OVERVIEW OF BOOK OF 2 PETER –
WATCH OUT / STAY ON TRACK / KEEP GROWING

INTRODUCTION:

Whereas the emphasis in **1 Peter** was on preparing believers to endure persecution from those who would attack the church from the outside, the emphasis in **2 Peter** is on guarding against the deceptive heresies of false teachers hiding inside the church community.

Imagine living in an expensive gated community where access is restricted and armed guards are posted both at the entrance as well as patrolling the streets to ensure your safety. You would have a great sense of security that you and your home and family and possessions are safe. My Mom spent her final 20 years living in the Charlestown Retirement Community. A very protected environment. But what if some of those very guards were enemies like a Trojan horse that had evil intentions to bring destruction and devastation. That is the picture that Peter is painting for us here. We need to be on guard. We need to be anchored in the truth of God's Word. We need to be committed to growing in our intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.

BIG IDEA: **Diligent Growth in the True Knowledge of Our Lord Jesus Christ (Through the Sufficiency of the Word of God):**

- **Protects Us Against the Destructive Heresies of False Teachers**
- **Prepares Us to Persevere in Godliness as We Await His Promised Return**

2 Peter 1:3 "*seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence*."

2 Peter 3:18 "*but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*."

This letter was probably written from Rome as well – maybe several years after 1 Peter The audience was the same group of believers scattered abroad in northern Asia Minor. We know that Nero died in 68 AD. Peter was likely imprisoned under Nero with the expectation that he would soon be executed. He ended up being crucified upside down – his own request since he did not deem himself to be worthy to be executed in the same manner as Christ had been.

OVERVIEW:

Our main focus should be to apply **diligence** to grow in the grace and true knowledge and power of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have the sufficient resource of the Word of God to ground us in truth and protect us against the destructive heresies of false teachers. Truth needs constant reinforcement and diligent application because of the devious assaults by false teachers who attack from inside the church and follow a path of sensuality and greed and exploitation. But the Lord is powerful and faithful to protect His own and to render retribution upon the ungodly. Even though it seems from a human perspective that the Lord's return has been delayed too long (giving rise to mockers and scoffers), we can be assured that the day of the Lord is coming soon to fulfill all the promises of God – including that of a "*new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells*."

OUTLINE:

(1:1-2) INTRODUCTION – THE RESOURCES FOR DILIGENT GROWTH IN KNOWING CHRIST = STIRRING UP THE GIFT OF FAITH

(1:3-4) THESIS STATEMENT = GOD HAS CALLED US AND EQUIPPED US FOR DILIGENT GROWTH IN KNOWING CHRIST

I. (1:5-11) THE RECIPE FOR DILIGENT GROWTH IN KNOWING CHRIST = SPECIFYING THE KEY CHARACTER QUALITIES THAT FOSTER GROWTH

II. (1:12-21) THE REINFORCEMENT FOR DILIGENT GROWTH IN KNOWING CHRIST = STANDING ON THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S TRUTH

III. (2:1-22) THE RECOGNITION OF DECEPTIVE AND DESTRUCTIVE FALSE TEACHERS WHO UNDERMINE DILIGENT GROWTH IN KNOWING CHRIST = SNIFFING OUT FALSE TEACHERS

IV. (3:1-17) THE RESULT OF DILIGENT GROWTH IN KNOWING CHRIST = STRENGTHENING US TO PERSEVERE IN HOLINESS AS WE AWAIT HIS PROMISED RETURN

(3:18) CONCLUSION -- SUMMARY OF THE THESIS STATEMENT -- GROW AND GLORIFY

(1:1-2) INTRODUCTION – THE RESOURCES FOR DILIGENT GROWTH IN KNOWING CHRIST = STIRRING UP THE GIFT OF FAITH IN COMMON WITH THE APOSTLES -- TRUE APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION

A. THE MODEL FOR GROWTH IN THE TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST = SIMON PETER

Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ,

Simon was his Aramaic name; Peter was his Greek name – both mean "Rock" –

B. THE ACTIVE STIMULUS INSURING GROWTH = THE SAME GIFT OF FAITH THAT STIRRED UP GROWTH AND FRUITFULNESS IN THE LIVES OF PETER AND THE OTHER APOSTLES

to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours,

Emphasis on the sovereign gift of God.
When we count our spiritual blessings – we should never forget the foundational gift of saving faith – it unites us with all the other saints down thru history – putting us on the same footing as even the apostles

C. THE GROUNDS FOR GROWTH = THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF OUR GOD AND SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST

by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:

We are not those who trust in our own righteousness, but in that righteousness imputed to our account by Jesus Christ whom we have received as our God and our Savior

D. THE RESOURCES FOR GROWTH IN THE TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST = LARGE MEASURES OF GRACE AND PEACE

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;

John Piper: If you want to enjoy God's peace and be the aroma of his grace in the world, your knowledge of him has to grow. Grace is not a mere deposit. It is a **power** that leads to godliness and eternal life. And where knowledge of the glory and excellence of God languishes, grace does not flow. The channel from God's infinite reservoir of grace into and through our lives is the knowledge of God.

(1:3-4) THESIS STATEMENT = GOD HAS CALLED US AND EQUIPPED US FOR DILIGENT GROWTH IN KNOWING CHRIST

A. WE ARE CONNECTED TO GOD'S POWER

5 Dangers to Avoid in Trying to Tap into God's Power for Your Spiritual Growth:

1. Don't Try to Rely on Your Own Resources (Limited / Finite)
   "*seeing that His divine power*"

Scripture rejects both spiritual laziness and self-righteous striving.

- Laziness says, "If God saves by grace, my choices do not matter."
- Legalism says, "If I work hard enough, God will accept me."
- The gospel says, "God has accepted repentant sinners through Christ; therefore, they now pursue holiness out of gratitude and by His power."

2. Don't Try to Grow By a "Works" Mentality
   "*has granted to us*" -- Perfect tense – speak of a completed act in the past that continues to have ongoing benefits in the present

3. Don't Question the Sufficiency of God's Resources
   "*everything pertaining to*"
   a. All **Circumstances** / All Time -- "*life*"
      emphasis probably on eternal life (which we already possess)

   b. All **Character** -- "*and godliness*"

4. Don't Get Duped by Counterfeit / Powerless Knowledge
   "*through the true knowledge of Him* "
   Sets up right from the beginning of the epistle the contrast with the false knowledge being communicated by the deceptive false teachers

5. Don't Lose Sight of Your High Calling
"*who called us by His own glory and excellence*"

- So the goal is spiritual growth;
- The empowerment comes from God's power;
- The means that God uses is the true knowledge of God

B. WE ARE CONNECTED TO GOD'S PROMISES

For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises,

Appreciate the **Value** of God's Promises = *precious and magnificent*
A promise is only good if the one issuing it has the power to faithfully fulfil it.

C. WE ARE CONNECTED TO GOD'S PERSON

in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature,

We have the tremendous privilege to grow in Christlikeness – with the mindset of Christ; the emotions displayed by Christ; the reaction to others displayed by Christ; the response to circumstances around us like Christ would respond

D. WE ARE DISCONNECTED (DELIVERED) FROM SINFUL CORRUPTION

having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

Described by the Apostle John as:

- *the lust of the flesh,*
- *and the lust of the eyes,*
- *and the pride of life*

I. (1:5-11) THE RECIPE FOR DILIGENT GROWTH IN KNOWING CHRIST = SPECIFYING THE KEY CHARACTER QUALITIES THAT FOSTER GROWTH

A. (1:5-7) SEVEN CHARACTER QUALITIES THAT MUST BE ADDED TO OUR FAITH FOR FRUITFUL SPIRITUAL GROWTH

My wife has enjoyed teaching math ever since she majored in Applied Statistics at Princeton University. She still tutors when she has opportunity. But as sophisticated as advanced math can be, it all begins with the fundamentals of knowing your basic math facts. She drilled these into our children as she homeschooled them. Here we have the 7 spiritual math facts that our foundational to spiritual growth. You can't skip over any of these. Each one seems to logically lead to the next. And yet in reality (in time and space) – you cannot separate them into sequential steps on a ladder of faith -- you don't master one completely and then go on to the next.

Sovereignty of God – yet coupled with human responsibility – *Apply all diligence*
Takes self-denial and discipline and effort

1. Virtue, moral excellence

2. Knowledge

3. Self-control

4. Perseverance

5. Godliness

6. Brotherly kindness

7. Love

B. (1:8-11) FOUR BENEFITS OF CONSISTENT SPIRITUAL GROWTH

1. (:**8**) Fruitful life and ministry

   For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

   Two things must be true here:
   - Possession of these qualities
   - Growth in these qualities

2. **(:9**) Focused vision and Spiritual Discernment

   For he who lacks these qualities is blind or short-sighted,
   having forgotten his purification from his former sins.

Look at the **contrast** here:

a. Coming up short – *lacks these qualities*
b. Lacking clear vision – *blind or short-sighted*
c. Overlooking the point of the Atonement – *having forgotten . . .*

3. (:**10**) Firm assurance

   Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;

John Piper: The confirmation of your election is your progress in sanctification. God predestined all the elect to be conformed to the image of Christ (**Rom. 8:29**). Therefore, the reassuring evidence of our election is **Christ-likeness.**

4. (:**11**) Future reward

   for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.

This verse is the **climax** of Peter's exhortation in **1:5–11**. The phrase **"eternal kingdom"** points beyond the temporary kingdoms of this world to the permanent reign of Christ.

"*abundantly supplied*" – Here the emphasis is on the **quality and abundance of the believer's entrance**, not on earning admission. Do we just limp into heaven or enter with a track record of an extremely fruitful life. Cf. **John 15:8** -- *By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples*. – Different levels of fruit bearing and of reward

II. (1:12-21) THE REINFORCEMENT FOR DILIGENT GROWTH IN KNOWING CHRIST = STANDING ON THE FOUNDATION OF GOD'S TRUTH

Whenever we see little children playing with a train set, we realize how easy it is to get knocked off track. It just takes a little nudge in the wrong direction. That is what Peter is concerned about for these believers. My little grandson Titus came up with a big word that tickled him – "Derailment." He would zoom his toy off the coffee table and then shout in glee: "*Derailment*!" The false teachers are trying to derail these believers.

How do we **stay on track**? This passage focuses both on the responsibility of the disciple and even more importantly on the responsibility of spiritual leaders and teachers.

A. (1:12-15) THE EARS OF AN ELEPHANT – SPIRITUAL LEADERS MUST CONTINUALLY REINFORCE THE TRUTH:

1. (:**12**) Content of the truth -- Not New Revelation, but Repetition of Foundational Truth is Essential
   Therefore, I shall always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you.

Jesus taught His disciples the same lessons over and over again. We tend to be a forgetful people. Don't despise the repetition of critical truths. We need reminders.

2. (:**13-14**) Urgency of reinforcing the truth
   And I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder, [14] knowing that the laying aside of my earthly dwelling is imminent, as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.

Cf. difficulty of waking kids up for school – yet no difficulty in them waking up on Christmas morning at 6 AM. There is a difference in anticipation and excitement and interest in the subject matter.

Peter knew his time was short for delivering these spiritual reminders. These are his last words –

- Peter's final concern isn't: **"Remember me."**
- His concern is: **"Remember the truth."**

3. (:**15**) Goal of reinforcing the truth
   And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure you may be able to call these things to mind.

Peter wants his readers to possess a **lasting memory of apostolic teaching**.
This shows the importance of the written record as he is giving them this letter that they can refer to even after he has departed this life. Perhaps he even has some consciousness here of being used by the Holy Spirit in the process of Inspiration.

Faithful ministry isn't merely about what people hear from us while we are present; it is about what they will remember and remain faithful to after we are gone.

B. (1:16-19) <u>THE EYES AND EARS OF AN APOSTLE</u> --
THE MESSAGE OF THE APOSTLES DEMANDS OUR ATTENTION BECAUSE THEY TASTED THE GLORY OF THE SECOND COMING ON THE MOUNT OF TRANSFIGURATION

The apostles know what they are talking about in contrast to the false apostles and the false teachers who weren't present on the Mount of Transfiguration (but sure make a lot of arrogant boasts about the validity of their fables)

1. <u>(:**16**) The Credibility of Eyewitness Testimony</u>
   For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

2. <u>(:**17**) The Majesty of Divine Testimony</u>
   For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased."

3. <u>(:**18**) The Corroboration of Apostolic Experience</u>
   and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain."

4. <u>(:**19**) The Impact of Such Testimony</u>
   And so we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.

C. (1:20-21) <u>THE MOUTH OF THE HOLY</u> SPIRIT --
THE FOUNDATION = THE PROPHETIC INSPIRED WORD OF GOD

But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, [21] for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

Great passage on the Revelation / Inspiration of Scriptures -- What process did God use?
You hear all the time the smokescreen excuse: "Everyone has their own interpretation of the Bible; therefore, no objective meaning can be attained; therefore, why even study it?"
Here you have God's answer to that objection.

1. The Source of the Revelation Must Determine the Method of the Interpretation
    a. Sourced in God
        - absolute truth
        - objective truth
        - unalterable truth
    b. Interpreted from that Perspective

2. The Process of Revelation / Inspiration

We need to stand firm on the foundation of God's Revealed Truth – that is the only way to protect against Derailment.

III. (2:1-22) THE RECOGNITION OF DECEPTIVE AND DESTRUCTIVE FALSE TEACHERS WHO UNDERMINE DILIGENT GROWTH IN KNOWING CHRIST = SNIFFING OUT FALSE TEACHERS

Historical Context: time of the apostles is fading; it has been over 30 years since the ascension of Christ; false teachers have crept into the church and are gaining momentum; Peter wants to go on record on these issues before he is gone

A. (2:1-3) FALSE TEACHERS ARE DIFFICULT TO DETECT BECAUSE OF THEIR DECEPTION

1. (:**1**) False teachers don't tell until they come out of their shell

    But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

They come in secretly with a hidden agenda; they smile and sign your doctrinal statement and profess to agree with you; then they have opportunity to teach; then they start to sneak in their false doctrine in subtle ways

2. (:**2**a) False teachers excel at accumulating a large clientele

    And many will follow their sensuality,

They are Sensational but Sensual in their lifestyle; they attract a large following

3. (:**2b**) False teachers repel with a terrible smell – Preachers in the Pigpen

    and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned;

    a. They are the Tares that are Planted in with the Wheat in an Attempt to Ruin the Harvest

    b. They are the Rotten Apple that Sits in the Bag with all the other Apples and will Corrupt All

    c. They are the Leaven that Seeks to Permeate the Whole Loaf

d. They are the Stinky Fish that smells up the whole assembly

They give Christianity a bad reputation

4. (:**3a**) False teachers compel to make their pockets swell

and in their greed they will exploit you with false words;

They are the opposite of servant leaders. They have no integrity. Their motive for ministry is **exploitation** and **greed**. They are **liars** proclaiming false words.

5. (:**3b**) False teachers rebel and will land in hell

their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

Judgment is certain – even though it has not fallen on them yet.

B. (2:4-9) FALSE TEACHERS ARE DESTINED FOR JUDGMENT WHILE GOD PRESERVES THE RIGHTEOUS FROM BEING POLLUTED

1. (:**4**) Example of the sinning angels

For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment;

2. (:**5**) Example of judgment of Noah's sinful generation vs. preservation of Noah and his family

and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others,
when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly;

3. (:**6-8**) Example of judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah vs. preservation of Lot

and if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly thereafter; [7] and if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men [8] (for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day with their lawless deeds),

Ron Ritchie: **Noah** and **Lot** both lived in corrupt, ungodly societies. Both were forced to remain in the midst of temptation for a period, Noah for 120 years, while Lot lived (the word means *'he made permanent residence'*) in Sodom. At no time were they removed from their respective locations. Only when God had begun judging their societies were either of these men removed to safety. In the same way, the Christians in Asia Minor had to live in a corrupt society, being tempted to unfaithfulness, to follow false teachers and to believe the mockers who denied Christ's second coming. However, Peter says, God would deliver them from the midst of temptation and personally return in power and glory to deliver them from ungodliness once and for all.

4. (:**9**) Proven Principle
    a. The Lord knows how to preserve the righteous from being polluted
        then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation,

    b. The Lord knows how to reserve the wicked for judgment
        and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment,

C. (2:10-16) FALSE TEACHERS BLAZE A PATH OF DESTRUCTION AS THEY:
- PURSUE PERVERTED PLEASURES AND
- RESIST RIGHTEOUS RULE
(HOW TO IDENTIFY FALSE TEACHERS / HOW DANGEROUS ARE THEY?)

and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties, [11] whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord. [12] But these, like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed, [13] suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong. They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you, [14] having eyes full of adultery and that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children;

1. They pursue perverted pleasures
    those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires

HOW CAN I RECOGNIZE THEM? WHAT THEY DO STEMS FROM WHO THEY ARE

a. SHAMELESS:DAYTIME CAROUSERS: They Flaunt their sin Openly
    "*they count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime*"

b. POLLUTED
    "*they are stains and blemishes*" -- cf. The defilement of leprosy in the OT

c. LUSTFUL
    "*having eyes full of adultery and than never cease from sin*"

d. DECEPTIVE
    "*enticing unstable souls*"

e. GREEDY
    "*having a heart trained in greed*"

2. They resist righteous rule
    and despise authority

a. DARING
b. SELF-WILLED

c. NO FEAR OF GOD
d. UNREASONING ANIMALS – CREATURES OF INSTINCT

DESTINED FOR DESTRUCTION / SUFFERING WRONG AS THE WAGES OF DOING WRONG

3. (:**15-16**) Example of both of these traits: Error of Balaam

forsaking the right way they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, [16] but he received a rebuke for his own transgression; for a dumb donkey, speaking with a voice of a man, restrained the madness of the prophet.

he **allowed his desire for material reward and personal gain to corrupt his spiritual judgment and ministry**.
Peter uses Balaam as a warning against the false teachers who were exploiting God's people for their own advantage.

- **Balaam knew God's will—but wanted something else**
- **Balaam's error was allowing greed to compete with obedience**
- **Balaam eventually found a way to accomplish what God had forbidden directly**
- **Balaam wanted God's blessing without loyal obedience**

D. (2:17-22) FALSE TEACHERS LURE OTHERS INTO THEIR FILTHY PIT BY PROMISING WHAT THEY CAN'T DELIVER

1. (:**17a**) Their Identity -- Who are these false teachers?
   Agricultural context where water was crucial to their economy
   springs without water – promises something valuable but doesn't deliver
   mists driven by a storm – expecting a great storm and all you get is a light mist

2. (:**17b**) Their Destiny -- Where are they headed"?
   "*for whom the black darkness has been reserved*" -- gloomy darkness

3. (:**18**) Their Sensuality -- How do they operate?

- Big Talkers -- "*speaking out arrogant words of vanity*"
- Fleshly Appeal -- "*they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality*"
- Deceptive Exploitation -- "*those who barely escape from the ones who live in error*"

4. (:**19**) T heir Slavery -- What is their message?

- False Promises of Freedom -- "*promising them freedom*"
- Harsh Reality = Slaves to Corruption -- "*while they themselves are slaves of corruption*"
- Essence of Freedom vs Slavery -- "*for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved*"

5. (:**20-22**) Their Degradation -- How bad off are they?
   Apostasy is worse than just plain ignorance of the truth

For if after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. [21] *For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment delivered to them.* [22] *It has happened to them according to the true proverb,*

Two examples of their degradation:

"A dog returns to its own vomit," and,
"A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire."

Evaluate teachers by both doctrine and character.
Peter emphasizes both. A teacher can possess:

- impressive communication
- large crowds
- credentials
- charisma
- popularity

and still be spiritually dangerous.
Look at:

What does he teach?
and:
What kind of life does he live?

IV. (3:1-17) THE RESULT OF DILIGENT GROWTH IN KNOWING CHRIST = STRENGTHENING US TO PERSEVERE IN HOLINESS AS WE AWAIT HIS PROMISED RETURN

A. (3:1-9) THE WORD OF GOD WILL DELIVER ON ITS PROMISES IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOD'S TIMETABLE -- IT ALWAYS HAS … IT ALWAYS WILL

1. (:**1-2**) The Word of God deserves our attention

This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, [2] *that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.*

2. (:**3-4**) The Word of God comes under constant attack

Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, [4] *and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."*

System of UNIFORMITARIANISM = everything stays the same always – leaves no room for divine intervention
Look at the **world views** prevalent today that leave God out of the picture:

1) The World View of the Evolutionist and the Secular Scientist
No Creation; no special significance to man; no ACCOUNTABILITY to God
cf. Dating methods are based on this view

2) The World View of the Secular Historian
God has no plan for History; there is no second coming of Christ; no kingdom plan; no new heavens and new earth; History is heading nowhere;
No URGENCY vs. "His Story"

3) The World View of the Environmentalist
let's devote our life to protecting the natural resources around us; we are one with Mother Earth; this is a world that is reserved for **destruction by fire**!

3. **(:5-6**) The Word of God has proven its supernatural power in the past
   a. (:**5**) Creation – blows away the lie of Evolution
      For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water,

   b. (:**6**) Noah's Flood
      through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.

Lesson: this is a moral universe; sin will not go unpunished forever

TRANSITION:
You didn't find any **mockers** in the day of Noah as the flood waters were rapidly rising; as the torrential downpour refuses to let up; as people cling to the tops of trees waiting their inevitable fate; You won't find any mockers when Christ returns in Judgment; instead every knee will bow and every tongue will confess the truth of God'sWord and the Lordship of His person -- but it will be too late then

4. **(:7**) The Word of God will bring catastrophic judgment in the future
   But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

5. (:**8-9**) The Word of God will bring fulfillment according to God's timetable
   [8] But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. [9] The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.
   The present delay is not due to any failure on God's part
   Not due to lack of power or laziness, but rather to His mercy and grace.
   In fact it can only be called a **delay** when viewed from our limited perspective -- certainly no grounds for doubting the fulfillment of the promise

B. (3:10-13) GOD'S PROMISES ABOUT END TIMES MOTIVATE US TO PERSEVERE IN HOLINESS

1. (:**10**) <u>This world is headed for destruction</u>

   But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

2. (:**11**) <u>Only holiness and godliness have lasting value</u>

   Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

3. (:**12**) <u>The Godly long for the Day of the Lord</u>

   looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!

4. (:**13**) <u>The new world will be characterized by righteousness</u>

   But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

C. (:14-17) DILIGENT WATCHMEN ALWAYS STAND GUARD

- OVER PERSONAL CHARACTER

- OVER GOD'S TRUTH

1. <u>(:**14-15**) Stand guard over personal character</u>

   Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, [15] and regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you,

2. <u>(:**16-17**) Stand guard over God's Truth</u>

   as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. [17] You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness,

(3:18) CONCLUSION -- SUMMARY OF THE THESIS STATEMENT = GROW AND GLORIFY GOD

A. SPIRITUAL GROWTH IS THE PERSONAL GOAL

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

Peter is concerned not only with the negative theme of Guarding against false teaching in the church, but more importantly with the pursuit of spiritual growth and the personal knowledge of Jesus Christ as we anticipate His return.

B. THE GLORY OF GOD IS THE COSMIC GOAL

To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

WHY STUDY THIS BOOK?

- To encourage believers to grow in the true knowledge (in the experiential, relational knowledge) of the Lord Jesus Christ
- To understand that we have been equipped with the same faith as the apostles and granted all that is sufficient for spiritual maturity and godliness; but we are still responsible to apply diligence and make every effort to grow
- To understand the urgency of these last days when false teaching abounds and time grows short to pursue godliness; we need to be circumspect
- To understand the coming wrath of God upon those who persist in ungodliness and false teaching
- To live in hope as we look forward to the return of Christ, despite the mockers and the scoffers