell.
 - a. Pit of darkness.
 - b. Chains of darkness.
 2. The story of the fall of the angels is deeply rooted in Hebrew thought.
 - a. Gen. 6:1-5. Sons of God took the daughters of men...giants were born.
 - b. The story was developed in the *Book of Enoch*, which everyone would know.
 - i. In *Enoch*, angels were called *Watchers*.
 - ii. Their leader in rebellion was Semjaza or Azazel.
 - iii. At his instigation they descended to Mount Hermon in the days of Jared, the father of Enoch; took mortal wives—instructed them in magic and in arts which gave them power.

- iv. Giants produced became cannibals and were guilty of every kind of lust and crime; especially of insolent arrogance to God and man.
 - c. Many references to them and their pride in the apocryphal literature.
 - i. *Wisdom* (14:6) tells how the proud giants perished.
 - ii. *Ecclesiasticus* (16:7) tells how fell away in the strength of their foolishness.
 - d. Paul says women should have their head covered because of the angels (1 Cor. 11:10).
 - i. Old belief that it was the loveliness of the long hair of the women which moved the angels to desire.
 - ii. Paul wishes to see that the angels are not tempted again (?)
 - 3. As time went on, this story became embarrassing because of the lust of the angels.
 - a. Jesus said in the resurrection, we would be as angels, who neither marry nor give in marriage.
 - b. The Sons of God were said to be good men of the lineage of Seth who took the daughters of Cain.
 - 4. Many believed the story was simply allegorized.
 - a. Augustine declared that no man could take this story literally and talk fo the angels like that.
 - b. Cyril of Alexandria said that it could not be taken literally.
 - c. Chrysostom said that, if the story was taken literally, it was nothing short of blasphemy.
 - d. Here we get a clue what Peter is speaking of when he speaks of men who despise the celestial powers and bring the angelic glories into disrepute by speaking slanderously of them.
 - 5. Angels who are greater in strength and in power do not bring a slanderous charge against them in the presence of God.
 - a. Jude 9: “The Lord rebuke you.”
 - b. *Enoch* tells that when the conduct of the giants on earth became intolerable, men made their complaint to the archangels Michael, Uriel, Gabriel, and Raphael.
 - c. The archangels took this complaint to God; but they did not rail against the evil angels who were responsible for it all.
 - 6. Wicked men in Peter’s day used toe angels for examples to justify their own lust and behavior.
- b. The second example: God saved Noah and his family from the flood.
 - i. Noah was a preacher, according to Josephus, who did his best to turn men from the evil of their ways.
 - ii. “Many angels of God lay with women and begat sons, who were violent and who despised all good, on account of their reliance on their own strength...But Noah displeased and distressed at their behavior, tried to induce them to alter their dispositions and conduct for the better.” (*Antiquities* 1.3.1).

- iii. Two qualities of Noah.
 1. In the midst of a sinning generation, he remained faithful to God.
 2. He was the preacher of righteousness.
- c. The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the Rescue of Lot.
 - i. Doom of cities sealed by the abuse of hospitality, the insulting of angels and the raging of unnatural lust.
 - ii. Lot was rescued.
 - iii. Here again is the story of the destruction of sin and the rescue of righteousness.
 - iv. Characteristics of Lot.
 1. Lot lived in the midst of evil, and the very sight of it was a constant distress to him.
 - a. Often we're shocked at sin, but become desensitized to it.
 2. Lot lived in the midst of evil, and yet he escaped its taint.
 3. When the worst came to the worst, Lot was willing to make a clean break with his environment.
- 5. Verses 4-11 continued. The Picture of the Evil Man.
 - a. He is the desire-dominated man.
 - i. The word *temperament* means a *mixture*.
 - ii. The human nature consists of a large variety of ingredients all mixed together.
 - iii. The efficacy of any mixture depends on each ingredient being there in its proper proportion.
 1. Wherever there is either excess or defect the mixture is not what it ought to be.
 2. The desire-dominated man has allowed his animal nature to usurp a place it should not have; he has allowed the ingredients to get out of proportion.
 - b. He is the audacious man.
 - i. There is the daring which is a noble thing, the mark of true courage.
 - ii. There is the daring which is an evil thing, the shameless performance of things which are an affront to decency and right.
 - c. He is the self-willed man.
 - i. A man who has no idea of anything other than pleasing himself.
 - ii. Obtinately maintaining his own opinion, or asserting his own rights, he is reckless of the rights, opinions and interests of others.
 - iii. Stubbornly, arrogantly, brutally determined on his own way.
 - d. He is the man who is contemptuous of the angels.
 - i. Lives in one world—the spiritual world does not exist and he never hears the voices from beyond.
 - ii. He is of the earth earthy.

Deluding Self and Deluding Others

2 Peter 2:12-14

1. The evil men are like brute beasts, slaves of their animal instincts.

- a. A beast is born only for capture and death.
 - b. If a man dedicates himself to these fleshly pleasures, in the end he so ruins himself in bodily health and in spiritual and mental character, that he cannot enjoy even them.
 - c. The glutton destroys his appetite in the end; the drunkard his health; the sensualist his body, the self-indulgent his character and peace of mind.
2. They are blots on the Christian fellowship; they are like the blemishes on an animal, which make it unfit to be offered to God.
 - a. The pleasures of the body are demonstrably subject to the law of diminishing returns.
 - b. In themselves they lose their thrill, so that in time, it takes more and more of them to satisfy.
 - c. Everything must be done to make the thrill sharper and more intense.
 - d. Committed to a life that has no future and to pleasure which ends in pain.
 3. Eyes full of adultery.
 - a. The Greek literally is, "They have eyes full of an adulteress."
 - b. They see a possible adulteress in every woman, wondering how she can be persuaded to gratify their lusts.
 4. They have hearts trained in unbridled ambition for the things they have no right to have.
 - a. They have deliberately fought with conscience until they have destroyed it.
 - b. They have deliberately struggled with their finer feelings until they have strangled them.
 5. They have not only deluded themselves, they have deluded others.

On the Wrong Road

2 Peter 2:15, 16; 17-22

1. Peter likens the evil men of his time to the prophet Balaam.
 - a. Balaam had come to stand as the type of all false prophets.
 - b. Two characteristics of Balaam which were repeated in the evil men of Peter's day.
 - i. Balaam was covetous.
 - ii. Balaam taught Israel to sin.
 1. He led the people out of the straight and into the crooked way.
 2. He persuaded them to forget their promises to God.
2. Peter continues his denunciation of the evil men.
 - a. They are like wells with no water and like mists blown past by a squall of wind.
 - i. They flatter only to deceive.
 - ii. They promise a gospel and in the end have nothing to offer the thirsty soul.
 - b. Their teaching is a combination of arrogance and futility. Christian liberty always carries danger.
 - i. Paul tells his people that they have indeed been called to liberty but that they must not use it for an occasion to the flesh (Gal. 5:13).
 - ii. Peter tells his people that indeed they are free but they must not use their freedom as a cloak of maliciousness (1 Peter 2:16).
 - iii. These teachers offered freedom, but it was freedom to sin as much as a man liked.

- c. These evil men are like dogs who return to their vomit or like a sow which has been scrubbed and then goes back to rolling in the mud.

LESSON EIGHT

Second Peter Chapter 3

The Principles of Preaching

2 Peter 3:1,2

1. Principles of preaching
 - a. The value of repetition
 - b. The need for reminder.
 - c. The value of a compliment.
 - i. Pure mind.
 1. That which is sifted until there is no admixture of chaff left.
 2. That which is so flawless that it may be held up to the light of the sun.
 - ii. Plato spoke of *pure reason*, reason which is unaffected by the seductive influence of the senses.
 - iii. Peter probably speaking of their not having their mind contaminated by heresy.
 - iv. “You are really fine people, if you would only remember it.”
 - d. Believing in the unity of the Scripture.
2. 2 Peter 3:3,4
 - a. Two arguments of the skeptics.
 - i. “Where is the sign of his coming?” which seems to insinuate their doubt that he was coming.
 - ii. The delay is so long that it can safely be assumed that it will not happen at all.
 - b. Peter’s response.
 - i. We must see time as God sees it (with Him a day is as a thousand years...).
 - ii. God’s apparent slowness to act is not dilatoriness—it is mercy.
 - c. The elements will melt with a fervent heat.
3. 2 Peter 3:5,6. Destruction by the flood.
 - a. Goal: A new heaven and earth wherein dwells righteousness.
 - i. World that was destroyed by water.
 - ii. The world that is reserved to the day of fire.
 - b. So often in *Second Peter* and *Jude*, the picture comes not directly from the Old Testament but from the Book of Enoch.
 - i. *Enoch* 83:3-5: Enoch has a vision: “I saw in a vision how the heaven collapsed and fell to the earth, and, where it fell to the earth, I saw how the earth was swallowed up in a great abyss.”
 - ii. In later stories the flood involved not only the obliteration of sinners but the total destruction of heaven and earth.
4. 2 Peter 3:7. Destruction by fire.
 - a. Old Testament scriptures.
 - i. Joel foresaw a time when God would show blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke (Joel 2:30).

- ii. The Psalmist has a picture in which, when God comes, a devouring fire shall precede him (Psalm 50:3).
 - iii. Isaiah speaks of a flame of devouring fire (Isaiah 29:6; 30:30).
 - iv. The Lord will come with fire; by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh (Isaiah 66:15, 16).
 - v. Nahum has it that the hills melt and the earth is burned at his presence; his fury is poured out like fire (Nahum 1:5,6).
 - vi. Malachi speaks of the Day of the Lord that shall burn as an oven (Malachi 4:1)
 - b. New Testament.
 - i. Jesus will baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire.
 - ii. Acts 2:3 “And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.”
 - iii. Every work will be tried as if by fire.
 - c. Stoic teaching.
 - i. The destruction of the world by fire; the universe completes a cycle—it is consumed in flames—start all over again.
 - ii. There will never be any new thing other than that which has been before; everything is repeated down to the minutest detail.
 - d. The biblical reality is not so much the death agony of the old world as much as the birth pangs of the new—end result will be that all things will be made new.
5. 2 Peter 3:8,9
 - a. Time.
 - i. Time is not the same to God as it is to man.
 - 1. “A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night” (Psalm 90:4).
 - 2. It is only against the background of eternity that things appear in their true proportions and assume their real value.
 - b. God does not wish that any should perish.
 - i. Paul: “God has shut them all up together in unbelief, that he might have mercy on all (Romans 11:32).
 - ii. Timothy speaks of God who will have all men to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4).
 - iii. Ezekiel: “Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked, and not rather that he should return from his way and live?” (Ezekiel 18:23).
 - iv. In Scripture there is a glint of the larger hope.
 - c. We are not forbidden to believe that somehow and some time the God who loves the world will bring the whole world to himself.
6. 2 Peter 3:10.
 - a. Man speaks in terms which he knows.
 - b. Peter is speaking of the New Testament doctrine of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, but he is describing it in terms of the Old Testament doctrine of the Day of the Lord.
 - c. The Jews saw time in terms of two ages—
 - i. This present age, which is wholly bad and is past remedy.
 - ii. The age to come, which is the golden age of God.
 - d. The change could not come about by human effort or by a process of development.

- i. Must be by direct intervention of God, which is the Day of the Lord.
 - ii. A time when the universe is shaken to its foundations.
 - iii. A time when the judgment and obliteration of sinners would come to pass; a time of terror.
 - e. Peter and many of the New Testament writers identified the Old Testament pictures of the Day of the Lord with the New Testament conception of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.
 - f. Many conceptions of the Second Coming.
 - i. There will come a day when God breaks into every life.
 - ii. There is the certainty of the entry of God into our own experience.
- 7. 2 Peter 3:11-14
 - a. If there are to be a new heaven and a new earth and if that heaven and earth are to be the home of righteousness, obviously a man must seek with all his mind and heart and soul and strength to be fit to be a dweller in that new world.
 - b. The hopelessness of those who don't look for the change.
 - i. If there is nothing to come, a man may well decide to make what he can of the pleasures of this world.
 - 1. Eat, drink, and be merry.
 - ii. If there is nothing to live for, a man may well be utterly indifferent.
 - 1. Nothing matters much if the end of everything is extinction.
 - iii. If there is nothing to live for but extinction and the world is going nowhere, there can enter into life a kind of lostness.
 - 1. Man ceases to be a pilgrim for there is nowhere to which he can make pilgrimage.
 - 2. Must simply drift in a kind of lostness, coming from nowhere and on the way to nowhere.
 - c. Epigram of Callimachus: "Charidas, what is below?" "Deep darkness." "But what of the paths upward?" "All a lie." "And Pluto?" (the god of the underworld). "Mere talk." "Then we're lost."
- 8. 2 Peter 3:11-14. Hastening the day.
 - a. "Thy kingdom come..." (Math. 6:10).
 - b. "And this gospel of the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony to all nations; and then the end will come" (Mat. 24:14).
 - c. Through true penitence and in real obedience a man opens his own heart to the coming of the King and brings nearer that coming throughout the world.
- 9. 2 Peter 3:15, 16. Perverters of Scripture.
 - a. God's willingness to wait verified by Paul's writings as patience.
 - i. Paul speaks of those who despise the riches of God's goodness and forbearance and patience, forgetting that his kindness is designed to lead a man to repentance (Rom 2:4).
 - ii. More than once Paul stresses the forbearance and the patience of God (Romans 3:25; 9:22).
 - b. Peter's criticism of Paul, to some, is another reason to doubt the authorship of Second Peter (John Calvin said Peter would never have spoken about Paul like this).
 - i. Reference to Paul indicates that Paul's letters by this time were known and used throughout the Church.

1. Indicates that they have been collected and published; they are generally available and widely read.
 2. It was not until 90 A.D. that Paul's letters were collected and published in Ephesus.
 3. Peter was martyred in the middle sixties of the century.
 - ii. Indicates Paul's letters have come to be regarded as Scripture.
 - iii. There are things in Paul's letters which are hard to understand and which ignorant people twist to their own ruin.
 1. Paul's doctrine of grace was twisted into an excuse and even a reason for sin (Romans 6).
 2. Paul's doctrine of Christian freedom was twisted into an excuse for unchristian license (Galatians 5:13).
 3. Paul's doctrine of faith was twisted into an argument that Christian action was unimportant, as we see in James (James 2:14-26)
10. 2 Peter 3:17-18. Peter tells us certain things about the Christian life.
- a. The Christian is a man who is forewarned (cannot plead ignorance).
 - b. The Christian is a man for a basis for life.
 - i. Ought to be rooted and founded in the faith.
 - ii. There are certain basic beliefs which never changes.
 1. Will never cease to believe that "Jesus is Lord." (Philippians 2:11).
 2. Never cease to be aware that there is laid on him the duty of making his life fit his belief.
 - c. The Christian is a man with a developing life.
 - i. Must daily experience the wonder of grace.
 - ii. Daily grow in the gifts which grace can bring.
 - iii. Daily enter more and more deeply into the wonder which is in Jesus Christ.
11. Letter concludes by giving glory to Christ, both now and to the end of time.