

How to Live Godly When the godless Bear Rule Habakkuk and 2 Peter

In light of the horrific last days in which we find ourselves, a look back in time to the period of the Judges is very telling, “every man did that which was right in his own eyes” (Judges 21:25). It’s true of the times but it is also true of us who have not matured in Christ. Peter is a prototype of the transformation that can happen in an unlikely soul through a relationship with Jesus Christ. Through the life and words of Peter we learn who we are, what Christ will make of us, and how to cope with our adversaries in an increasingly hostile environment.

His Past Path

- Peter first began with the attitude, “What can I get for what I give?” (Matt. 19:27)
 - He came to the point of utter dependence on Jesus to walk by faith. “Lord, save me.” (Matt. 14:26-31)
 - He decided to follow Jesus no matter the cost. “to whom shall we go...Thou art the Christ” (Jn. 6:66-69)
 - Yet at the most difficult moment, He failed Christ. His spirit was willing but his flesh was weak (Matt. 26:25)
1. Salvation knowledge of Jesus establishes a relationship with Him. 2 Peter 1:2-4
 - a. It is by grace we are saved.
 - b. We now have peace with God.
 2. Sanctification knowledge of Jesus is a process whereby grace and peace increase. (1:2)
 - a. By yielding to His control as Lord
 - b. By walking in the light (1 Jn.1:9)
 - c. By prayer (Phil. 4:6,7) gives “the peace of God”
 5. The conformity to Jesus in our lives will become resemblance. (Romans 8:29).
 - a. In godliness - Christ shining through us
 - b. In glory - Our lives bringing glory to Him
 - c. In virtue – spiritual strength of holiness
 6. An increasing intimate knowledge of Jesus through the promises of His Word gives us divine power to escape the corruption of our own nature and makes us partakers of His divine nature (1:3,4).

The Principles - Indicators of intentionally growing in grace

2 Peter 1:5-7 “giving all diligence,

- add to your faith **virtue**
- and to virtue **knowledge**
- and to knowledge **temperance**
- and to temperance **patience**
- and to patience **godliness**
- and to godliness **brotherly kindness**

- and to brotherly kindness **charity**”

2Peter 1:8-14 “For if **these things be in you, and abound**, they make *you that ye shall* neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that **lacketh these things** is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye **do these things**, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Wherefore I will not be negligent to **put you always in remembrance** of these things, though ye know *them*, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by **putting you in remembrance**; Knowing that shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. “

Practice - “these things” 1:8,9,10,15

- These things can be “forgotten” “always in remembrance” of these things
- These things can be “neglected – “negligence,”
- These things need to “be in you, and abound”
- These things can be lacking “lacketh these things”

What things prevent us from being “barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Product - These things in you will

- make you fruitful.
- make you thankful.
- keep you from falling.
- keep you established.
- keep you going long after I’m gone.

Persistence - We must intentionally focus by remembering. “remembrance” 1:12,13,15;3:1

- Remember whose servant you are. “our Savior Jesus Christ”
- Remember that you have not only been saved but also sent. “apostle” – sent one
- Remember who you are partners with “them that have obtained like precious faith”
- Remember what you are possessors of “the righteousness of God”
- Remember that the characteristics of Jesus come from spending time with Him in the Word. (1:4-9)
- Remember that the word that we know will establish us. (1:10-12)
- Remember that this life is short and only what is done for Christ will last. (1:13,14)
- Remember that Jesus could come for us at any time. (1:15,16), (Matt. 24:44-51)

The Problem of False Prophets

Pulling the wool off of our eyes: False Teachers

2

Peter 2 Summary by Dr. A.J. Barnes

The general subject of this chapter is:

- That it might be expected that there would be false teachers among Christians, as there were false prophets in ancient times;
- That they would introduce destructive errors, leading many astray; and,
- That they would be certainly punished.

I. Some of the doctrines which they would hold.

(a) They would deny the Lord that bought them, 2Pe_2:1.

(b) They would be influenced by covetousness, and their object in their attempting to seduce others from the faith, and to induce them to become followers of themselves, would be to make money, 2Pe_2:3.

(c) They would be corrupt, beastly, and licentious in their conduct; and it would be one design of their teaching to show that the indulgence of gross passions was not inconsistent with religion; 2Pe_2:10, "that walk after the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness;" 2Pe_2:12, "as natural brute beasts;" "shall perish in their own corruption;" 2Pe_2:14, "having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin;" 2Pe_2:22, "the dog has returned to his own vomit again."

(d) They would be arrogant, and self-willed; 2Pe_2:10, "and despise government; presumptuous are they and self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities;" 2Pe_2:18, "they speak great swelling words of vanity."

(e) They were persons who had formerly lived corrupt lives, but who had become professing Christians. This is implied in 2Pe_2:20-22. They are spoken of as having "escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ;" as "having known the ways of righteousness," but as having turned again to their former corrupt practices and lusts; "it has happened to them according to the true proverb," etc. There were various classes of persons in primitive times, coming under the general appellation of the term "Gnostic," to whom this description would apply, and it is probable they who had begun to broach their doctrines in the times of the apostles.

II. These false teachers would obtain followers and their teachings would likely allure many. This is intimated more than once in the chapter: 2Peter 2:2, "and many shall follow their pernicious ways;" 2Peter 2:3, "and through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you;" 2Peter 2:14, "beguiling unstable souls." Compare 2Pet. 2:18.

III. They would certainly be punished. A large part of the chapter is showing from the examples of others who had erred in a similar manner, that they could not escape destruction.

Facts and illustrations:

(a) The case of the angels that sinned and were cast down to hell (2Pet. 2:4). If God brought such dreadful punishment on those who were once before his throne, wicked men could have no hope of escape.

(b) The case of the wicked in the time of Noah, who were cut off by the flood (2Pet. 2:5).

(c) The case of Sodom and Gomorrah (2Pet. 2:6).

(d) The “character” of the persons referred to was such that they could have no hope of escape.

- (1) They were corrupt, sensual, presumptuous, self-willed and were even worse than the rebel angels had been - men that seemed to be made to be taken and destroyed (2Pet. 2:10-12).
- (2) They were spots and blemishes, sensual and adulterers, emulating the example of Balaam, who was rebuked by even a dumb ass for his iniquity (2Pet. 2:13-16).
- (3) They allured others to sin under the specious promise of liberty, while they were themselves the slaves of debased appetites, and gross and sensual passions (2Pet. 2:17-19).

2 Peter 3

The principal design of this chapter is to demonstrate, in opposition to the objections of scoffers, that the Lord Jesus will return again to this world; that the world will be destroyed by fire, and that there will be a new heaven and a new earth; and to show what effect this should have on the minds of Christians.”

by Dr. A.J. Barnes

2Peter 3:

3 “Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, 4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation. 5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: 6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: 7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. 8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. 10 **But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.** 11 *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, 12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? 13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

Peter closes his last will and testament with a reference to Joel that he made in his first sermon at Pentecost. Acts 2:19 “And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: 20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable **day of the Lord** come.” The Bookends of his preaching ministry is the coming of the Lord. At Pentecost He emphasized repentance and faith for salvation. In 1 Peter he emphasized holiness in the midst of worldliness and even in suffering. In 2 Peter he emphasizes faithfulness in the midst of fiery trials in light of “the appearing of Jesus Christ.” He concludes with the key to our steadfastness as the Lord carries His return. 2 Pet. 3:17 “Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. 18 But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and for ever. Amen.”