

Great Commission



Baptist Church

Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher



Encouragement to Stand in the Faith Adult Sunday School Curriculum

August/September 2016



Lesson I

Date: August 7, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 2:6-12

Lesson Outline

A. The Destination in the Description

(2Peter 2 vs 6-9)

B. The Defilement in the Description

(2Peter 2 vs. 10a)

C. The Disrespect in the Description

(2Peter 2 vs. 10b-11)

D. The Disgracefulness in the Description

(2Peter 2 vs. 12)

Great Commission Baptist Church
Adult Sunday School Lesson
Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher

The Description of False Prophets Part 1

Prophecy Prevents Deception "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many" (Matthew 24:4, 5). Jesus' warning tells us that another purpose for prophecy is to protect us from deception. In Matthew 24, Christ speaks about the signs of His coming and the end of the world in an effort to keep us from following those who contradict His Word and His law in the last days. Just a few verses later, He adds, "Many false prophets will rise and deceive."

This prophecy has certainly come true: Many have come claiming to be Christ or say they come in His name while using that platform to deceive and exploit. Sadly, this is one reason that so many are suspicious, unbelieving, or jaded about prophecy. Yet Jesus said it would happen like this exactly, so those who decry Bible prophecy don't really have an excuse if they're ultimately deceived by the devil.

"Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Jesus predicts that we will all face great deceptions in the end, such as attempts to impersonate His coming. He doesn't want us to be deceived, following smooth-talking preachers or lying spirits.

It is important to note that Jesus is saying that we need to watch out for false prophets because there will also be genuine prophets have already fulfilled their purpose. Otherwise, Jesus would have simply warned us to beware of any prophet.¹

1. When was the last time you heard someone make a prediction and say God told them?

¹Ferguson, David. *The Great Commandment Principle*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1998.



Lesson I
Date: August 7, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 2 Peter 2: 6 - 12

Lesson Aim:
 Students will see how false prophets/teachers destroy with their deceit, their lust, and their greed; therefore, it is imperative that we be on guard each and every day to recognize this danger to growing Christians.³

¹⁻²Commentary compiled by Rev. Terrence Howard, TH.M.
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³Emma Stevens

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Adult Sunday School Lesson

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2 Peter 2:6-7 (KJV)

⁶ And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned *them* with an overthrow, making *them* an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; ⁷ And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

2 Peter 2:6-7 (NIV)

⁶ if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; ⁷ and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men

The Description of False Prophets Part I

A. The Destination in the Description

(Verse 6) An example of God's certain punishment of evil is the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. (Gen. 18-19) describes the sinfulness of these cities and Abraham's effort to keep them from being destroyed. When not even ten righteous people could be found in the cities, God destroyed them by burning them to heaps of ashes and swept them off the face of the earth (Gen. 19:24-25). The cities do not even exist today. Archaeologists believe they may have been buried by the waters of the Dead Sea. Peter explained that the horror of these cities' ending is an example of what will happen to ungodly people. Great will be the suffering of the ungodly; their ending will result in punishment, gloom, and banishment from the presence of God. In our day, God's punishment on the unrighteous seems less of a preaching and teaching priority. Do we, like the false teachers, think we have outgrown this clear doctrine of Scripture? We have a lot of emphasis on tolerance of others and the self-help benefits of the Bible, but we must not dilute God's clear words of warning. To turn away from God is to turn to ruin. From such ruin, there will be no escape. Don't neglect teaching about God's judgment.¹

(Verse 7) Just as Noah had been protected from the Flood that destroyed the earth, so Lot, Abraham's nephew, had been rescued from Sodom and Gomorrah's destruction. Lot had chosen to settle near Sodom but was distressed by the wickedness he saw and heard day after day. Lot lived in Sodom and apparently was a man of some importance there, for when the angels went to take Lot from the city, they found him sitting in the gateway of the city.²



Lesson I
Date: August 7, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 2 Peter 2: 6 - 12

Temptation: A testing; Generally understood as the enticement of a person to commit sin by offering some seeming advantage. The sources of temptation are Satan, the world, and the flesh. We are exposed to them in every state, in every place, and in every time. The nearest approach to a definition of the process of temptation from within is given us by James, "But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust" (James 1:14).³

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³ New Unger's Bible Dictionary

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2 Peter 2:8-9 (KJV)

⁸ (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed *his* righteous soul from day to day with *their* unlawful deeds;)⁹ The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:

2 Peter 2:8-9 (NIV)

⁸ (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)--⁹ if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.

The Description of False Prophets Part I

A. The Destination in the Description

(*Verse 8*) Peter described Lot as a righteous man who was horrified by the evil in the city. Angel visitors rescued Lot and his family by taking them away from the city before it was destroyed. The Genesis account does not make Lot appear to have been very "righteous" at all. But for all his flaws, Lot stood out as a righteous man in an extremely evil society. When God chose to bring swift and complete judgment on the evil of these cities, he also graciously saved his own. Just as God rescued Lot from Sodom, so he is able to rescue us from the temptations and trials we face in a wicked world. Lot was not sinless, but he put his trust in God and was spared when Sodom was destroyed. God will punish those who cause the temptations and trials, so we need never worry about justice being done (Prov. 25:26)¹

(*Verse 9*) This verse begins with, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment". The thought here is not that God is delivering one from the solicitation to do evil but rather God knows how to deliver one from the troublous circumstances which have tried the soul of man such as false teachers' vexation. God will deliver them from evil men by judging the unjust. The false prophets and persecutors will indeed be judged by God though at the present time they seem to be doing well. Lot was not rescued because of any merit on his part. He was rescued because he was a believer and because his Uncle Abraham had prayed for him. Abraham outside of Sodom had more influence than Lot inside the city. Lot even lost his testimony to his own family, his wife disobeyed God and was killed (Job 21:30).²



Lesson I
Date: August 7, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 2 Peter 2: 6 - 12

Angels: By the word "angels" (i.e. "messengers" of God) we ordinarily understand a race of spiritual beings of a nature exalted far above that of man, although infinitely removed from that of God—whose office is "to do him service in heaven, and by his appointment to succor and defend men on earth."³

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³ Smith's Bible Dictionary: Comprising Antiquities, Biography, Geography, Natural History, Archaeology and Literature.

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2 Peter 2:10-11 (KJV)

¹⁰ But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous *are they*, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. ¹¹ Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord.

2 Peter 2:10-11 (NIV)

¹⁰ This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature and despise authority. Bold and arrogant, these men are not afraid to slander celestial beings; ¹¹ yet even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not bring slanderous accusations against such beings in the presence of the Lord.

The Description of False Prophets Part I

B. The Defilement in the Description

(Verse 10a) The description of the false teachers is like describing much of our society, for they have the same character. This verse says, "Walk after the flesh". The appetites of the flesh govern their walk. This leads to a low life that populates rescue missions. Then the verse says, "Lust of uncleanness". This is a desire and appetite for the filthy. One can pervert their appetite to desire gross evil. This is seen in homosexuality. We as believers should know the truth and the truth is, they were not born that way, as most try to proclaim. God does not make a mistake, if you were born a man, you are a man and if you were born a female, you are a female and his command for us to procreate the world can only be done by a male and a female being married as God's plan and having children.¹

C. The Disrespect in the Description

(Verse 10b – 11) This is evil courage. It is related to "presumptuous" which is daring and bold to do evil. It is an attitude that is not afraid to speak evil of God. The meaning of "speak evil" is "blaspheme"—to speak in a profane, slanderous, abusive way. False teachers were doing things even angels would not do, namely, slander such beings. One might expect stronger and more powerful beings (good angels) to criticize less powerful beings (fallen angels), but that is simply not allowed in the presence of the Lord (Jude 8-9). Yet so great was the pride of these slanderers that it knew no bounds in their attack on all who disagreed with their teachings. Even so, they were totally ignorant of the very things they blasphemed.²



Lesson I
Date: August 7, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 2 Peter 2: 6 - 12

Question:

1. What happens when false prophets/teachers get busted?

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²Emma Stevens

Question by Emma Stevens

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2 Peter 2:12 (KJV)

¹² But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

2 Peter 2:12 (NIV)

¹² But these men blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like brute beasts, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like beasts they too will perish.

The Description of False Prophets Part I

D. The Disgracefulness in the Description

(Verse 12) The false teachers arrogantly rebelled against God and spoke as though Satan's influence meant nothing, laughing at powers they knew little about. All their supposed knowledge was worthless; they really understood nothing. Without mincing words, Peter further described these false teachers as unthinking animals, creatures of instinct. Like beasts, the false teachers would be destroyed.¹

Summary: One of the central messages of 2 Peter is to recognize the threat from false prophets/teachers. Our society has become so tolerant of all kinds of teachings. We are not surprised to wake up and hear just about anything, regarding any given thing. Unfortunately this type of tolerance - 'an anything-goes attitude', moves into the church on the wheels of false prophets/teachers. Churches and people's lives are destroyed because of false prophets. Pastors and leaders have departed from the teaching of the sincere Word of God in order to declare their own unbelief and flawed religious theories - dealing in phony doctrine. Christians must be on guard: guarding our ears, guarding our mind, and guarding our heart, because false prophets/teachers can bring well-meaning believers and active kingdom-focused churches down with them. Peter encourages us today to take a strong position against false prophets/teachers; not to ignore them. It is too important to let pass, because they bring ridicule down on the church and worse, on the name of Christ. Their personal advancement is a sin that God does not take lightly, and neither should we.²



Lesson II

Date: August 14, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 2:13-17

Lesson Outline

A. The Disgrace in the Description

(2Peter 2 vs 13-14)

B. The Doom in the Description

(2Peter 2 vs. 15-17)

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The Description of False Prophets Part 2

Prophecy Warns the Lost. When Moses went before Pharaoh, God sent a series of frightening plagues to encourage the devilish ruler to act. However, these plagues were not meant to destroy; rather, they were sent to first save the Jews from captivity, but also to help the Egyptians avoid utter destruction.

"And the LORD spake unto Moses, Go unto Pharaoh, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me. And if thou refuse to let them go, behold, I will smite all thy borders with frogs" (Exodus 8:1, 2). Why was it necessary for Moses to warn Pharaoh in advance that a plague of frogs was coming? If Moses had not said anything and a plague of frogs suddenly came swarming out of the great river, Pharaoh's counselors could have said, "This is just a natural occurrence." If Moses had gone after the plagues and said, "See all these frogs? That's because you won't let my people go!" Well, anybody can do that.

A lot of people have weighed in on 9/11, Katrina, and the Indonesian tsunami after the fact. How much more compelling would their testimony be to others had they spoken prior to the events? People would have really sat up to take notice. Moses gave these prophetic warnings to save the lost and to warn the rebellious, showing that God is really in control.¹

1. Do you remember a time in history that someone mislead people in the name of God?

¹Ferguson, David. *The Great Commandment Principle*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1998.



Lesson II

Date: August 14, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 2: 13 - 17

Lesson Aim:

Students will see how false prophets/teachers destroy with their deceit, their lust, and their greed; therefore, it is imperative that we be on guard each and every day to recognize this danger to growing Christians.³

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2 Peter 2:13-14 (KJV)

¹³ And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, *as* they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; ¹⁴ Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:

2 Peter 2:13-14 (NIV)

¹³ They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their pleasures while they feast with you. ¹⁴ With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed--an accursed brood!

The Description of False Prophets Part II

A. The Disgrace in the Description

(Verse 13) This word "disgrace" mean to shame, dishonor or discredit. There is a tragic "reward" or (wage) for "unrighteousness" or wrongdoing, and the false teachers will "receive" it, this word "receive" means to obtain. One charge against them is that they "riot in the daytime." Daylight hours are for productive activity, not revelry; as 1 Thessalonians 5:7 suggests, "They that be drunken are drunken in the night." The false teachers use the day to "riot", this word "riot" mean to revel, live in luxury. This is their "pleasure" this word "pleasure mean sensual delight, lust. These teachers had been so obvious in their sinfulness that it was shameful that any of the believers should follow them. While the false teachers tried to pass themselves off as superior teachers with great knowledge, they indulged in evil pleasures in broad daylight. Such acts would be done under cover of darkness. These men were so arrogant, however, that they did not even attempt to cover up their behavior, making them no longer fit to be with the Christians.¹

Peter called them "spots", this word spots mean spoil, stain, disfigure) and "blemishes", which mean blot, fault, flaw, that bring disgrace on the Church. "Sporting themselves" mean ,to revel, to live in luxury. "Deceivings", in this context mean that of a love feast, which would agree with Jude 12.²



Lesson II

Date: August 14, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 2: 13 - 17

Covetousness (Heb. *hamad*, to “desire”; *besa* ‘, “dishonest gain”; Gk. *pleoneksia*, “the wish to have more”). An inordinate desire for what one has not; in NASB this word is translated “greed”; its basis lies in discontentment with what one has. It has an element of lawlessness and is sinful because it is contrary to the command “Being content with what you have” (Heb. 13:5), because it leads to trust in “the uncertainty of riches,” to love of the world, to forgetfulness of God, and is idolatry (Col. 3:5), setting up wealth instead of God.³

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2 Peter 2:14-15 (KJV)

¹⁴ Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:¹⁵ Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son of Bosor*, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

2 Peter 2:14-15 (NIV)

¹⁴ With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed--an accursed brood!¹⁵ They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness.

The Description of False Prophets Part II

A. The Disgrace in the Description

(Verse 13) The feast may refer to part of the celebration of the Lord’s Supper. In one of the greatest of hypocritical acts, they attended the sacred feasts designed to promote love and unity among believers, while at the same time they reveled in deceitfulness. These men were guilty of more than false teaching and promoting evil pleasures; they were guilty of leading others away from the truth. Destruction would be their reward.¹

(Verse 14) The Greek word translated insatiable literally means "unable to stop." 2nd Peter applies this description to the eyes of false teachers. Indulgence does not satisfy them. Adulterous looking perpetually engages them. Every woman is a potential adulteress to them. Whenever they see women, they have licentious thoughts. Their eyes are in this sense full of adultery (Job 24:15; Matt 5:28-29). The word “beguile” carries the idea of the sense of catching with bait. The "bait" is licentious passions of the flesh. The false teachers encourage men to believe they are religious when in fact they are "lured and enticed by... desire" (Jas 1:14). They probably assumed that true spirituality makes bodily indulgence of no moral significance. They entice unstable souls. Perhaps they misuse passages of Scripture to condone sin. They have hearts trained in covetous practices. They are not rank amateurs, but are schooled in the art of seduction. While the word covetous may cover any kind of excessive craving, the context here seems to point primarily to sexual greed. It is not that he is cursing them; he is simply foreseeing that they will experience the curse of God in all its fury.²



Lesson II

Date: August 14, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 2: 13 - 17

Balaam: A heathen diviner who lived at Pethor, which is said, in Deut. 23:4, to have been a city of Mesopotamia. Although doubtless belonging to the Midianites (Num. 31:8), he possessed some knowledge of the true God and acknowledged that his superior powers as poet and prophet were derived from God and were His gift. His fame was great, and he became conceited and covetous.³

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2 Peter 2:15-16 (KJV)

¹⁵ Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son* of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

¹⁶ But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet.

2 Peter 2:15-16 (NIV)

¹⁵ They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness.

¹⁶ But he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey--a beast without speech--who spoke with a man's voice and restrained the prophet's madness.

The Description of False Prophets Part II

C. The Doom in the Description

(Verse 15) Balaam has become known in history as a man who sought to make personal gain at the expense of his ministry (see Num. 22-24). He is a perfect example of what Peter was dealing with. Balaam sought to manipulate truth so as not to deny it, but to use it for his own advantage. He was not all bad, and much of his message was true; however, he finally lost out completely. He became numbered with the enemies who, according to his own prophecy, were marked for destruction, and his sad end is told in Num. 31:8). Peter said the false teachers had abandoned the right road. They had gone astray by following in the footsteps of Balaam, the prophet who commercialized his gift. He sought the reward offered by Balak, "the wages of unrighteousness." He loved earthly things more than heavenly things. "Loved" is from *agapaō*, an intense kind of love, the word used in 2 Tim. 4:10) "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." The final wages of sin is death, though the present pay may seem desirable.¹

(Verse 16) Balaam's "iniquity" which mean transgression, was exposed when his donkey spoke with a human voice. Actually the ass was "dumb" (voiceless), and yet it talked to Balaam and restrained him from doing something that was "madness" (foolhardy). Balaam had been hired by Balak, king of Moab, to try to turn God against the Israelites so they would not be able to defeat Moab's army. He knew that as long as God was helping the Israelites, his soldiers could not stand against them. So Balaam set out to curse Israel. He succeeded in luring men of Israel to commit whoredom.²



Lesson II

Date: August 14, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 2: 13 - 17

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2 Peter 2:17 (KJV)

¹⁷ These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.

2 Peter 2:17 (NIV)

¹⁷ These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them.

The Description of False Prophets Part II

B. The Doom in the Description

(*Verse 17*) Peter said the false teachers made an empty profession of faith. He compared them to "wells" (fountain, spring) without water and to clouds that, instead of giving rain, are "carried" away (driven) by a "tempest" (squall, hurricane; as in Mark 4:37, the sudden "storm of wind" on the Sea of Galilee that threatened Christ and His disciples). What a disappointment to a thirsty traveler in the desert when he sees a patch of green ahead, only to find when he reaches it that the spring has dried up!¹

Summary: Peter's letter reminds us today, what is so destructive about the characteristics of false prophets/teachers is families and church families get ruined. Of course ministries are destroyed, but most of all a '*black mark*' on the message of the Gospel can occur. False prophets are sneaky and manipulative who deal in phony doctrine - they can promise much and deliver nothing. Therefore, we must be on guard and not easily drawn away from following the sincere Word of God.²

Questions:

1. Can you recognize the works of false prophets/teachers in our world today?
2. Do you believe freedom is doing anything you want?



Lesson III

Date: August 21, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 2:18-22

Lesson Outline

A. The Deceit in the Description
(2Peter 2 vs 18-19)

B. The Defection in the Description
(2Peter 2 vs. 20-22)

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The Description of False Prophets Part 3

The Principal Principle. The ultimate message of prophecy is redemptive. The reason that God tells you the future is not so you will know when to take your money out of the bank or so you can know when you're supposed to run for the hills and stock up on food.

He tells you all this more than just to let you know when Christ will come the first time or the second time - or what happens during the millennium. He tells you so you will know He is God and to help you allow Him to come into your heart. And that's true whether you are familiar with the many secrets of Revelation or whether you are just beginning to read the Bible. The joy and peace you feel when you know that God has a plan for you is one of the most faith-building experiences you can have.

Yes, He has numbered every star in the universe and knows what's going to happen in the ceaseless ages to come. Yet despite this infinite knowledge of God, He has a hope and a plan just for you.

God is in charge, and He's proven it with prophecy. He can be trusted, because His Word has never and will never fail. "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" (Luke 21:33). You can bank your life on Him and His Word, especially as you go out to tell others of His wondrous power.¹

1. What have you learned about prophecy and explain?

¹Ferguson, David. *The Great Commandment Principle*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1998.



Lesson III

Date: August 21, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 2: 18 - 22

Lesson Aim:

Students will see how false prophets/teachers destroy with their deceit, their lust, and their greed; therefore, it is imperative that we be on guard each and every day to recognize this danger to growing Christians.³

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2 Peter 2:18-19 (KJV)

¹⁸ For when they speak great swelling *words* of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much* wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

¹⁹ While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

2 Peter 2:18-19 (NIV)

¹⁸ For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error. ¹⁹They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity--for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.

The Description of False Prophets Part III

A. The Deceit in the Description

(Verse 18) This word “deceit” means, a dishonest practice or something done to mislead. New converts are special targets of false teachers. They "allure" (beguile, entrap, entice) those who are just escaping from the ranks of unbelievers who live in error. The false teachers talk in grandiose terms to do this. They are extravagant in their verbosity, and they sway the people with their "great swelling words", but Peter says their words are "vanity" (empty, profitless, insincere). They appeal through carnal desires and through much "wantonness" (lewdness, unrestrained immorality). By encouraging the new converts to compromise, they draw them back into the very lifestyle from which they recently fled. The false teachers were able to draw new Christians away from the gospel truth.¹

Jude's description of the false teachers is even more devastating than Peter's. He said: "These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage" (Jude 16). Jude further stated: "Clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots" (Jude 12). Jude called them "ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 4). He stated: "These filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities" (Jude 8).²



Lesson III

Date: August 21, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 2: 18 - 22

Corruption: The rendering of several Heb. and Gk. words, signifying (1) the decay of the body (Job 17:14); (2) the blemishes that rendered an animal unfit for sacrifice (Lev. 22:25); (3) the demoralization of heart and life through sin (Gen. 6:12), resulting in those sinful habits and practices that defile and ruin men (Rom. 8:21; (4) everlasting ruin (Gal. 6:8); NIV, “destruction”).

¹⁻²Commentary originated Rev. Terrence Howard, TH.M. All editing and copying by permission only.

³ New Unger's Bible Dictionary

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Adult Sunday School Lesson

Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher

2 Peter 2:19-20 (KJV)

¹⁹ While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. ²⁰ For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

2 Peter 2:19-20 (NIV)

¹⁹ They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity--for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him. ²⁰ If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning.

The Description of False Prophets Part III

A. The Deceit in the Description

(Verse 19) The false prophets promised "liberty" (freedom), but it is not the freedom Christ offered when He said, "The truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Christ offers freedom from sin, not freedom to sin; and freedom from the Mosaic law, not freedom from the law of divine love. What the false teachers promised was a presumed liberty that amounts to license—a freedom to please oneself regardless of any restraining law. They would use liberty "for an occasion to the flesh" (Galatians 5:13). They would encourage people to sin saying God's grace will cover whatever sins they commit (Rom. 6:1). But Peter said these false teachers themselves really did not enjoy liberty, for they were "servants" (slave) of "corruption" (depravity, defilement). They had been "overcome" (vanquish) by it and therefore were in bondage to it. All who yield themselves to sin are the servants of sin (Rom. 6:16).¹

B. The Defection in the Description

(Verse 20) This word “defection” means a flaw in something or an inadequate feature. Victims of false teachers will end up in a worse state than they were in before they were saved. Jesus made a similar statement in reference to a man from whom an unclean spirit had been cast out: "The last state of that man is worse than the first"(Matt. 12:45). He said the uncleanness becomes seven times worse when the evil spirits return. Similarly believers who, through acknowledging Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, (nxt pg)²



Lesson III

Date: August 21, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 2: 18 - 22

Pollution: (ἡμίμα, *gā'al*, "to pollute"; ἀλίσγημα, *alīsgēma*, "contamination"): In Malachi 1:7, "Ye offer polluted bread," i.e. not actually unclean, but worthless, common (compare Ezra 2:62), bread here being used metonymically for sacrificial offerings generally (compare; Matt. 6:11). The phrase in Acts 15:20, "the pollutions of idols," is explained in Acts 15:29 by "things sacrificed (the King James Version "meats offered") to idols."³

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³ International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

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2 Peter 2:20-21 (KJV)

²⁰ For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. ²¹ For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

2 Peter 2:20-21 (NIV)

²⁰ If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. ²¹ It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.

The Description of False Prophets Part III

B. The Defection in the Description

(*Verse 20*) have escaped (run away) from worldly "pollutions" (defilement, uncleanness), if they should become entangled again in those pollutions and be conquered by them, will plunge into sin more deeply than before they were saved and be more helpless to free themselves from its grip. This word "entangled", meaning entwine, involve. It is the word used of braiding or plaiting the hair, a very deliberate process, and indicates their return to their former immoral lives is not a rash act but a willful choice on their part.¹

(*Verse 21*) There is another way in which those who turn back are worse off than before. It is because they are abandoning or refusing the truth, the holy commandment, God's Word, apart from which they cannot hope for help. In the beginning the truth was new to them, and they were not hardened against it. Now they have become almost immune to its power. Jesus, using the eye as a metaphor, warned against this: "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness" (Matt. 6:23). No one is so blind as he who shuts his eyes to truth! Another warning, that of apostasy, is given in Heb. 10: 26-27). If one willfully rejects God's provision of salvation after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there is no way left by which he can find forgiveness since he is deliberately rejecting Christ's sacrifice, the only sacrifice for sins. The "way of righteousness" is the message John the Baptist preached (Matt. 21:32).²



Lesson III
Date: August 21, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 2 Peter 2: 18 - 22

¹Commentary compiled by
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²Emma Stevens

Question by Emma Stevens

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2 Peter 2:22 (KJV)

²² But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

2 Peter 2:22 (NIV)

²² Of them the proverbs are true: "A dog returns to its vomit," and, "A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud."

The Description of False Prophets Part III

B. The Defection in the Description

(Verse 22) Peter followed the familiar example of Jesus in using homely and vivid illustrations. He described what happens when a believer forsakes the ways of God by the illustrations of a dog and a pig. In each case the point is obvious: the false teachers had "escaped the pollutions of the world" (verse 20) but had not remained in the way of righteousness. When the opportunity arose, they reverted to their old nature and filthy ways. The first illustration is from (Prov. 26:11).¹

Summary: Christians are exhorted to grow in our faith and knowledge of Christ, and not reject the truth that delivered us from the enslaved sinful state we once were in. Otherwise, we might find ourselves being manipulated by false prophets/teachers, thus refusing to obey God. Peter describes such a person as someone sinking in quicksand who refuses to grab the rope thrown to him/her; the person who turns away from Christ rejects the only means of escape.²

Question:

1. What happens when we refuse to follow God?



Lesson IV

Date: August 28, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 3:1-7

Lesson Outline

A. The Saints Remembrance
(2Peter 3 vs 1-2)

B. The Scoffers Ridicule
(2Peter 3 vs. 3-4)

C. The Saviors Reprisal
(2Peter 3 vs. 5-7)

Great Commission Baptist Church
Adult Sunday School Lesson
Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher

False Teaching

There are over a hundred prophecies in the Old Testament that predict events that would happen in the life of Jesus, the Messiah, hundreds of years before they happened. The odds of one person being able to fulfill all these prophecies with 100% accuracy is 10 to the 18th power. That's a "1" with 18 zero's after it, (1,000,000,000,000,000,000). Two of the most common chapters in the Bible that reveal facts regarding the life of Jesus are Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53. Consider another wonderful prophecy in which God gave a Babylonian king an outline of history from his time to the end of the world. Read this remarkable dream in Daniel, chapter 2. God outlined for King Nebuchadnezzar the four great world kingdoms from his time right on down to our time: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. Then the Roman Empire would be split into ten divisions, which are the European nations that exist today. The Great King, who is represented by the stone cut out of the mountain without hands, refers to the coming of Jesus and His eternal kingdom. Other prophecies recorded in the Bible were given many years, even hundreds of years, before the predicted event would take place. Yet these events happened exactly as the prophecy said they would. Not only can we look at the fulfilled Biblical prophecies of the past to test the Bible's authenticity, but also we can see prophecies being fulfilled before our eyes today. Take for example Matthew 24:14 where Jesus says, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come." Through the use of radio, satellite, and TV the gospel of Jesus is being preached to all nations around the world.

Why should we believe the Bible is true? Because only God can foretell events hundreds of years before they happen (Isaiah 46:9,10) and each event predicted has occurred just as it was foretold in the Bible. ¹

1. Name a passage in the OT that prophesied about events in Christ life?

¹Ferguson, David. *The Great Commandment Principle*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1998.



Lesson IV

Date: August 28, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 3:1-7

Lesson Aim:

Students will grip the fact that every promise God gave in His Word is worthy to be believed, for it will come to pass just as He said, despite any type of false teaching. The better we know Jesus, the less attractive false teaching will be.³

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2 Peter 3:1-2 (KJV)

¹This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: ²That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:

2 Peter 3:1-2 (NIV)

¹ Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. ² I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles.

False Teaching

A. The Saints Remembrance

(Verse 1) The first letter from Peter was to console. The second is to warn. In his first letter, Peter was trying to encourage Christians who were suffering terrible persecutions from without. In his second letter, he is warning them of danger within the Church. Peter did not tell them anything new but wished to "stir up" (*diegeirō*, arouse them to be wide awake, as in 1:13) their understanding by reminding them of what they had been taught. "Remembrance" has been the key to this letter (see 1:12-15). Peter himself had been guilty of forgetting (Luke 22:61), so he wanted to warn his readers against forgetting the Word of God.¹

(Verse 2) In this chapter Peter emphasized two important issues. One is that the Word of God is true and dependable; it means just what it says. The other is that the purpose of prophecy is not to satisfy human curiosity regarding the future but to provide the incentive for holy living. He points them back to the OT prophets and the NT apostles. the fundamental source for the believers' knowledge of God and His work among man is found in the holy Scriptures. There are two witnesses that confirm the veracity of these Scriptures, the words of the prophets and the words of the apostles, and these two witnesses agree in all things pertaining to the person and work of Jesus Christ, God's Messiah. No doubt Peter also recalled when he and another disciple were going to a village called Emmaus after the Lord's resurrection and Jesus showed up and ask them of their sorrows, He then expounded on the scriptures (Luke 24:25-27).²



Lesson IV

Date: August 28, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 3:1-7

Scoffer: The verb indicates the manifestation of contempt by insulting words or actions; it combines bitterness with ridicule. It is much more frequent in the Revised Version (British and American) than in the King James Version, replacing "scorn" of the latter in Psalm 1:1; Proverbs 1:22, etc. "Scorn" refers rather to an inner emotion based on a sense of superiority; "scoff," to the outward expression of this emotion.⁴

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⁴ International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

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2 Peter 3:3-4 (KJV)

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.

2 Peter 3:3-4 (NIV)

³ Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. ⁴ They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."

False Teachings

B. The Scoffers Ridicule

(Verse 3) Just as the prophets had warned, Peter again warned that many "scoffers" and false teachers would arise in the last days (2 Peter 3:1-3). Pointing to the ancient unchanging laws of nature, they would ridicule the very notion of Christ's second coming—conveniently forgetting God's other miraculous deeds, such as the Flood (2 Peter 3:4-6). Since God had already judged the world once, no one should doubt that he'll do it again: Just as he destroyed it with water, he will someday destroy it with fire (2 Peter 3:7).¹

"First" means "First of all," or "of primary importance." Compare 2 Peter 1:20. It is vitally important both to understand this key characteristic of the last days (that is, the denial of both creation and consummation), and also to know and practice the divinely inspired Scriptures. **last days**. The context here is set in the last days. Although we must not set dates, these aspects of the last days are surely more characteristic of our own times than any time before us. At least, we are closer to the last days than anyone has ever been before! Thus Peter's exhortation and analysis surely fits us better than anyone before us.²

(Verse 4) The major emphasis of the scoffers would be the apparent delay in Christ's return to earth. As Peter wrote this letter, it was obvious that Jesus had not yet returned. Therefore, those who mock and reject the Lord held the position that this was the way it always had been since the beginning of creation. They foolishly claimed that Christ was never going to return and that there was no such thing as a final accounting before the holy God. To correct this mistake Peter referred to the Flood and the change it made in the earth. God had already intervened once, and He will intervene again. But unregenerate men and women do not want any intervention.³



Lesson IV
Date: August 28, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 2 Peter 3:1-7

Flood: or Deluge. The account of this phenomenal world-engulfing event is recounted in Genesis 6-9. It comprehends the bulk of space given by divine revelation to the events in the early redemptive history of man, eclipsing even the space given to the creation and the Fall.³

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2 Peter 3:5-7 (KJV)

⁵For 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: ⁶Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.

2 Peter 3:5-7 (NIV)

⁵ But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. ⁶By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed.

False Teaching

C. The Saviors Reprisal

(Verse 5) The scoffers would purposely forget the account of the Flood recorded in Gen. 6-8. The word "willingly", meaning gladly, choice, a preference. They would close their eyes to the Biblical account of how God, by the word of His power, created the "heavens" (sky, as in Matt. 16:3), "Ye can discern the face of the sky") and the "earth" (land, ground). In the beginning all was water. God created the firmament to divide the water in the clouds from the water in the universal sea. Then He caused the sea to "be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear" (Gen. 1:9). By this interpretation, "out of the water" refers not to the position of the land but rather to the effect of the water upon the land. The word "Standing" meaning set together, compacted, consist; as in (Col. 1:17 are held together). ¹

(Verse 6) The word "Whereby" indicates the Flood occurred by means of God's command. By Him the earth was created, and by Him it was inundated (covered with water) so the earth and its inhabitants "perished" (ruin, destroy fully). Peter reminds his readers that by the same Word of God, judgment was meted out upon every living being. In other words, people should not rely on their false assumption that God has little or nothing to do with the world that He created. Instead, they must realize that by His Word He can create anything that He desires, and by His Word He can destroy anything that He has created. In fact, the only reason the world has not yet been destroyed is that it is not yet God's time. But Scripture is clear; God has spoken: Jesus Christ is going to return to the world and the world is going to be judged and destroyed again.²



Lesson IV
Date: August 28, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 2 Peter 3:1-7

Questions:

1. Why are men so quick to deny the plain teachings of God's Word?

2. Would you agree, man's denial of God's Word is not a problem of the head, but a problem of the heart?

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²Emma Stevens

Questions by Emma Stevens

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2 Peter 3:7 (KJV)

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.

2 Peter 3:7 (NIV)

⁷ By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

False Teaching

C. The Saviors Reprisal

(Verse 7) Notice that the same 'word' that preserves the created order is also reserving it for fiery judgement. Just as water and the word of God were agents for destroying the former world, so fire and the word of God will be the agents of destruction in the future, [note: verse 8 in reference to the future destruction.] Everything will go in the great conflagration: every home, village, town, city and country. Everyone's plans, money and possessions, this earth and the stars—all will be burned up. Does this not make for sober reading? The divine perspective on the passing of time answers the skeptics' criticism in vv. 3, 4. "Delay" of the Lord's coming is a human reaction to the divine reckoning.¹

Summary: The "last days" is the time between Christ's first and second comings; thus we, like Peter, are living in the last days. This should encourage all Christians to do the work to which God has called us and believe that he will return as He promised. God is not bound by time as we are, therefore while we still have breath in our body let's not be tricked into believing lies coming from false teaching. False teaching is simply denying the plain teachings of God's Word, with eagerness to invent fables that pull away truths that are so clearly taught in the pages of your Bible. False teaching and scoffers will continue in 2016 and beyond, yet it does not change the fact that Jesus will come again. The world was created in the beginning and it will be cremated in the end. In that day, all that will matter is your personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ . . . let there be nothing false about that!!!²



Lesson V

Date: September 4, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 3:8-10

Lesson Outline

A. God's Period
(2Peter 3 vs 8)

B. God's Promise
(2Peter 3 vs. 9a-b)

C. God's Patience
(2Peter 3 vs. 9c)

D. God's Punishment
(2Peter 3 vs. 10)

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The Schedule of God's Return

Prior to the devastation of New Orleans, the Louisiana government knew for days that serious trouble was coming with Hurricane Katrina and pleaded with its citizens to flee. While granting that some were simply not able to evacuate, there were also many doubting, stubborn souls who ignored the warnings. They remained behind and were trapped by the ensuing floods, and many of them died needlessly.

The hurricane watchers are something like prophets, getting their "visions" from satellite technology. They can see the dangers forming over the ocean long before we can, and they're also fairly accurate now about where and when a storm will make landfall. If they say a dangerous storm is coming, you might want to go ahead and at least get out your umbrella. Right? Because not listening to their predictions with their superior perspective is foolish. Regarding the second coming, Jesus said, "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled" (Luke 21:20-22 NKJV).

Christ foretold the destruction of Jerusalem very clearly. But was He just tantalizing those listening to Him with His predictive ability or impressing us with how precisely God can predict the future? No. Everything Christ said had deeper meaning. This prophecy and others He gave His people would save them, if they would only heed the warnings. Today, we study last-day prophecy so we too can prepare for what is coming so that lives might be saved. ¹

1. Name a passage in the OT that prophesied about events in Christ life?

¹Ferguson, David. *The Great Commandment Principle*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1998.



Lesson V
Date: September 4, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 2 Peter 3:8 - 10

Lesson Aim:

To remind believers that they should never forget that the Lord, Jesus is most certainly coming back in power and glory with judgments and rewards.³

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³ Earline Franklin

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Adult Sunday School Lesson

Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher

2 Peter 3:8 (KJV)

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.

2 Peter 3:8 (NIV)

⁸ But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

The Schedule of God's Return

A. God's Period

(Verse 8) This word "period" means length of time, era, or an interval. Peter begins this verse with the conjunction, "but". He uses it as a contrast for the previous verses. He then says, "Beloved" (dearly loved) appears six times in Peter's second epistle. By him saying "beloved", this let us know that he is talking to the saints. He cautioned believers not to forget "this one thing," that God is very longsuffering. He quoted from Psalm 90:4 to show a thousand years is not very long to the eternal God. When the Bible says "the end of all things is at hand" (1 Peter 4:7), it may mean tomorrow or it may mean a thousand years from now. So believers should not grow impatient if Christ's coming is not as soon as they expect. God's timetable is not synchronized with any earthly clock. Scoffers are ignorant of this. They view time from the standpoint of their own short lives and not from God's standpoint. Man has but a short time to live, and if he does not accomplish his purposes in a very brief period, he never will. But it is not so with God. He always lives.¹

However long it might be "since the fathers fell asleep" (verse 4), it is not very long in God's sight. Paul evidently expected Christ to return in his own lifetime. He wrote, "We which are alive and remain..." (1 Thess. 4:17). When it became apparent that he would die prior to Christ's coming, it did not trouble him. He still rejoiced in the crown of righteousness reserved for him and for all those who "love his (Christ's) appearing"(2 Tim. 4:6-8).²



Lesson V
Date: September 4, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 2 Peter 3: 8 - 10

Patience: Patience is that calm and unruffled temper with which the good man bears the evils of life, whether they proceed from persons or things. It also manifests itself in a sweet submission to the providential appointments of God and fortitude in the presence of the duties and conflicts of life. This grace saves one from discouragement in the face of evil (Luke 21:19).⁴

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⁴ New Unger's Bible Dictionary

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2 Peter 3:9 (KJV)

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.

2 Peter 3:9 (NIV)

⁹ The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

The Schedule of God's Return

B. God's Promise

(Verse 9a-b) This verse says, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise". This word "slack" mean to delay or to tarry. That is, it should not be inferred because His promise seems to be long delayed that therefore it will fail. When people, after a considerable lapse of time, fail to fulfill their engagements, we infer that it is because they have changed their plans, because they have forgotten their promises, or because they have no ability to perform them, or because there is a lack of principle, which makes them fail, regardless of their obligations. However, no such inference can be drawn from the apparent delay of the fulfillment of the divine purposes. Whatever may be the reasons why they seem to be deferred, with God, we may be sure that it is from no such causes as these.¹

The next phrase says, As some men count slackness. It is probable that the apostle here had his eye on some professing Christians who had become disheartened and impatient, and who, from the delay in regard to the coming of the Lord Jesus, and from the representations of those who denied the truth of the Christian religion, arguing from that delay that it was false, began to fear that his promised coming would indeed never occur. To such he says that it should not be inferred from his delay that he would not return, but that the delay should be regarded as an evidence of his desire that men should have space for repentance, and an opportunity to secure their salvation (Heb. 10:37).²

C. God's Patience

(Verse 9c-d) This part of the verse says, "But is long-suffering to us-ward or toward us. The delay should be regarded as a proof of His forbearance, and of His desire that all human beings should be saved. Every sinner should consider the fact that he is not cut down in his sins, not as a proof that God will not punish (nxt pg)³



Lesson V
Date: September 4, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 2 Peter 3: 8 – 10

Day of the Lord: "The day of the Lord" is not a single event but the period of time including the Second Coming, the tribulation period, and the establishment of Christ's kingdom. Peter skipped over all the intervening events and dealt with the final scene when the heavens shall pass away and the earth be burned up. "Elements" is *stoicheia* (basic parts, components).³

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³ Complete Biblical Library Commentary - The Complete Biblical Library – Hebrews-Jude.

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2 Peter 3:9 (KJV)

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.

2 Peter 3:9 (NIV)

⁹ The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

The Schedule of God's Return

C. God's Patience

(*Verse 9c-d*) the wicked, but as a demonstration that He is now forbearing, and is willing that he should have an ample opportunity to obtain eternal life. No one should infer that God will not execute His threats, unless he can look into the most distant parts of a coming eternity, and demonstrate that there is no suffering appointed for the sinner there; anyone who sins, and who is spared even for a moment, should regard the respite as only a proof that God is merciful and forbearing now.¹

At the end of this verse it says, "Not willing that any should perish". That is, He does not desire it or wish it. His nature is benevolent, and He sincerely desires the eternal happiness of all, and His patience toward sinners "proves" that He is willing that they should be saved. If He were not willing, it would be easy for Him to cut them off, and exclude them from hope immediately. This passage, however, should not be adduced to prove: That sinners never will in fact perish. Some people try to use this passage to say that everyone is going to heaven, but that is the wrong interpretation of this passage. The passage does prove that: (a)That God has a sincere desire that people should be saved; (b)That any purpose in regard to the destruction of sinners is not founded on mere will, or is not arbitrary; (c)That it would be agreeable to the nature of God, and to His arrangements in the plan of salvation, if all human beings should come to repentance, and accept the offers of mercy; (d) That if any come to Him truly penitent, and desirous to be saved, they will not be cast off; (e)That, since it is in accordance with His nature, that He should desire that all people may be saved, it may be presumed that He has made an arrangement by which it is possible that they should be; and, (f)That, since this is His desire, it is proper for the ministers of religion to offer salvation to every human being (Eze 33:11).²



Lesson V
Date: September 4, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 2 Peter 3: 8 - 10

Questions:

1. How do you live your life in expectancy to Jesus' return?

2. What are you doing to share Jesus with others so they can choose to turn to Him?

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Questions by Earline Franklin

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2 Peter 3:10 (KJV)

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.

2 Peter 3:10 (NIV)

¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.

The Schedule of God's Return

D. God's Punishment

(Verse 10) The Day of the Lord will certainly come (the Greek verb carries a positive emphasis). Believers need to remember this and be ready at all times; unbelievers need to realize it also, or they will suffer at the hands of a "thief in the night." Paul used this same expression in 1 Thess. 5:2 concerning the Lord's coming. Jesus warned of it, admonishing His disciples to be ready always, "for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 24:44).¹

Summary: Although Jesus is loving and longsuffering, He will one day return to judge the world. We are reminded that He does not run the world by the believers' timetable. His view of time is different from mankind's view. What feels like a delay to believers is his grace and mercy extended to humanity. Jesus delays his return to give everyone time to turn to Him. He gives time for individuals to either choose or reject the way He has provided for salvation .But one should never forget that He is faithful in keeping His promise to us. He will one day return. Believers should live their lives in expectancy of His return.²



Lesson VI

Date: September 11, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 3:11-18

Lesson Outline

A. The Walk of the Believer
(2Peter 3 vs 11-12)

B. The Watching of the Believers
(2Peter 3 vs. 13-14)

C. The Warning of the Believers
(2Peter 3 vs. 15-16)

D. The Way of the Believers
(2Peter 3 vs. 17-18)

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The Believers Holy Life

Fame and Fortune Will Fall. We often call it “Custer’s Last Stand,” but we should really say “Custer’s Last Fall,” because he didn’t stand. It was the Indians’ last stand, for standing means you’re victorious—that you survived and are still around.

So maybe we should apply the process of elimination and learn what isn’t going to stand or endure to the end. I think most of us already realize that some things people build on make pretty shabby foundations. Money is one of them—it’s not going to last. Proverbs 11:4 says, “Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.” You will not be able to bribe the Judge when Jesus comes. Proverbs 11:28 adds, “He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.” And then there is Isaiah 2:20, 21, speaking of the day of judgment, “In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; ... for fear of the >Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.” Money is not going to last.

How about fame? The Bible is very clear. “The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot” (Proverbs 10:7). “The face of the >Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth” (Psalm 34:16). And Daniel 12 tells us that the names of the wicked are covered with everlasting contempt.¹

1. As a believer what do consider most valuable about life and explain?

¹Ferguson, David. *The Great Commandment Principle*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1998.



Lesson VI

Date: September 11, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 3: 11-18

Aim:

Students will embrace the truths of God's Word and have an eager desire to get as close to Christ as we can so that the time remaining, as we live a pure and blameless life, we might be used by Him to touch this world.⁴

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2 Peter 3:11-12 (KJV)

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?

2 Peter 3:11-12 (NIV)

¹¹ Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives ¹² as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.

The Believers Holy Life

A. The Walk of the Believer

(Verse 11) In the light of all this, Peter is expecting Christians not to be passive, but active in pursuing holiness. We are not just to lie back and let it happen, but are to work out our salvation (see Phil. 2:12–13). We are also to help others in their Christian pilgrimage. An eternal perspective is required: Do not live just for the here and now, but look forward to this great Day of the Lord. An old saying can help us in understanding this: I cannot work my soul to save, for that my Lord has done; but I will work like any slave for love of God's dear Son.¹

(Verse 12) Christians are to live with God's word in their hearts and minds, and they should be an expectant people. By saying that Christians should 'speed [the] coming' of the day of God, Peter does not mean that any human being can alter the time of it; rather, Christians speed the coming of the Day of the Lord by working, praying and evangelizing. So do not doubt or moan about the apparent slowness of the Second Coming, but live in its growing light.²

Martyn Lloyd-Jones said:

We can hasten the day by preparing ourselves, by preaching the gospel, by telling others about him. The end will come when the fullness of the Jews will have come in, when the fullness of the Gentiles have come in, when all will have been gathered in, when all of the routine will have been drawn out of the world. Let us hasten that by preparing ourselves, let us hasten it by preaching, and by supporting missionary work, and the work of the church in this land; in fact, by everything we can do to hasten its coming.³



Lesson VI
Date: September 11, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 2 Peter 3: 11-18

Spot: A defect or blemish; used in Job 31:7b(KJV, "blot") to indicate a *moral* weakness (Heb. *mum*). Compare Leviticus 21:17-23; 22:20.³

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³ New Unger's Bible Dictionary

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2 Peter 3:13-14 (KJV)

¹³ Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. ¹⁴ Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

2 Peter 3:13-14 (NIV)

¹³ But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. ¹⁴ So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

The Believers Holy Life

B. The Watching of the Believers

(Verse 13) Believers should not be preoccupied with the flaming destruction of the present heavens and earth but should be looking for new heavens and a new earth in which "righteousness" (*dikaiousunē*, holiness, innocence, equity) "dwelleth" (*katoikei*, reside, make its home). "New" is from *kainos*, meaning fresh. The new heavens and new earth will have a new quality. Some say the heavens and earth will be renewed, rather than being replaced with something brand new. On this question Stanley M. Horton states: "A good case can be made here (verse 10) for taking this as a renovation of the heavens and earth rather than an annihilation. The Bible does speak of 'everlasting hills' (Gen. 49:26; Habakkuk 3:6); the earth 'established forever' (Psalms 78:69; 104:5), and 'abiding forever' (Ecc. 1:4)". Horton goes on to say: "Since fire is often used in the Bible of cleansing or purifying, it may be taken that the heavens and earth are simply renovated, renewed, and restored to a better state by going through the fire".¹

(Verse 14) Peter exhorted, "Be diligent" means to be eager, zealous, earnest, and prompt. The word speaks of intense effort, as in 2 Tim. 2:15, "Study to show thyself approved unto God." Since believers are expecting a new heaven and new earth pervaded with righteousness, they should prepare themselves to be occupants of such a home so when Christ comes He will find them living in peace, "without spot" (unblemished, unstained, undefiled) and "blameless" (faultless, without flaw or blot, untainted by the world). The second coming of Christ was the great incentive for holy living among believers in the First Century. Peter referred to it here, and Paul often did in his writings.²



Lesson VI

Date: September 11, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 3: 11-18

Destruction: In the King James Version this word translates over 30 Hebrew words in the Old Testament, and 4 words in the New Testament. Of these the most interesting, as having a technical sense, is *'ābhaddōn* (from verb *'ābhadh*, "to be lost," "to perish"). It is found 6 times in the Wisdom Literature, compare Rev. 9:11.³

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³ International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

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2 Peter 3:15-16 (KJV)

¹⁵ And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; ¹⁶ As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

2 Peter 3:15-16 (NIV)

¹⁵ Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. ¹⁶ He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

The Believers Holy Life

C. The Warning of the Believers

(Verse 15) Peter explains the seeming delay in God's program, verse 15 ties in with verse 9, where Peter explained why the Lord had delayed fulfilling His promise. God had every reason long ago to judge the world and burn up its works, but in His mercy, He is long-suffering with us, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." This is the day of salvation, not the day of judgment. Peter made reference to Paul's writings. Because while Peter's ministry was primarily to Israel, and the hope of Israel is the Kingdom on earth. Paul ministry was to the Gentiles and the Church, and it was through Paul that God revealed His program for the age.¹

(Verse 16) Peter feared that the false teachers might take advantage of ignorant, unstable people by distorting the teachings of Paul so that God's truth was turned into a lie. For example, some teachers reasoned that since Paul taught justification by faith, Christians could do whatever they liked. They argued that the more an individual sinned, the more God had the opportunity to demonstrate His grace (see Rom. 3:5-8; 6:1). This interpretation was clearly a distortion of Paul's intent. Peter understood Paul's writings to speak the word of the Lord just as did the prophets of old (see 1 Thess. 2:13). Distorting the words of the apostles led not simply to error, but to destruction.²



Lesson VI

Date: September 11, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

2 Peter 3: 11-18

In 2016, no matter where we are in our spiritual journey, no matter how mature we are in our faith, this sinful world will always challenge our faith. We still have much room for growth. so that we will be prepared to stand for truth in any and all circumstances.³

Questions:

1. Do you spend most of your time piling up possessions or striving to develop Christlike character?
2. What would you like to be doing when Christ returns?

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³Emma Stevens

Questions by Emma Stevens

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2 Peter 3:17-18 (KJV)

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 stedfastness. 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.

2 Peter 3:17-18 (NIV)

¹⁷ Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position. ¹⁸ But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

The Believers Holy Life

D. The Way of the Believers

(Verse 17) There are four “beloved” statements in 2 Peter 3 which summarize what Peter wanted to get across as he brought his second letter to a close. “Beloved...be mindful” (3:1-2). “Beloved, be not ignorant” (3:8). “Beloved...be diligent” (3:14). “Beloved...beware” (3:17). The word translated beware means “be constantly guarding yourself,” True Christians cannot fall from salvation and be lost, but they can fall from their own “steadfastness” What was this steadfastness? Being “established in the present truth” (1:12). The stability of the Christian comes from his faith in the Word of God, his knowledge of that Word, and his ability to use that Word in the practical decisions of life.¹

(Verse 18) The theme of I Peter was grace; the theme of II Peter was knowledge; so, Peter sums up both books by admonishing us to grow in Grace and in Knowledge. This is not merely knowledge of the Bible; it is knowledge of Christ through the Bible. We must come to know Him better: Paul said in (Phil.3:10-11) We should have that same zeal for the knowledge of Christ.²

Summary: Christ's second coming will be sudden and terrible for those who do not believe in him. But if we are morally clean, living a holy life, and spiritually alert, it won't come as a surprise. Realizing that the earth is going to be burned up, we should put our confidence in what is lasting and eternal, and not be bound to earth and its treasures or pursuits. Christians must not become lazy and complacent because Christ has not yet returned.



Lesson VII

Date: September 18, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 1:1-6

Lesson Outline

A. The Personal Greeting
(Colossians 1 vs 1-2)

B. The Praise in the Prayer
(Colossians 1 vs. 3-4)

C. The Promise in the Prayer
(Colossians 1 vs. 5-6)

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Adult Sunday School Lesson
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Paul's Prayer for the Colossians Part I

Prayer is speaking with God. It's in the Bible, Jeremiah 33:3, NKJV. "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know." Did Jesus pray? Yes, often. It's in the Bible, Luke 5:16, NKJV. "So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed." Jesus often rose early to pray. It's in the Bible, Mark 1:35, NKJV. "Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed."

What do I pray for? Our needs, our joys, our sorrows, our cares, and our fears – everything. It's in the Bible, Phillipians 4:6, NKJV. "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" Jesus understands all our needs as a close friend – He's been there. It's in the Bible, Hebrews 4:15, NKJV. "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin, let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." God is very willing to hear and answer our prayers. It's in the Bible, Mathew 7:11, NKJV. "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!"

Prayers are not magic. It's in the Bible, Matthew 6:7-8, NKJV. "And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him."¹

1. Explain how often to do you pray, for example times, situations, and individuals ?

¹Ferguson, David. *The Great Commandment Principle*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1998.



Lesson VII
Date: September 18, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 1: 1 - 6

Lesson Aim:

For believers to commit to pray for one another's steadfast faith, their love for one another, their hope in Christ and the fullness of the gospel operating in their lives.⁴

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Colossians 1:1-2 (KJV)

¹Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timotheus *our* brother,
²To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1:1-2 (NIV)

¹Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,
²To the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse: Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

Paul's Prayer for the Colossians Part I

A. The Personal Greeting

(Verse 1) Colossians begins with the typical salutation of the day: the name of the writer or writers, the name of the recipient or recipients of the letter, and a few words of greeting. In the opening statement, Paul probably had at least two reasons for designating himself an apostle. Unlike the Philippians, the Colossians did not know him personally. Furthermore, he was writing to refute the serious unscriptural gnosticism that had crept into the assembly. As an apostle he was an official representative of the Saviour himself and was clothed with His authority. At the very outset of this epistle Paul linked his office and call to the will of God. He had certainly not chosen this position for himself. Note also the manner in which he connected himself with Christ Jesus. He literally belonged to Christ as His representative.¹

The use of the term "Jesus Christ" at the very outset may have been a deliberate attempt to emphasize the exalted position of Jesus. The Gnostics constantly endeavored to denigrate the deity of Christ by seeking to rob Him of His full majesty. It is interesting to note that Paul did not use the name of Jesus by itself in the entire epistle. He would have nothing to do with the mentality that relegated Jesus to anything less than true God and true man. Although Paul mentioned Timothy as being with him, it is not certain that Timothy served as secretary on this occasion.²

Timothy was the young man Paul had met in Lystra on the second missionary journey. Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him (Acts 16: 1-3). Timothy probably came to believe in Christ through Paul, for Paul later calls him his son. (nxt pg)³



Lesson VII
Date: September 18, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 1: 1 - 6

Saints: One separated from the world and consecrated to God; one holy by profession and by covenant; a believer in Christ (Ps 16:3; Rom. 1:7; Rom. 8:27; Phil. 1:1).⁴

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⁴ Easton's Illustrated Dictionary

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Colossians 1:2-3 (KJV)

² To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.³ We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

Colossians 1:2-3 (NIV)

² To the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at Colosse: Grace and peace to you from God our Father.
³ We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you,

Paul's Prayer for the Colossians Part I

A. The Personal Greeting

(Verse 1) in the faith (1 Tim. 1:2). Timothy became Paul's assistant and emissary—traveling with him and sometimes for him. Timothy was not imprisoned with Paul, but he stayed in Rome to encourage Paul and to help with ministry needs. Thus, Paul's letter to the church in Colosse includes greetings from Timothy, a brother in the faith.¹

(Verse 2) This verse begins with, "To the saints" refers to the status of the recipients of this letter, rather than to a degree of holiness attained. The second half of the title could be translated either "faithful brothers" or "believing brothers," although the first makes more sense because the second would be redundant. The most important fact expressed is that they were "in Christ," or "lived in the realm of Christ," as people related to Him through the new birth. As he normally did, Paul combined the Greek greeting "grace" and the Hebrew greeting "peace". Paul often began his letters with greetings of grace and peace. Grace means God's unmerited favor; peace refers to the peace that Christ made between us and God through his death on the cross. Paul wanted his readers to experience God's grace and peace in their daily living. (Rom. 1:7) ²

B. The Praise in the Prayer

(Verse 3) One characteristic of Paul was his constant prayers for the churches—those he knew well and those he did not. The word always could modify give thanks, or it could modify pray, referring to Paul always praying for the churches (and specifically the Colossian church) during his regular prayer times. (Eph. 1:16)³



Lesson VII

Date: September 18, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 1: 1 - 6

Joy: Usually some form of Heb. *gîl*, to “leap,” or “spin around” with pleasure; a stronger term than *simhâ* (Ps. 30:5); *masôš* (Job 8:19), rejoicing; Gk. *chara* (Matt. 2:10), gladness; the cause or occasion of joy (Luke 2:10). Joy is a delight of the mind arising from the consideration of a present or assured possession of a future good.

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Colossians 1:4-5 (KJV)

⁴ Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love *which ye have* to all the saints,
⁵ For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;

Colossians 1:4-5 (NIV)

⁴ because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints-- ⁵ the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel

Paul's Prayer for the Colossians Part I

B. The Praise in the Prayer

(Verse 4) This verse introduces the specific items for which Paul thanked God when he thought of the Colossian Christians. First, he was grateful to God because they had placed their faith in Christ Jesus. Although there are many things for which Christians should thank God, none is more important than the one Paul listed first: faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 6:44). If a person does not have that, nothing else really counts for much. The apostle knew the Colossians had taken the first step, the step that definitely is the all-important one. Secondly, the apostle and his associates thanked God always for the love the Colossians extended to all the saints. Their faith did not consist merely of verbal profession. They translated their confession of Jesus Christ into action, and this action was prompted by the love (*agapē*) that God alone is able to infuse into a person (Heb. 6:10).¹

C. The Promise in the Prayer

(Verse 5) The Colossians' trust in Christ Jesus and love for others had reason: they were looking forward to the joys of heaven. Why have faith in Jesus Christ if there is no hope for a glorious future? Why love others if it doesn't matter in the end? But looking forward to heaven makes all the difference. These believers have been looking forward to heaven since they first heard the truth of the Good News. Paul brought them the “truth” of the gospel as opposed to the heresy of the false teachers. Notice the manner in which Paul connected this hope with the gospel. From the very beginning (Gen. 3:15), people have cherished the hope that one day the Messiah would come to earth and remedy the sinful condition of mankind. Truly the simple gospel message that Jesus died, was buried, and rose again according to the Scriptures constitutes the greatest impetus to hope that mankind has ever known.²



Lesson VII
Date: September 18, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 1: 1 - 6

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Colossians 1:6 (KJV)

⁶ Which is come unto you, as *it is* in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as *it doth* also in you, since the day ye heard *of it*, and knew the grace of God in truth:

Colossians 1:6 (NIV)

⁶ that has come to you. All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth.

Paul's Prayer for the Colossians Part I

C. The Promise in the Prayer

(Verse 6) the Colossians were producing fruit because they were permitting the gospel to work in them. Notice the beautiful progression in the four items for which the apostle and his associates always thanked God when they remembered the Colossians. Faith, love, and hope naturally should lead to fruit. Just as surely as a seed planted in soil will produce fruit if it is given the proper care, so the gospel will produce fruit where people allow it to do so.¹

Summary: Paul wrote to the Colossians to confirm them in the gospel of Christ, to exhort them to discharge their duty to God, to one another and to all mankind. He first gives thanks to God for all things (our salvation, faith, hope, and love). We as believers should follow Paul's example and commit to pray for one another and to encourage each other to stand firm on the gospel of Christ.²

Questions:

1. How does Paul say the Colossians have responded to the gospel?

2. How have you personally responded to the gospel message?



Lesson VIII

Date: September 25, 2016

Lesson Scriptures:

Colossians 1:7-12

Lesson Outline

A. The Person in the Prayer
(Colossians 1 vs 7-8)

B. The Practice in the Prayer
(Colossians 1 vs. 9-10)

C. The Partakers of the Prayer
(Colossians 1 vs. 11-12)

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Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher

Paul's Prayer for the Colossians Part 2

Praying for others spiritual growth should be the goal of Christians. It's in the Bible, II Peter 3:18, "But grow in spiritual strength and become better acquainted with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Spiritual growth results from discipline. It's in the Bible, I Corinthians 9:25,. "Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever." God has promised continuous growth until Jesus returns. It's in the Bible, Philippians 1:6,. "And I am sure that God who began the good work within you will keep right on helping you grow in His grace until His task within you is finally finished on that day when Jesus Christ returns."

Growth takes practice and is essential to the Christian life. It's in the Bible, Hebrews 5:12-14, TLB. "You have been Christians a long time now, and you ought to be teaching others, but instead you have dropped back to the place where you need someone to teach you all over again the very first principles in God's Word. You are like babies who can drink only milk, not old enough for solid food. And when a person is still living on milk it shows he isn't very far along in the Christian life, and doesn't know much about the difference between right and wrong. He is still a baby-Christian! You will never be able to eat solid spiritual food and understand the deeper things of God's Word until you become better Christians and learn right from wrong by practicing doing right."¹

1. When was the last time you prayed for another believers growth explain?

¹Ferguson, David. *The Great Commandment Principle*. Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1998.



Lesson VIII
Date: September 25, 2016
Lesson Scriptures:
 Colossians 1:7-12

Aim:

For believers to commit to pray for one another's steadfast faith, their love for one another, their hope in Christ and the fullness of the gospel operating in their lives.³

¹⁻²Commentary compiled by Rev. Terrence Howard, TH.M. All editing and copying by permission only.

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Great Commission Baptist Church

Adult Sunday School Lesson

Dr. Douglas E. Brown, Pastor/Teacher

Colossians 1:7-8 (KJV)

⁷ As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellowservant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ; ⁸ Who also declared unto us your love in the Spirit.

Colossians 1:7-8 (NIV)

⁷ You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, ⁸ and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.

Paul's Prayer for the Colossians Part II

A. The Person in the Prayer

(*Verse 7*) Epaphras had founded the church at Colosse while Paul was living in Ephesus (Acts 19:10). Epaphras may have been converted in Ephesus and then had returned to Colosse, his hometown. Paul called Epaphras a much loved coworker, a faithful servant, and a "fellow prisoner" (Philemon 23). The letter to the Colossians and the personal letter to Philemon were written at about the same time and sent to the same destination (the Colossian church met in Philemon's house). It is unclear from this verse whether Epaphras was actually in prison with Paul, or if Paul's words were metaphors of warfare or "captivity to Christ." It is more likely that Epaphras was with Paul voluntarily and would return to Colosse. The Colossian believers could trust Epaphras, and they could trust his message. Paul was saying that Epaphras was speaking on behalf of the apostle himself. Epaphras's authority gave them good reason to *not* accept teachings that had come to them later and which were contradictory to Epaphras's teaching.¹

(*Verse 8*) Undoubtedly, Epaphras had told Paul all about the church in Colosse. Some concern from Epaphras about the false teaching that had come into Colosse prompted Paul's response through this letter. But Epaphras had also told Paul about the character of the church—they had great love for one another, they showed love outside the fellowship, and they loved the well-known Paul as a brother in Christ, even though they had never met him. Such love comes from our relationship with Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit because this love is a fruit of the Spirit. Christian love comes from the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22). Love is a by-product of our new life in Christ.²



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Wisdom: An attribute of God, wisdom is intimately related to the divine knowledge, manifesting itself in the selection of proper ends with the proper means for their accomplishment. Thus not only the world of nature but especially the economy of redemption is a manifestation of divine wisdom (*see* Psalm 104:24).³

¹⁻²Commentary compiled by Rev. Terrence Howard, TH.M. All editing and copying by permission only.

³ New Unger's Bible Dictionary

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Colossians 1:9-10 (KJV)

⁹For this cause we also, since the day we heard *it*, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Colossians 1:9-10 (NIV)

⁹For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. ¹⁰And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,

Paul's Prayer for the Colossians Part II

B. The Practice in the Prayer

(*Verse 9*) For this reason connects with the preceding verses. It means because of Epaphras' report. From the first time he had heard about these dear saints at Colosse and their faith, love, and hope, the apostle had made it his practice to pray for them. Paul had already mentioned that he continued praying for these believers (as he did for all the churches; Paul didn't know about a church in Colosse until he had heard about it from Epaphras, and Paul rejoiced to be able to pray for another growing church. Paul did not stop at saying that he prayed constantly for the Colossian believers; he went on to explain exactly what he prayed for them. He asked God that they have complete understanding of God's will for their lives. He asked that they be made wise with spiritual wisdom (James 1:5).¹

These are not abstract concepts; instead, Paul was referring to the true wisdom and understanding made available by God's Holy Spirit. The Colossians needed to be filled with this type of spiritual wisdom and knowledge, leaving no room for any other type of false "knowledge" advocated by Gnostic heretics. Wisdom and understanding refer to discretion and discernment. When believers possess those, they will be able to discern the truth from false teaching (1 John 5:20). This knowledge is not of a worldly or carnal nature; it is characterized by spiritual wisdom and spiritual understanding.²



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Patience: "Patience" implies suffering, enduring or waiting, as a determination of the will and not simply under necessity. As such it is an essential Christian virtue to the exercise of which there are many exhortations. We need to "wait patiently" for God, to endure uncomplainingly the various forms of sufferings, wrongs and evils that we meet with, and to bear patiently injustices which we cannot remedy and provocations we cannot remove.³

¹⁻²Commentary compiled by Rev. Terrence Howard, TH.M. All editing and copying by permission only.

³ International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

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Colossians 1:10-11 (KJV)
¹⁰ That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;

Colossians 1:10-11 (NIV)
¹⁰ And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully

Paul's Prayer for the Colossians Part II

B. The Practice in the Prayer

(Verse 10) True understanding and wisdom of God's will is inseparable from living in harmony with it. True knowledge leads to obedience; complete obedience cannot occur without the knowledge of God's will given by the Holy Spirit. The Colossian believers should live always to honor and please the Lord. By so doing, they will continually do good, kind things for others. Their behavior should match their status as God's holy people. They ought to be following God closely—their lives being transformed to Christlikeness. A Christian must be active in order to grow spiritually and to live worthy of the Lord (1 Thess. 4:1).¹

C. The Partakers of the Prayer

(Verse 11) The apostle's third request is that the saints might be strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power. (Note the progression: *filled*, v. 9; *fruitful*, v. 10; *fortified*, v. 11.) The Christian life cannot be lived by mere human energy. It requires supernatural strength. Therefore Paul desires that the believers might know the power of the risen Son of God, and he furthermore desires that they should know this according to His glorious power. The request is not that this power might be *out of* His glorious power, but according to it. His glorious power is limitless and that is just the scope of the prayer. This power is needed so that the child of God may have all patience and longsuffering with joy. God's grace has achieved one of its greatest objects in the life of the believer who can suffer.²



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Colossians 1:7-12

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²Earline Franklin

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Colossians 1:12 (KJV)

¹² Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:

Colossians 1:12 (NIV)

¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.

Paul's Prayer for the Colossians Part II

C. The Partakers of the Prayer

(Verse 12) Giving thanks in this verse refers to the Colossians, not Paul (it is plural in the original). Paul is praying that they might not only be strengthened with all might but that they also might have a thankful spirit, that they might never fail to express their gratitude to the Father, who qualified them to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. Paul was most likely setting up the contrast between the state of "light" that the believers have been transferred to from their previous state of "darkness" (Rom. 8: 17-25).¹

Summary: Paul prayer for the Colossians was continuous. He prays that the revealed will of God be learned from His Word and in His son. He wants them to learn godly conduct in all areas of their lives and to be fruitful in every good work. We as believers are not expected to walk worthy of the Lord, be fruitful and grow in grace and knowledge in our own strength but in His. We must continue to pray and seek His face.²

Questions:

1. Who do you continuous pray for and why?

2. In what way are you walking worthy of the Lord?

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