

Sermon Series -- Second Peter
Knowledge, Scripture, Salvation, Knowing God, False Teaching, The Day of the Lord
By Bob Young

2 PETER (#1)
KNOWLEDGE (EPISTEMOLOGY)

Introduction

For Peter, knowledge is foundational to faith. Often in our Bible reading and study, we fail to note repeated words. I want to help you see “knowledge” as a theme in 2 Peter.

The importance of knowledge, in today’s world must not be overlooked. What do you really know? Our world has undermined certainty. We live in a day of relative truth. Knowledge is not possible according to the thinking of many. Here’s the first question: What is knowledge?

Knowledge is a key word in 2 Peter, we meet it first in the introduction.

Knowledge

In Peter, we are looking at the Greek word *epignosis*. This is not simply *gnosis*. This is *epignosis*. The word has a three-fold significance:

1. Knowledge directed toward a particular object. In 2 Peter, knowledge is directed toward Jesus Christ, the need to increase our knowledge of Jesus. The idea occurs throughout Scripture (Isa. 5:13; Hos. 4:6; John 5:39; Phil. 3:10).
2. *Epignosis* means full knowledge. Plutarch spoke of the knowledge of the master vs. the amateur or apprentice. We are called to become experts, not novices, in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.
3. *Epignosis* sometimes refers to knowledge in a way that unites subject with object. To know is to share and participate. Col. 1:27 and Gal. 2:20 would be examples of this concept.

I. Knowledge has a purpose, knowledge equips us, 1:3-4

Knowledge equips us. We do not seek knowledge for the sake of knowledge. I think I'll go to church tonight. Why? I can get smarter. That is not enough. Knowledge must be applied. One can have knowledge and be dumb. I remember a 5th year aeronautical engineering student at Wichita State University who had never learned to drive. Grace and peace come from knowledge.

II. Knowledge should be productive, 1:5-8

To moral excellence we are to add knowledge. This knowledge exists in the spiritual realm. This is not physical knowledge. This is not an admonition to go back to school, to continue our education. This is spiritual knowledge. Phil. 4:8 suggests that as we saturate our minds with spiritual knowledge, we mature, grow into Christ. Our goal is that the pages of our Bible might become dirty so that our lives might be clean. I remind you again of Phil. 3:10. In the introduction to Peter's second letter, grace and peace come from knowledge. This is productive knowledge. The same truth is reflected in 1:9-11. Knowledge is productive when remembered and applied.

III. Some seek pseudo-knowledge, 2:1-3; 3:3-7

Note that our word runs through 2 Peter as a thread. We meet our word knowledge again and again, sometimes specifically, sometimes in concept.

In reading 2 Peter, I often think of the desire to increase knowledge, knowledge toward, in the direction of, toward an object. This is the first definition I mentioned.

In 2 Peter, I can also apply the definition of full knowledge. This understanding of knowledge communicates the idea behind a master's degree. A bachelor originally was an apprentice, ready to study under the master. After studying under the master, one could master the trade, the art, the information. This is our call

to master a certain subject, the second definition mentioned above. Christians are called to become masters, not remaining amateurs or apprentices.

Peter is using a word common the lips of pagans, but giving new fullness to its meaning. The Greeks defined *sophia*, wisdom, as knowledge of things both human and divine. Wisdom was not depth but breadth.

Greeks sought after God and after that knowledge in two main ways (remember 1 Cor 1).

First, they sought it by philosophical speculation. This is the sheer power of human thought. But this has clear, obvious troubles. God is infinite, higher than man. Isa. 55, Job. 11:7. If God is ever to be known, he must be known not because the mind of man discovers him, but because he chooses to reveal himself to man. Further, if religion is based on philosophic speculation, it must always retain the domain of only a few philosophers. Every person cannot become a philosopher. Whatever Peter means by knowledge, it is not philosophic speculation as the Greeks sought knowledge.

Second, some sought knowledge by mystical experience. To be one with the Divine Mystery. Religions of that day popularized this concept. Mystery religions were all passion plays. The initiate was to enter into the experience being depicted. But such experience is transient, temporary.

If the knowledge of Jesus Christ is not be philosophy and not mystical, what is it? In the New Testament, knowledge is personal. I know whom I have believed. Knowledge is ultimately not about facts or things but about relationships and people. Personal acquaintance with Jesus, knowing him as a person, relationship, intimacy. In fact, as you know, in older English usage, the word knowledge was used to refer to the most intimate of human relationships sexually. When Peter says grace and peace come through knowledge, this is not just intellectual, but it speaks of relationship.

Application time. Consider the false teachers of whom Peter speaks. They are seeking pseudo-knowledge, perhaps philosophic, perhaps a popularized version, or an experiential or mystical version, but certainly not the personal knowledge Jesus came to make possible.

IV. Knowledge is not passive, 3:14-16

Another way of saying this: Attaining knowledge is often difficult. Knowledge does not come easy. It is difficult to attain. There is a price.

Illustration: an older preacher was well-versed in Scripture, citing verses without end; a younger preacher said, I would give my life to know the Bible like you do. The older preacher replied, that is what I did.

Knowledge is not passive, knowledge is active. Knowledge is intentional, it requires effort. It is not automatic, by osmosis. You do not sit and listen and gain knowledge. Knowledge involves both the mind and the doing. It is on the job training. Head, heart, hands. Involvement mentally, emotionally, actively. The Old Testament priests read the word, explained the word, lived the word. Doctors are trained by book knowledge, telling others, and practicing.

V. Knowledge is progressive, 3:17-18

The letter closes with the admonition to grow in grace and knowledge. Some have stopped growing. I heard of a well-known brother, he said in debate that he learned the truth 50 years ago and he had not learned anything since. What a statement! How sad.

Knowledge is progressive. Tomorrow I will know more than today. I am growing in knowledge. I am seeking to learn, not just facts, but to know Jesus. I want to know him, his power, his life, his spirit, his plan, his purpose, his eternity.

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2 PETER (#2)

SCRIPTURE (REVELATION, EPISTEMOLOGY)

Introduction

We have a Word more certain...

2 Peter says a remarkable amount about the word of God, about the Scriptures. Peter was probably referring to the Old Testament, but he also knew the writings of Paul. It would not be overstatement to say that 2 Peter emphasizes the importance of scripture. This theme is related to our previous study of knowledge. I love the book of 2 Peter—I find it especially helpful for this kind of word study, thinking of Peter's message in terms of primary themes. In our contemporary society, with little appreciation for knowledge or truth and limited Bible knowledge, 2 Peter has a message in the emphasis it puts on the Bible as the Word of God.

The need for a revelation from God

Our society has generally forgotten the nature of knowledge and truth. Francis Schaeffer, in *Escape from Reason* (1968), spoke of this epistemological gap when he made reference to a "theory of knowledge and the limits and validity of knowledge." When truth is viewed differently, God's word is viewed differently. When the rules for determining the validity of knowledge are changed, the underpinnings of God's word are altered.

There is a need for a revelation from God because knowing God is not automatic. God can be seen and known in natural revelation, in the created world, but that revelation is partial. One can know that there is a God but one cannot know the nature of that God.

Our society's failure to see God is based in a failure to accept and know God's self-revelation. There are two problems with the changing views of knowledge in our society and culture.

First, recent generations have been taught that truth is relative. Not in the absolute sciences, although some have even questioned cognitive certainty, but especially in the areas of philosophy and religion. Two conflicting views can be right according to the views of many today.

Add that the current society tends to be non-confrontational (tolerant). Many accept anyone's view, everyone's view, despite the contradiction. This is not just the affirmation of the right to have a view, this is the acceptance of the correctness of everyone's view regardless of apparent conflicts. How can Jesus be the Son of God and not be God? Many say it is because we interpret the Bible differently. Such views make 2 Peter as current as today's newspaper (1:19-21).

Second, many today believe that experience is the primary test of truth. If it feels good, if I feel good about my beliefs, if it works for you, it must be true. "You light up my life...it can't be wrong when it feels so right..." Such is classic baby boomer epistemology. But it is wrong, even if it feels good and sounds right.

Bible truth is absolute, one statement excludes all competing and contrary statements, as in Acts 4:12. When we reject absolute truth, we reject the Bible and turn our back on logic as well. The principle of contradiction is the major basis for rational thought. Something cannot be true and false at the same time.

Given two contradictory thoughts, both cannot be rational, although both can be irrational. Consider morality: if God intended sexual relations for marriage only, adultery must be wrong. Consider theology and faith: Jesus is either God or he is not.

In a world that largely rejects rational thinking, the message of 2 Peter will help avoid moral anarchy. Knowledge, Scripture. Here are two important themes in 2 Peter. These themes provide the basis for an accurate understanding of 2 Peter 2.

Alan Bloom, *Closing of American Mind*, relativism does not open the mind to new truths, but only closes it to old traditional ones. The greatest fear today is not error but intolerance. And he wrote that in 1968.

What we believe about the Bible is based in what we believe about God

The nature of the Bible is based in the nature of God.

- God does not violate his own nature, his own laws.
- Man has the ability to think as he does because God thinks as he does.
- Man is made in the image of God.
- God is not self-contradictory or changing, Jas. 1:17; Num 23:19

These truths must be applied in our study of Bible interpretation (hermeneutics), how we interpret and understand the Bible. We use rational logic, grammar, knowledge of culture and history, with basic laws of writing and logic. I say again that 2 Peter speaks to where many in our world live today.

I. The sufficiency of Scripture, 1:3-4

A. Sufficient...

- For life and godliness in all ways
- For knowledge of Christ and his calling
- For Christian living with virtue, through the divine nature, with the ability to escape corruption.

B. Sufficient because God has given us all things

- Through knowledge
- Through calling us to glory and virtue
- Through giving great and precious promises
- Through enabling us to partake of divinity
- Through escaping corruption in the world through lust

II. The Source of Scripture, 1:16-21

A. God or man?

- Eyewitnesses (man) observed how God acted, 1:16-18
- Eyewitnesses of his majesty (16)
- Eyewitnesses of the Father's blessings with glory and honor (17)
- Eyewitnesses of the Father's testimony concerning the Son (18)
- The word of prophecy (man) was unloosed by God, 1:19-20
- The prophecy was not of man's will, but men spoke by God (Holy Spirit)

B. Five statements about Scripture

- Surety of Scripture, 1:19
- The significance of Scripture, 1:19
- The solution of Scripture, 1:20
- The spirit of Scripture, 1:21
- The speaking of Scripture, 1:21

III. Singleness or Solidarity (unity) of Scripture, 3:1ff

Speaking of the singleness or solidarity of Scripture says that the message of Scripture is one message. It is solid. Solidarity means identifying with us, but also solid, dependable, reliable. Scripture has a two-fold nature.

A. It is of God, word of God

B. It is of man--Prophets and Apostles, word of God written down in human words

IV. The scope of Scripture, 3:14-15 (which is in reality an outline of 3:3ff)

A. It speaks of the future, 3:14 (referring to vv. 9-13)

B. It speaks of the present, present lifestyles, present situations, 3:14

C. It speaks of the past history of God's dealings with mankind, 3:15 (cf. vv. 3-8)

V. The Subversion of Scripture, 3:16-18

Scriptures are often wrested to destruction by the unlearned and unstable, 16

Beware lest we be caused to fall from steadfastness by such errors, 17

Always grow, 18

Conclusion

There is a truth that is absolute, it is truth whether recognized or unrecognized

Truth is knowable, ascertainable

Truth in Scripture is above feelings

God gave us truth in his word, the Bible.

The Bible is sufficient...from God...through man...dealing with all of life and time

Yet many seek to deny it or change it

2 PETER (#3)

SALVATION (SOTERIOLOGY)

Salvation Things, Don't Forget...

Text: 2 Pet. 1:5-12

Introduction

We are in a familiar text. Something like singing the same songs over and over. Different emphasis, different purpose. We have sought to think about knowledge, we have studied Scripture as a theme of 2 Peter. In this sermon, I focus on Peter's salvation words. Peter intertwines two ideas – salvation and remembering, not forgetting.

Remember your salvation

Memory is a wonderful thing. How dull would be life without memory. How dangerous. We must cultivate spiritual memories. Memory is what keeps us from having to make literally thousands of decisions every day. Tradition keeps us from having to redecide every issue every time. Memory is not bad. Tradition is not bad (illustration: "Fiddler on the Roof"). We must remember. We must go forward building upon the foundations of the past.

How does 2 Peter connect salvation and memory?

I. Don't forget the fact of salvation, 1:5-15

Christian thinking (esp. v. 9)

- These things must be in you and abound--put these things in you in abundance
- These things must not be lacking--take care that none of these things is lacking
- These things must be done--make actions are consistent with "these things"
- These things must be remembered--this is motivation

Christian virtues, v. 12

Christian action, v. 13-15 (stir up)

II. Don't forget the power of salvation, 1:16-18

Christ is the living word, with majesty and honor, person of salvation

Christ is the son of God

III. Don't forget the source/surety of salvation, 1:19-21

The written word reveals the living word

2 PETER #4

REMEMBER GOD (THEOLOGY)

I want you to remember....

Introduction

Memorial Day. Remember. What do you remember? We have almost forgotten the focus of this day. I remember as a youngster, final appearance of HS band, Memorial Day parade, to cemetery, celebration, somber moments. Now, another holiday. Three-day weekend. Perhaps we should not have moved Memorial Day. Few are at home ready to remember. Yet remembering is essential to our identity, our commitments, our understandings of life.

Remembering is essential to knowing our heritage. I can read my family's history, recorded in a book. I know better who I am. Fred Craddock illustration: guide who claimed, this is the place, down in the Negev, the place where we hid, jumped out, overcame the enemy. Six Day War, what? Philistines. A 20th century guide in touch with a time 3000 years earlier. It has shaped his understanding of the world.

Remembering is part of our religious heritage. In the Supper we remember. Two ways of remembering: bring past to the present, or go back to the past. I often hear in our communion prayers, let us go back, or let our minds go back. May I in love suggest that maybe a better prayer would be, help us bring the crucifixion of Christ to bear in our present lives, and let us go forward this week in the power of his death and resurrection, bringing the past to the present.

Peter knew how important it was that his readers of his second letter remember. We see an introduction to the idea in 1:7-11. Possess these equalities, increase, be effective in knowledge, lest you forget. Always anticipate.

Look more carefully at 1:12, 13, 15. Compare 3:5, some deliberately forget, 3:8 do not forget, there is promise, keep looking forward. I put these two sections of 2 Peter together to study what Peter says about God.

Chapter 1, remember what?

God's provision, 1:3-7

God's salvation, 1:9

God's son, 1:16-18

God's sure word, 1:19-21

Chapter 3, remember what?

God's prophetic word, 3:1-2

God's past promises, 3:3-8

God's provision, 3:9

God's future promises, 3:10-13

Remember God

Remember that I am part theologian. My mind thinks that way. I like texts, expository study and preaching, but within those smaller texts, I seek themes, ideas, concepts. Here is a way to grasp what we should remember based on 2 Peter: we must remember God.

Why? Summarized briefly -- because we can be like him. How we see God determines all of life. The thoughts in this lesson are all taken from chapter 1 and what Peter says about God.

I. The Powerful God

1:3,16. Omnipotent. God is able, is anything too hard for God (Gen. 18:14; Num. 11:23). With God, all things are possible (Rich Young Ruler). I can do all things....

But do not expect God to do contradictory things.

II. The Generous God

1:3. This relates to promises. God is generous, Jas. 1:17. 2 Cor. 8:; 9:15. He has given us all things. 2 Tim. 3:16-17.

III. The Revealing God; The Speaking God

1:3, 16, 19-21. The real question of life is this: is it reasonable to believe (1) that there is a God and (2) that he has revealed himself. The resounding answer of Scripture is: John 1:1-14. This is NT, but in reality Isaiah gives us more of God than all of the OT, and then NT shows the emotion of God. A God who comes loving, dying, saving. A God of communication with despite his holiness and our unholiness.

IV. The Knowing God

1:3,16; 1:5; 2:20; 3:18. John 6:44-45, can be best explained by Jer. 31:31-34. Shows why in Acts 19 some were baptized again. Our God is a God of knowledge.

V. The Calling God

1:3,10. God calls us out of individualism into relationship, out of darkness into light, out of singleness into community. For a purpose.

VI. The Glorious God

1:3,16-17. Compared these to Isa. 57:15; 6:1-8.

VII. The Excellent God

1:3,5,17. Excellence is a characteristic of God, and of God's people. Eccl. 9:10.

VIII. The Promising God

1:4; 3:9,13. These are precious promises. God omnipotent can surely perform his word, will, and way.

IX. The Delivering God

1:4; 2:4-9; 3:9; 2:20. The entirety of chapter is both warning and comfort, because we serve a delivering God.

X. The Sharing God

1:4, koinonia, sharing his nature, power, person.

2 PETER (#5)

TEACHING (PRACTICAL ECCLESIOLOGY)

Does It Matter What We Teach? (2 Peter 2)

Introduction

Some in the church today suggest that it doesn't matter what we teach, one teaching is as good another, as long as one is sincere. That cannot be right--contradictory information cannot be accepted as truth. Some things are impossible: 2+2 cannot equal 4 and 5 at the same time. The theorem, the shortest distance between two points is a straight line, is true in plane geometry and false in solid geometry, but that is not a contradiction.

Peter's says that there is an authentic word from God--focused in Jesus, verified by eyewitnesses, a majestic and God-honoring word, given according to God's promise, the dawning of a new day, not of human origin although humans were involved, the word of God given by God even as in past times by the Holy Spirit. God's word is authentic, valid, must be heard. Against this background, Peter warns of false teachers (prophets).

The meaning of the Old Testament word *nabi*, and New Testament word, prophet, is to carry forward or carry along. This thought is found in 2 Pet. 1:19-21. Prophets were forth-tellers, for-tellers, and fore-tellers.

In the New Testament we are told to distinguish false prophets, Mt 7:15; 1 Jn 4:1ff. Peter is concerned about how to identify false prophets and about their influence upon God's people.

Peter's instructions suggest that we cannot overemphasize the importance of correct teaching (sound or healthy) that bases lives on the foundation of truth. Objective truth exists, true whether it is recognized or not (Jn. 8:32; 17:17; 2 Tim. 1:13; 1 Tim. 4:16; Tit. 2:1). Certainly we want to teach right, believe right, live right.

How do we know what is true? God's word is true, but it requires diligent study to identify departures from truth (1 Tim. 4:11-16; 2 Pet. 1:19-21). This study continues the emphasis on knowledge in Peter.

We must be perpetually on guard. The study of 2 Peter 2 continues Chap. 1.

How can I distinguish the false from the true? (1) By knowing the Bible, the things being taught; (2) by knowing the teacher, the distinguishing characteristics of false teachers.

DESCRIPTIONS OF THE FALSE TEACHERS

The descriptions of these false teachers are revealing.

A. Description of their activity, v. 1

- Damnable--privately bringing heresies and division
- Denial of the Lord, perhaps in the same vein as those today who deny Jesus Christ as the Son of God
- Destruction of such is swift and sure

B. Description of their methods

- Subtle. Clever, not openly hostile. Introducing heresies, divisions, choices, options, opinions. In this they follow Satan, as in Gen. 3:1.
- Seditious, denying the sovereign Lord. They sow seeds of rebellion.
- Sensual, v. 2, licentiousness. Not all false teachers are sensual in the obvious sense, but many are. Underlying mindset is physical not spiritual; thus, the truth is blasphemed, v. 10a, 14a.
- Slick. Exploit because of greed, v. 3, 14b. In vv. 15-16 Peter cites an OT example from Num. 22-31.
- Self-determining, self-governing. They despise authority, v. 10b. May have been similar to those described in Rom. 6:1-2.
- Self-willed, v. 10b. To please self, they don't care about others.
- Slandorous, vs. 10b. Daring, brazen, for these are bold to blaspheme where even angels fear to tread, in a sense similar to Jude 9.
- Simple, in sense of ignorance, v. 12. When pressed, they cannot explain and teach these things.
- Superficial, vv. 17-18. Valueless.
- Sly, dishonest, v. 18b. Implied in concept of false teachers, secret, v. 1, exploit, v. 3.
- Seductive, v. 14.
- Straying, v. 15.

Notice: it does matter what we teach.

-1- DESTRUCTION

What we teach matters because God will destroy false teachers and false teachings, 1-5

Judgment is certain, we can see the certainty of their judgment, 2:1-10, 13.

Three concepts are connected: divisive, denying, destruction
The result of their activity is destruction, vv. 2-3

-2- DISTRESS

What we teach matters because false teachings bring distress to truly righteous people, 5-8

- A. When truth is blasphemed, compare Gen. 1-11
- B. When others follow their example, which is why we are to oppose them
- C. When covetousness is encouraged
- D. When people are taken advantage of
- E. Because judgment is sure

-3- BE DISTINCT

What we teach matters because God distinguishes the true from the false, 9.

In vv. 4-9, we can see the punishment or judgment of their activity, vv. 4-9

- A. God judges.... angels...the ungodly of the old world...Sodom and Gomorrah...the unjust
- B. But God delivers.... Noah...Lot...the godly and righteous

Peter's message is one of hope because God knows how to divide the righteous from the unrighteous. The paragraph (vv. 4-9) concludes with the message: be distinct from false teachers.

- The angels, v. 4, were unrighteous and God punished
- The ancient world, v. 5, was unrighteous, and God punished
- Noah, v. 5, was righteous, protected
- Sodom & Gomorrah, v. 6, unrighteous, punished
- Lot, v. 7, righteous, protected
- Conclusion: v. 9.

-4- DANGER

The DANGER of the false teachers. We must follow true teaching. Doctrine is reflected by activity or conduct, vv. 10-16. They even dare to sin; they are bold and malicious, 2:10ff

Doctrine leads to conduct, it is equally as possible to hear, believe, and obey a lie as it is to hear, believe, and obey the truth. Notice again the descriptive phrases just from this section.

- Sensual, licentious, lustful, 10
- Self-willed, self-determining, self-governing, 10
- Slandorous, 10
- Simple, in sense of ignorance, 12
- Slick, 15-16
- Sinful, 14
- Superficial, 17-18
- Sly, dishonest, 18
- Seductive, 14
- Straying, 15
- Seditious, denying sovereign Lord, 1

-5- DESTINY

Consider the DESTINY of the false teachers, and those who follow them, vv. 19-22. God will deal with false teachers, vv. 1,3,4-9, 13, 19ff.

When we consider their influence, we can see some of the danger, 18-22

- A. Allurement, 18. Why oppose such? Because they lead others astray.
- B. Their false promises which lead to bondage, 19.
- C. The result is re-entanglement in the world, 20-22

Conclusion

Have no fellowship, Eph. 5:11, with false teaching
Be a student of God's Word, teach what is right
Take heed lest ye fall, be constantly on guard

2 PETER (#6) THE COMING DAY OF THE LORD (ESCHATOLOGY)

There's a Great Day Coming! (2 Pet. 3:7-11)

Introduction

Throughout 2 Peter, throughout the Bible, we have repeated promises of the coming of Jesus. The OT and NT are filled with such promises--1845 OT references, 17 OT books give prominence to this theme, 318 NT references, 1/30 of all NT verses. 23 of the 27 NT books focus on this great truth in one way or another.

God has been telling us of the second coming of Jesus for at least 2000 years, and even longer through the OT prophets. Jesus Christ told us of his coming before he left this earth.

Peter makes clear...

- There is a day appointed when earth will be destroyed by fire (there are two different words for "destroy" used in 2 Peter 3).
- That day will be a day of judgment.
- That day will be a day of destruction for the ungodly.

Many choose to deliberately ignore this great truth, but it is to be remembered, an event to avoid. A destiny to anticipate. In this chapter we read about (1) Denial, 3-5; (2) Destruction, 5-7; (3) Delay, 8-9; (4) Destiny, 10-12; and (5) Diligence, 11-18. We will look at these 5 themes under two headings that point toward a conclusion.

I. Jesus is coming.

A. Some **deny** His coming, 1-5

- The commands and words of the Bible are sure
- Scoffers will come, consistent with prophecies of the past
- These scoffers are worldly, they are the essence of denying Christ.
- These are willfully ignorant.

B. The Bible affirms his coming.

- Christ will come again, v. 4
- God demonstrates his presence on earth even today, 4b
- Remain in hope, do not be deceived into thinking that because he has not come that he will not come.
- There is much confusion in the world today because the Bible uses the concept of Jesus' coming in various ways. Jesus came as a human being. Jesus is said to come in judgment, as to the churches of Revelation. But the great truth is that Jesus is coming again.

II. A Day of Judgment is coming.

A day of judgment is certain (Eccl. 12:13,14; Heb. 9:27; Acts 10:42; 17:31). It will be a great day for those who are prepared. It will be a day of destruction for those who are not prepared.

A. **Destruction** is sure, 5-7

- The flood
- The promise of fire.
- Certain judgment against ungodliness.
- Earth is destined for destruction, 3:7a
- Since God exists, there is judgment and eternity, 3:7b

B. God's **delay** is evidence of his mercy, 8-9

- Vs. 8 is often misunderstood, with regard to time references.
- The promises are still certain.
- God desires salvation for all, cf. Also v. 15.

C. That dreadful day of **destiny** is sure, 10-12

- But it will yet be unexpected
- The destruction of the earth
- Dissolved with fervent heat

A DESCRIPTION OF THAT DAY

When that day comes, we will be part of the greatest crowd ever assembled.

All must appear, 2 Cor. 5:10.

All who have ever lived.

You and your family will be there.

When that day comes, the greatest, fairest, best judge will preside.

The Lord is the righteous judge, 2 Tim. 4:8

There may not be justice in our court system, but in that day, all will be fair.

All will stand on their own record, books opened.

All will receive justice, not mercy.

When that day comes, the Bible will matter.

The books were opened and another book, Rev. 20:12

The words of Jesus, Jn 12:48

The Bible will be unchanged, Mt. 24:35.

When that day comes, there will be both rejoicing and dread.

There will be separation.

The importance of following Jesus will be clear.

Only Jesus can cover our record with his blood.

Only Jesus can provide the basis for mercy, not justice.

Today every person can choose to stand with the Lord and be saved.

When that day comes, the most important verdict of any person's life will be rendered.

When that day comes, the destiny will be final, eternal, forever.

Everlasting punishment, eternal life, Mt. 25:46

Come ye blessed, depart from me

The verdict will announce the eternal destiny of all who have ever lived.

Give diligence therefore, 11-18

A. Verse 11, holiness, godliness, become a certain kind of person

B. Verse 13, righteousness

C. Verse 14, peace, spotless, blameless

D. Verses 15-18, grace and knowledge: wisdom (15), requires effort (16), caution (17), we can still fall (18).

E. I want to be with Christ and all the redeemed of the earth. I want to meet those led to Christ here. I want you to go with me. I want to see you there. Will you give diligence?