



*THE BOOK OF
II PETER*



GULF SHORES
CHURCH OF CHRIST
Gulf Shores, AL

BIBLE CLASS STUDY GUIDE

Prepared by Ray Reynolds

A Survey of the Book of II Peter
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This study guide was created by Ray Reynolds for the purpose of Sunday morning Bible classes at the Gulf Shores Church of Christ (Gulf Shores, AL). The material presented in this class series will be gleaned from personal notes, the New King James Study Bible, Dr. Coy Roper, Gleason L. Archer, Irving L. Jenson, Mark Copeland, Frank Pack, Guy N. Woods, and various other sources.

A Survey of the Book of II Peter

INTRODUCTION

Author:

The book claims to have been written by the apostle Simon Peter (**II Peter 1:1**). However, traditions about this are weak and conflicting. The language and style is different from I Peter. However, **I Peter 5:12** reveals Silas and John Mark's influence in the first book. This may have been a more personal letter from his own hand and with influence from Jude (**II Peter 2:1-3:4** is nearly a word for word quote of **Jude 4-19**).

There are those who feel that no other book in the New Testament is more hotly debated in reference to date and author. It should be noted that these things were debated before the book was placed in the NT canon and after 367 AD it was universally accepted, despite these arguments.

Many critics are also critical of other books, dates, and authors, just because they dislike accepting things as assumed so because of tradition. Being critical is not necessarily a bad thing, but if it takes the focus off of the message, then it becomes a distraction.

Date:

It is generally accepted it was written in the mid 60's AD. Some have ascribed 64-65 AD to the book, while others believe it to be closer to 66-68 AD. It is obvious it was written at the same time as the book of Jude, but there are differing views as to which came first.

Theme:

This book is about seeking knowledge. Peter previously commanded Christians to defend their faith (**I Peter 3:15**). This, of course, included knowledge (**John 8:32**). Faith is reasonable and is not a leap into the dark. Once this is understood we can see that false teachers can be successfully defeated by carefully examining the Scriptures (**II Peter 2**). The threat of false teachers at the time of 2 Peter had become a reality, which is also seen in the book of Jude. He reveals that some will attempt to "twist" the Scriptures (**II Peter 3:15**).

Peter hopes that Christians will see that they can know, beyond the possibility of error, that God exists and that the Bible is His Word (**II Peter 1:20ff**). The way to such knowledge is spiritual growth and maturity (**II Peter 1:3-10**). This is one of the reasons why he spends his last chapter dealing with preparing for the second coming and giving an account for our spiritual walk.

Audience:

The letter was intended for a general audience (**II Peter 1:1**). There is little doubt that he intended it for the exiled Christians in the Roman provinces of Asia Minor: Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia(**II Peter 3:1**).

Key Verses:

II Peter 1:5-9, 1:19-21, 2:4-11, 2:21, 3:1-9, 3:10-13, 3:17-18

Outline:

- I. The Blessings of God (1:1-15)*
- II. The Glory of God (1:16-21)*
- III. The Justice of God (2:1-16)*
- IV. The Teaching of God (2:17-22)*
- V. The Promise of God (3:1-9)*
- VI. The Peace of God (3:10-18)*

A Survey of the Book of II Peter

LESSON ONE: The Blessings of God

Text: II Peter 1:1-15

Introduction: I Peter was written before the persecution of Nero and the Romans against the early Christians. This second letter is addressed to the church in general, but specifically focuses on hard teachings that were misunderstood by the church. The words of this great book are applicable in any age but they are scholarly in nature. The apostle Peter is seeking to offer some words to the faithful. Will you accept them? In this lesson, we will focus on the blessings of God. Let's study together. . .

Discussion:

I. Receiving Your Faith (1:1-4)

- A. Christians must be encouraged.
- B. Christians need to seek knowledge.
- C. Christians have everything they need.
- D. Christians inherit a nature like God.

II. Adding To Your Faith (1:5-7)

- A. Christians add virtue.
- B. Christians add knowledge.
- C. Christians add self-control.
- D. Christians add patience.
- E. Christians add godliness.
- F. Christians add brotherly kindness.
- G. Christians add love.

III. Evaluating Your Faith (1:8-11)

- A. Christians grow in Christ.
- B. Christians are called and chosen.
- C. Christians will never fail.
- D. Christians inherit an eternal inheritance.

IV. Strengthening Your Faith (1:12-15)

- A. Christians cannot forget their past.
- B. Christians cannot forget that life is temporary.
- C. Christians cannot forget their motivation.
- D. Christians cannot forget what they have learned.

Conclusion: Peter confirms that once we have established an unstoppable faith in ourselves, we need to encourage others. Peter is seeking to build up the faith of the church. Will you receive his words to the faithful? How's your faith? Have you taken the steps of faith? Are you keeping your faith strong? What can we do to encourage you to stay faithful to God?

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LESSON TWO: The Glory of God

Text: II Peter 1:16-21

Introduction: Since we have concluded a study of I Peter, and entered into a study of II Peter, we have learned a lot about the apostolic methodology of this great disciple and elder. Where the first letter was meant to strengthen the faith of Christians, this second is meant to further educate them on matters of the faith. Most of the topics we will discuss in this series are "meaty" and challenging, they are appropriate for the church today. We are facing some of the same difficulties today. In this particular lesson we will be studying the glory of God. Are you ready to study words to the faithful? Let's study together. . .

Discussion:

I. Jesus Is Glorified Through the Confirmation of the Eyewitnesses (1:16)

- A. Christ came to the earth.
- B. Christ is coming again.
- C. Christ is glorified on the earth.
- D. Christ is glorified in heaven.

II. Jesus Is Glorified Through the Confirmation of the Father (1:17-18)

- A. Christ was baptized in front of many witnesses.
- B. Christ was transfigured in front of many witnesses.
- C. Christ was crucified in front of many witnesses.
- D. Christ was glorified because of His obedience.

III. Jesus Is Glorified Through the Confirmation of the Disciples (1:19)

- A. Christ's disciples defended Him.
- B. Christ's disciples defended the truth.
- C. Christ's disciples defended the church.
- D. Christ's disciples were passionate for the cause.

IV. Jesus Is Glorified Through the Confirmation of the Word of God (1:20-21)

- A. The Scriptures give hundreds of prophecies concerning the Christ.
- B. The Scriptures exalt Christ throughout the Old and New Testaments.
- C. The Scriptures are not for private interpretation.
- D. The Scriptures are the inspired words of God.

Conclusion: Peter confirms that once we have established an unstoppable faith in ourselves, we need to encourage others. Peter is seeking to build up the faith of the church. Will you receive his words to the faithful? How's your faith? Have you taken the steps of faith? Are you keeping your faith strong? What can we do to encourage you to stay faithful to God?

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LESSON THREE: *The Justice of God*

Text: II Peter 2:1-10

Introduction: In this second letter, Peter hopes to strengthen the faith of Christians and further educate them on matters of the faith. Most of the topics we will discuss in this series are "meaty" and challenging, they are appropriate for the church today. We are facing some of the same difficulties now. In this particular lesson we will be studying the justice of God. Are you ready to study words to the faithful? Let's study together. . .

Discussion:

I. Justice for False Teachers (2:1-3)

- A. False prophets have been numbered among God's people.
- B. False doctrines are extremely destructive.
- C. False teachers will be found in the church.
- D. False things cannot derail the way of the truth.

II. Justice for Fallen Angels (2:4)

- A. Some of the angels sinned.
- B. The angels who sinned were sent to Hell.
- C. These wicked angels received punishment.
- D. God will use justice to punish the wicked.

III. Justice for the Family of Noah (2:5)

- A. Wicked people were punished with the flood.
- B. Noah and his family were spared.
- C. Evil people are against God and His ways.
- D. Noah preached the truth.

IV. Justice for the Family of Lot (2:6-8)

- A. God destroyed the evil cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.
- B. God used the destruction as an example.
- C. Lot and his family were spared.
- D. Lot's family did not leave without being affected.

V. Justice for Humanity (2:9-10)

- A. The Lord knows how to save.
- B. The Lord will hold evil people and punish them.
- C. The Lord will be prepared for the Judgment Day.
- D. The Lord will execute His authority.

Conclusion: Peter confirms that once we have established an unstoppable faith in ourselves, we need to encourage others. Peter is seeking to build up the faith of the church. Will you receive his words to the faithful? How's your faith? Have you taken the steps of faith? Are you keeping your faith strong? What can we do to encourage you to stay faithful to God?

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LESSON FOUR: The Teaching of God

Text: II Peter 2:10-22

Introduction: In this second letter, Peter hopes to strengthen the faith of Christians and further educate them on matters of the faith. Most of the topics we will discuss in this series are "meaty" and challenging, they are appropriate for the church today. We are facing some of the same difficulties now. In our last lesson we noticed the justice of God. In order to better understand the lesson for today let me point out four things: (1) *Christians must be aware of the destructive heresies of false teachers*, (2) *Christians must be aware of the destructive words of false teachers*, (3) *Christians must be aware of the destructive methods of false teachers*, and (4) *Christians must be aware of the destructive partners of false teachers*. In this particular lesson we will be studying the teaching of God, as expressed by those who speak the truth, and contrast it with false teaching. Are you ready to study words to the faithful? Let's study together. . . .

Discussion:

I. True or False = What People Are Hearing (2:10-12)

- A. False teachers are selfish, teachers of the truth think of others first.
- B. False teachers accuse men and angels, teachers of the truth do not accuse.
- C. False teachers are ignorant, teachers of the truth are wise.
- D. False teachers covet, teachers of the truth do not covet.
- E. False teachers are like animals, teachers of the truth are like God.

II. True or False = What People Are Seeing (2:13-16)

- A. False teachers enjoy suffering, teachers of the truth do not rejoice in suffering.
- B. False teachers enjoy sin, teachers of the truth do not rejoice over sin.
- C. False teachers enjoy abusing grace, teachers of the truth do not abuse grace.
- D. False teachers consider the present, teachers of the truth consider the future.
- E. False teachers do not listen to reasoning, teachers of the truth listen and obey.

III. True or False = What People Are Thinking (2:17-22)

- A. False teachers are empty, teachers of the truth are full.
- B. False teachers are enslaved, teachers of the truth are free.
- C. False teachers know evil, teachers of the truth know Jesus.
- D. False teachers follow the broad path, teachers of the truth follow the narrow road.
- E. False teachers ignore backsliding, teachers of the truth address backsliding.

Conclusion: Peter confirms that once we have established an unstoppable faith in ourselves, we need to encourage others. Peter is seeking to build up the faith of the church. Will you receive his words to the faithful? How's your faith? Have you taken the steps of faith? Are you keeping your faith strong? What can we do to encourage you to stay faithful to God?

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LESSON FIVE: *The Promise of God*

Text: II Peter 3:1-9

Introduction: Since we have concluded a study of I Peter, and entered into a study of II Peter, we have learned a lot about the apostolic methodology of the great disciple and elder of the church. Where the first letter was meant to strengthen the faith of Christians, this second is meant to further educate them on matters of the faith. Most of the topics we will discuss in this series are "meaty" and challenging, they are appropriate for the church today. We are facing some of the same difficulties today. In this lesson we will be studying the promise of God. Are you ready to study words to the faithful? Let's study together. . .

Discussion:

I. God's Promise Through the Prophets (3:1-2)

- A. Christians need to be reminded of things they have heard before.
- B. Christians need to reveal honest minds.
- C. Christians need to reflect on the words of the prophets.
- D. Christians need to respect the commands of God.

II. God's Promise Through the Apostles (3:2)

- A. Christians should know the apostles.
- B. Christians should respect the apostles.
- C. Christians should read and study the words of the apostles.
- D. Christians should relate to the apostles.

III. God's Promise Through the Generations (3:3-7)

- A. Christians were laughed at because of their faith in Christ Jesus.
- B. Christians will witness people doing evil things.
- C. Christians must be prepared despite the persecution.
- D. Christians will be separated from the wicked on Judgment Day.

IV. God's Promise to Christians Today (3:8-9)

- A. Christians need to understand how God works.
- B. Christians need to understand God's faithfulness.
- C. Christians need to receive this great promise of God.
- D. Christians need to recognize the grace of God.

Conclusion: Peter confirms that once we have established an unstoppable faith in ourselves, we need to encourage others. Peter is seeking to build up the faith of the church. Will you receive his words to the faithful? How's your faith? Have you taken the steps of faith? Are you keeping your faith strong? What can we do to encourage you to stay faithful to God?

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LESSON SIX: *The Peace of God*

Text: II Peter 3:10-18

Introduction: Several weeks ago we started a study of the books of Peter. We learned much about the apostolic methodology of this great man of God and his passion as an elder of the church. His first letter was meant to strengthen the faith of Christians, but the second was meant educate the brethren on matters of the faith. We have considered some "meaty" and challenging topics, but have seen the applicable nature for the church today. As we close out this series of lessons, I would like for us to study the peace of God. Are you ready to study words to the faithful? Let's study together. . . .

Discussion:

I. Peace Comes From Being Prepared (3:10-13)

- A. Jesus will return like a thief in the night.
- B. Jesus will return with calamity and destruction.
- C. Jesus will return for those who anticipated His coming.
- D. Jesus will return because of God's promise.

II. Peace Comes From Avoiding Sin (3:14-15)

- A. Christians should do their very best while they wait for Jesus.
- B. Christians should flee from sin while they wait for Jesus.
- C. Christians should be without fault while they wait for Jesus.
- D. Christians should be at peace with God while they wait for Jesus.

III. Peace Comes From Reading the Word of God (3:15-16)

- A. Christians need to read the words of Paul.
- B. Christians should respect the teachings of the Word of God.
- C. Christians rightly divide the word of God.
- D. Christians should comprehend the whole counsel of God.

IV. Peace Comes From Growing in Grace and Knowledge (3:17-18)

- A. Peter wants Christians to be careful.
- B. Peter wants Christians to avoid evil people.
- C. Peter wants Christians to stay faithful.
- D. Peter wants Christians to continue to grow.

Conclusion: Peter confirms that once we have established an unstoppable faith in ourselves, we need to encourage others. Peter is seeking to build up the faith of the church. Will you receive his words to the faithful? How's your faith? Have you taken the steps of faith? Are you keeping your faith strong? What can we do to encourage you to stay faithful to God?

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CONCLUSION

Christians in the 21st century are nearer our Lord's return than ever. Therefore, the book of second Peter has more than just eschatological value. Jesus may return during this century! Readers need to be more prepared now that they know Jesus' return is very close. Unfortunately, because of the Internet, tele-evangelist, and novelists many Christians have had their view clouded. They are unwilling or unable to discern truth from error because of false teachers. What can they do? Follow the apostle Peter's advice.

Peter is using not only his apostolic role, but his pastoral role in this book to shepherd his readers and prepare them for better living. Individual Christians and churches that want to grow can follow the same prescription for growth in faith that Peter gave in **II Peter 1:5-11**. Faith alone is not enough to please God. Adding to our faith is necessary. We must take action.

Believers need to be aware of false teachers and false prophets. Peter repeats an Old Testament theme that seems to be familiar to his readers. He emphasizes the "word of the prophets" of the Old Testament (**II Peter 1:19-21**) and the influence of the Holy Spirit on those who wrote the Bible. Consider **II Samuel 23:2**, **Jeremiah 23:26**, and **II Timothy 3:16-17**. False teachers plagued God's people in both the Old and New Testaments. Unfortunately they are still with us.

Finally, notice how Peter elevates the ministry and teaching of Jude. James, the brother of Jesus, was a significant leader in the Jerusalem church. Little is known of this other half-brother of Jesus, except what he wrote in his letter (the next to last book in the New Testament). Yet, Jesus teaching was so valuable to the apostle Peter that **II Peter 2:1-3:4** is nearly a word for word quote of **Jude 4-19**. Not only were the brothers in agreement, but Peter must have intended to elevate Jude's ministry.

There is little time to delay. Jesus is coming soon! Now is the time to heed the advice of the apostle Peter. Now is the time to prepare for judgment. God will reward the righteous and punish the wicked. What will be your fate?