

Principles of 2 Peter 1:1

- We were all born in slavery to sin as members of the Adamic race [Rom 6:20].
- When we place our faith in Jesus Christ, we are freed from the bondage of sin [Rom 8:2].
- As believers we are still slaves, but we are now under a new Master, the Lord Jesus Christ [Eph 6:9] who purchased us [2 Pet 2:1] with the price of His blood (spiritual death on the cross) [Acts 20:28; Rev 5:9].
- As slaves of Jesus Christ, we are useful to Him when we flee from sin and pursue righteousness [2 Tim 2:19-22].
- We cannot truly call ourselves a δοῦλος bond-servant until we make the volitional decision to submit our lives to our Master [Matt 10:38-39; 16:24-25].
- Those who choose to submit to Christ and are truly servants of the Lord will come to know the joy that only God can provide [Isa 65:13-14].
- The tenets of our faith are contained in the Scriptures which have been granted to us by God – all believers have access to the whole counsel of God [Acts 20:27].
- Pastors are gifted by God to build up the body of Christ [Eph 4:11-13], but they do not have “special knowledge” that other believers do not have access to.
- God grants us the ability to understand the Scriptures through the ministry of God the Holy Spirit [John 16:13].
- We are indwelled by God the Holy Spirit, not because of any merits of our own, but because we have been given the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ [Rom 3:21-22; 8:9-11].
- Jesus Christ is our God and Savior and is co-equal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.
- ∴ By (on the basis of) the righteousness of Jesus Christ we have been granted the content of our shared faith.

Principles of 2 Peter 1:2

- We have always been under God's grace (Common Grace [Mt 5:45]), but as born again believers we now have a son-father relationship with God [Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6] and God extends even more of His grace to us.
- This grace-upon-grace [John 1:16] is neither earned nor deserved (grace cannot be), but is based purely upon what God has done in uniting us with Christ [Gal 3:27] and imputing His righteousness to us [Rom 3:21-22].
- In 1 Peter we learned that, as believers, we can find ourselves in a position of opposition with God rather than recipients of His grace [1 Pet 5:5; Jas 4:6; Pr 3:34].
- As these verses make clear, our position of opposition comes about as a result of pride which leads to rebellion against God in the form of sin and human good.
- When sin puts us at enmity with God, the answer is to change our minds about our sin and confess [1 John 1:9].
- In both his 1st and 2nd epistle to the people of Asia Minor, Peter expresses his desire that grace and peace be multiplied to these believers [1 Pet 1:2; 2 Pet 1:2].
- In 2nd Peter we see that this multiplied grace and peace involves having full knowledge of the Father and Christ.
- Full knowledge of God is a result of learning [Deut 17:18-20], believing [1 Thess 2:13], meditating upon [Ps 119:97-99] and applying [Ps 119:100; Jas 1:22] the word of God.
- Grace and peace are coupled together in many verses in the Bible [Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3; Eph 1:2; Phil 1:2; Col 1:2; 1 Th 1:1; 2 Th 1:2; 1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:2; Titus 1:4; Phlm 3; 1 Pet 1:2; 2 Pet 1:2; 2 John 3; Rev 1:4].
- The believer who is under God's grace is at peace with God (not at enmity) and also at peace in his own soul.
- This peace of God for believers is actually a guard for the believers' hearts and minds [Phil 4:7].

Principles of 2 Peter 1:3-4

- When we understand that the omnipotent power of God is the source of everything we need for our spiritual life, we will begin to live by His strength rather than our own.
- When we attempt to carry out our work assignments in our own strength, we are operating in the power of the flesh and are unable to produce the results God intends.
- Furthermore, we should only expect to achieve victory in the day-to-day battles of the Angelic Conflict when we are wielding God's strength against the enemy.
- Likewise, if we understand that God is freely giving to us everything we need for our spiritual life and reverent conduct, we will begin to seek answers to our spiritual problems from God rather than in worldly solutions.
- This means avoiding psychotherapy, psychiatry, spiritism, psychotropic drugs, or any other non-Biblical source.
- Even Christian counseling should be avoided when it is based upon godless Freudian or Jungian psychological methodologies and simply laced with Bible verses.
- The solutions to our spiritual problems are all provided to us by God's grace...
 - If we are carnal, we receive forgiveness of sins by God's grace through confession of sin [1 John 1:9].
 - If we need wisdom for a particular situation we are facing, we receive wisdom from God [Pr 3:5-7a] by God's grace through prayer [James 1:5] and through the study of God's word [2 Tim 3:14-17].
- Through these divine provisions, while humbly yielding to the ministry of God the Holy Spirit, we have all of the tools we need to live a life of reverent conduct.
 - Reverent conduct requires a believer to have an attitude of respect, even fear, toward almighty God [Psalm 36:1; Prov 2:5-10].
 - Reverent conduct is the outward result of a believer's devotion to Christ [2 Cor 11:3].
- When we walk in the Light our spiritual productivity is all provided by God's grace...
 - God the Holy Spirit provides us with spiritual gifts which are suitable for our ministries [1 Cor 12:4].
 - God the Son opens the doors for ministry [1 Cor 12:5].
 - God the Father works in us to produce the effects of our various ministries [1 Cor 12:6].
- God's abundant provision for our spiritual life comes through a full knowledge of who He is [2 Pet 1:3].
- We can know about God through natural revelation [Ps 19:1; Rom 1:20], but we can come to know God only through special revelation – the Word of God.
- As we increase in the knowledge of God we gain spiritual wisdom and understanding which enables us to know His will and results in a fruitful spiritual life [Col 3:9-10].
- The more we know God, the more we know about all of the spiritual assets He has freely given to us as believers.

- The more we know God, the more we are able to employ those spiritual assets in our daily lives.
- When we actively and effectively employ the spiritual assets provided to us by God, we become resilient and nimble in handling virtually any of the circumstances and conditions we may face in our lives [Phil 4:11-13].
- As believers, we have been invited by God to live a life which glorifies Him as we manifest His excellence of character in this world full of moral relativism.
- We come to a *full* knowledge of God's righteous standards as we learn more and more about the Word of God and live our lives according to what we learn.
- As we do this we are able to demonstrate God's perfect character in every aspect of our daily lives.
- This occurs as our character is gradually transformed to be consistent with God's character through the renewing of the mind [Rom 12:2].
- God provides us with the time we need to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ [2 Pet 3:18], but since He has also granted to us volition which has a direct impact on the growth process, we are held accountable for anything we do which hinders our spiritual growth.
- In the working of God's plan for our lives which is rooted in growing up in all aspects into Christ [Eph 4:15], He has manifested His glory and excellence of character in giving us His magnificent promises.
- These promises are contained in the Scriptures and are worth more than gold or silver or jewels [Pr 3:13-15].
- These promises have such value to us only when we personally claim them and live accordingly.
- God's promise that "greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world" [1 John 4:4] does us no good when we try to stand up to our spiritual adversaries in the power of our own strength.
- God's promise that "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." [1 John 1:9] does us no good if we resist the convicting ministry of God the Holy Spirit and refuse to confess our sins.
- God's promise that "if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him." [Jas 1:5] does us no good if we fail to seek God's wisdom through prayer or doubt God's ability to fulfill His promises [Jas 1:6-7].
- God's promise that "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU." [Heb 13:5] does us no good if we live as though God is not with us and doubt His ability to be the provider of all things we need [Phil 4:19].
- It should be our goal, then, to search the Scriptures to learn more about the promises God has given to us and find opportunities to claim those promises knowing that God is faithful to deliver on those promises [Num 23:19; 1 Cor 10:13; 2 Cor 1:18-20; 1 Thess 5:24; 2 Thess 3:3].

- By claiming God’s promises, we grow to become “partners” with our new nature which was created in righteousness and holiness of the truth [Eph 4:24].
- This developing partnership with the divine nature of our second birth necessarily requires that we sever the partnership with our old, corrupted sin nature [Eph 4:22].
- The old nature is not eradicated at the moment of our salvation, nor is it reformed through the process of spiritual growth.
- Our old nature is and always will be inherently given to evil practices [Col 3:5-9].
- God, therefore, allows us to choose which nature we will be in cahoots with, so we are either becoming more Christ-like or we are becoming more like the world around us – there is no stagnancy in the spiritual life.
- When we choose to partner with our new nature it is renewed to a *full* knowledge according to the image of Christ [Col 3:10] which results in a life characterized by reverent conduct [Col 3:12-17].
- Our partnership with the divine nature allows us to manifest the righteousness of God in all that we do, but we do not in any way become God by partaking of our new nature.
- We need to understand that at the moment of salvation we were freed from our slavery to sin [Rom 6:6], so we are no longer locked in an inescapable partnership with our sin nature.
- God also has blessed us with the indwelling Holy Spirit who opposes the flesh, so when we make the choice to walk by means of the Spirit we will not partner with and fulfill the desires of the old sin nature [Gal 5:16-17].
- This world that we live in has been polluted by sin and is characterized by moral decay.
- Our freedom from slavery to sin has also set us free from the corruption of this world.
- It is through our partnership with the new nature that we begin to be influenced by God’s system of values.
- The world is dominated by Satan’s system of values which are to our sin nature like candy to a child - irresistible.
- As we claim God’s promises that we can live in Satan’s world in God’s strength, with access to God’s wisdom, and under God’s hand of protection, He disarms the effectiveness of the temptations of this world.
- Summary...
 - Recognize that God is the source of everything necessary for our spiritual life and godly living.
 - Come to know God through His Word.
 - Learn God’s promises and personally claim them.
 - Sever your relationship with your old self and partner with the new, divine nature God has given you.
 - Walk by the Spirit to avoid worldly influences and sin.

Principles of 2 Peter 1:5-7

- First comes our position in Christ and then our responsibility based upon that position follows.
 - God first saves us by grace.
 - Having received the gift of eternal life, we must choose to live accordingly.
- If we choose to live as people possessing eternal life, then it is necessary for us to apply diligence in allowing God to transform our lives.
- We are responsible for how we choose to use our time, the desire to be seriously engaged in our walk with the Lord, and the humility required to be teachable.
- God does the work in us to produce the characteristics of Christ in our lives [Rom 12:2; 2 Cor 3:18; Phil 2:13].
- The believer's diligence entails an ongoing exercise of faith which is the foundation of the virtues that are produced through spiritual growth.
- In our diligent pursuit of spiritual growth we should develop Christ-like virtues in our walk of faith...
 - excellence of character.
 - knowledge.
 - self-control.
 - patient endurance.
 - reverent conduct.
 - brotherly kindness.
 - sacrificial love.
- God is the one who provides the growth and builds the edifice in our soul, but it is our responsibility to seek after these qualities as each one builds upon the others.
- Our excellence of character comes from dwelling on the character of Jesus Christ [Phil 4:8].
- Our excellence of character is not a thing to be hidden – it should be apparent in all of our words and actions and is one of the ways we proclaim the character of God to this lost and dying world [1 Pet 2:9].
- In order for spiritual growth to occur in our lives we must pursue knowledge of God's word [Col 1:10].
- This knowledge should progress into full knowledge as we accumulate more and more of God's word and unite our understanding with faith [Heb 4:2].
- This full knowledge should then develop into wisdom as it becomes part of our norms and standards and is actively applied to our experience [Heb 5:12-14].
- As we grow in our faith we should begin to gain mastery over our passions so that we begin to have self-control over our words and actions.

- This is not a legalistic obedience to a set of rules imposed by men [Col 2:20-23], but rather an inner strength which comes through spiritual maturity.
- No degree of spiritual maturity will result in such self-control apart from the filling of the Spirit [Gal 5:16-24].
- Our flesh opposes the Spirit [Gal 5:17], so it is necessary for us to use the strength which God supplies to exercise self-control in disciplining our bodies [1 Cor 9:24-27].
- As baby believers, we lack patience and do not have the spiritual stamina to endure protracted testing.
- God uses testing to develop our patience and endurance [Rom 5:3-5; 15:4; Jas 1:3] so that when we find ourselves under persecution, we can persevere [2 Thess 1:4].
- When patient endurance is fully developed in us, the result will be a high level of spiritual maturity [Jas 1:4].
- When faith is accompanied by excellence of character, knowledge of God's word, self-discipline and patient endurance, we possess the building blocks for a life characterized by reverent conduct.
- This is everyday conduct that honors God as we live like someone who believes in God and believes God.
- A godly person has a reverence, devotion and properly oriented fear of God.
- All of these characteristics of a mature believer result in an outward expression of love.
- The first way our spiritual maturity is expressed is in the love of the brethren [Rom 12:10; 1 Thess 4:9; 1 Pet 1:22].
- This is a rapport-based love which is rooted in our common bonds of the faith.
- We should be able to love our brothers in Christ with rapport love even if we don't like the way they dress, the way they talk, or the way they do a number of things.
- Brotherly love is very different from sacrificial love and does not apply to brothers in Christ who are abiding in carnality [1 Cor 5:9-13].
- The ultimate goal of spiritual maturity is that a believer is able to love with a sacrificial, integrity-based love.
- This type of love is unconditional and flows from the character of the one who loves.
- This is how God loved us even while we were yet sinners and sent His Son to die for us [John 3:16; Rom 5:8; Eph 2:4-5; 1 John 3:16].
- This type of love can be extended to carnal believers and unbelievers because it does not depend in any way upon the merits of the object.
- As we see in Peter's list, unconditional, sacrificial love is based upon all of the other virtues which are developed in us as we mature in the faith [1 Cor 13:4-8a].
- God expects us to progress in the faith, not to remain as babes in Christ [1 Pet 2:1-3].
- We should examine ourselves to see if we lack in any of the qualities in this list and should be diligent to seek to add these things to our walk of faith as needed.

Principles of 2 Peter 1:8-10

- The only way we can attain the character qualities we learned about in verses 5 through 7 is through the ministry of God the Holy Spirit as we grow in our faith.
- As these qualities begin to become real in our souls, we advance down the path of the productive Christian life.
- As these qualities increase in us to the point of abundance, we gain the capacity to produce an abundance of spiritual fruit in an increasingly wide-ranging variety of ministries.
- These qualities will not truly exist in us apart from a full knowledge of Jesus Christ which comes as God's word (which we learn through the diligent study of the Scriptures under the filling ministry of the Holy Spirit) dwells richly in our souls [2 Tim 2:15; Col 3:16].
- Believers who do not come to a full knowledge of Christ and do not increase in these character traits will find themselves either on the sidelines (idle) or totally unproductive (unfruitful) in their spiritual lives.
- Many believers today are excited about getting "busy" for the Lord, but because they do not have full knowledge of Christ they do not understand His will, so they are "busy" doing things which do not bear any spiritual fruit.
- Other believers who do have some knowledge of God's will often choose a particular course of action based upon personal preference and end up producing less spiritual fruit than they could have had they objectively followed God's plan for their lives.
- There are many ways we can inhibit the amount of spiritual fruit we produce...
 - Carnality [1 John 1:6-10]
 - Lack of spiritual preparation [Heb 5:12-6:2]
 - Forsaking our assembling together [Heb 10:25]
 - Neglecting our spiritual gift(s) [1 Tim 4:4]
 - Subjective choice of ministries [Acts 15:38]
 - Being in the wrong physical location [Acts 16:6-8]
- Many believers are spiritual infants who are myopic (near-sighted) and can only focus on their current circumstances and conditions.
- However, we are not to remain spiritual children but should grow up in all aspects into Christ [Eph 4:14].
- When believers add to their faith [v .5] by growing in respect to their salvation [1 Pet 2:1-2] they will gain the objectivity needed to avoid spiritual myopia.
- This objectivity comes as we continually keep in mind the forgiveness of sins we received at the moment of salvation as well as the ongoing forgiveness we receive when we confess our sins as believers.
- This perspective allows us to see beyond our immediate situation and grasp the big picture of God's grace working in our lives which gives us an eternal focus [2 Co 4:17-18].

- As we grow spiritually, our faith, which sees beyond the temporal realm, becomes our “sight” [2 Cor 5:7].
- In light of the tremendous benefits of growing spiritually and the peril of remaining spiritually stagnant and losing sight of God’s grace, we should be motivated to apply a diligent effort in pursuing spiritual maturity [2 Tim 2:15].
- As unbelievers God’s called us to hear the gospel and as believers He chose us to be a part of His Church.
- His calling/choosing us should not have only a short-term effect in the “honeymoon” period after our salvation.
- Instead, the results of His calling and choosing us should have an abiding effect for the rest of our earthly lives.
- Our salvation is the beginning of our eternal life and the remaining duration of our life on this earth ought to be lived with an eternal perspective [2 Pet 3:13].
- This eternal perspective motivates us to glorify God with our lives which we will do when we put aside the characteristics of our old nature and put into use the qualities which God is instilling in us [Eph 4:22-24].
- We are actually delusional when we hear the things of the word of God and do not put them into use [Jas 1:22].
- In contrast, when we abide by the word of God and put into use the things the Holy Spirit teaches us, we will be blessed [Josh 1:8; John 13:17; Jas 1:25].
- In addition, when our actions reflect the renewing of our minds [Rom 12:2], we are walking by means of the Spirit and will never stumble [v. 10] because we will not carry out the desires of the flesh [Gal 5:16].
- This constant walk in the Light, abiding in Christ, is what God intends to be normal for His children.
- There is no need for us to be spiritually shipwrecked in our lives, constantly stumbling.
- We must always be mindful that it is the power of God that keeps us from stumbling [Jude 24-25].
- We often stumble when our pride draws our attention away from God and toward ourselves [1 Cor 10:12-13].
- When go from the Light into darkness when...
 - Something (including ourselves) distracts us from our focus of the Lord [Heb 12:1-2].
 - Once we take our eyes off of God, we stop walking by means of the Holy Spirit.
 - At this point, we become susceptible to temptation.
 - The temptation itself is not a sin, but once we “impregnate” the temptation as our negative volition is carried away, it gives birth to sin [Jas 1:13-15].

Principles of 2 Peter 1:11

- In this passage we have already seen many benefits associated with allowing God to transform us by the renewing of the mind.
- Now we are learning about a future blessing that comes when we outwardly demonstrate the character traits that God is manifesting in us.
- All Church Age believers will return with Christ at the Second Advent and will enter with Him into His earthly kingdom [1 Thess 4:17].
- However, believers whose lives are characterized by walking in a worthy manner [Eph 4:1; Col 1:10; 1 Th 2:12] will enjoy a grand entrance into the kingdom with Christ.
- Believers who continue in the deeds which God prepared beforehand [Eph 2:10] until the end will receive a reward of authority in the kingdom above and beyond that which every believer receives through faith in Christ [Rev 2:26].
- 2 Tim 2:12 also speaks of a reign with Christ that is reserved for those who endure.
- These rewards (like all others) are provided to believers on the basis of God's grace – they are undeserved even though they are qualified by obedience.
- The Bible describes rewards for the faithful believer to show the character of God in bestowing blessings upon those who have honored His Son during their lives.
- Our motivation for following the will of God and living a life that is pleasing in His eyes should come from our love for Him [John 14:15], not from trying to “earn” rewards.

Principles of 2 Peter 1:12-15

- Believers need to be frequently reminded of what they already know in order to prevent dullness of thinking or, even worse, forgetting that which they have learned.
- This assumes, of course, that believers have already learned the doctrines the pastor is giving as a reminder.
- In the process of review, many believers will be learning doctrinal tenets or principles of application for the very first time.
- Even when believers have doctrinal principles fresh in their thinking, frequent reminders serve to solidify their understanding of the word of God as it becomes implanted in their souls [Jas 1:21].
- This process of learning/reminder puts God's word at the forefront of the believers' thinking so that it is at their disposal and readily applied to the exigencies of life.
- This is how the truths of the Bible can bring stability to believers independent of circumstances and conditions.
- Stability = Learning + Reminders + Application
- When God's word is firmly implanted/ingrained in our souls, it becomes the "shock absorbers" for our spiritual life as we are able to handle whatever speed bumps or potholes we might encounter in our daily walk.
- This is the true source of a person's equilibrium, not business success, bank accounts, retirement plans, material possessions, social status, physical health, family, friends, etc.
- God is infinitely stable – His truth gives us stability.
- Many pastors are drawn to attempt to teach something sensational and spectacular in order to attract followers, but a good servant of Christ will teach the fundamental, sound doctrines of the faith [1 Tim 4:6].
- This may seem boring to some, but if believers actually listen to these reminders of the fundamental truths of the faith, they will often be awakened from a spiritual slumber they didn't even realize they had drifted into.
- Peter recognized the importance of grounding believers in the doctrines of the faith.
- He was even more acutely aware of his responsibility in teaching by way of reminder given that he knew his physical death was imminent.
- Peter was not afraid to die, but he had an urgency about this teaching because he understood that his earthly ministry would come to an end when he departed from his earthly body [Phil 1:21-24].
- Peter serves as an example to all pastors in that he was always ready to remind believers of the eternal truth of God's word so that they would always have that truth fresh in their thinking, even after he died.
- Earthly ministries come to an end, but the truth of the word of God lasts forever [Isa 40:8].
- God's word is the only source for our understanding of eternity and eternal things such as our living soul and spirit which will continue on after our physical death.

Principles of 2 Peter 1:16-19

- False teachers (which we will learn more about in chapter two) base their faith upon worldly myths and lies.
- The apostles' teaching was based upon the authority of God's word which is confirmed by historical facts.
- The Bible itself is the most trustworthy collection of writings that has ever been preserved.
- There are over 5,000 Greek New Testament manuscripts available to reconstruct the original text.
- Some N.T. papyri date back to the time of the apostles.
- By contrast, there are only 10 good manuscripts of Caesar's *Gallic Wars* and the oldest manuscript is dated 900 years after Caesar's time.
- Conclusion: Our faith is based upon the truth of God's word which has been delivered to us by God's prophets and apostles and faithfully preserved for us in the Bible.
- Peter had personal experience with Jesus Christ.
- His experience included his time as an Apostle of the Lamb walking side-by-side with Jesus during the 1st Advent as well as the unique experience of witnessing the transfiguration which gave him a glimpse of the glorious and powerful return of Christ at the 2nd Advent.
- While personal experience never takes precedence over God's word, the things to which Peter was an eyewitness were perfectly consistent with biblical prophecy and serve to lend credibility to him as a teacher.
- The word of God is the measuring stick by which we must measure our lives, including our personal experience.
- As with any measuring tool (ruler, micrometer, etc.) it is important to know how to use it.
- First, the word of God must be properly understood through a literal, grammatical, historical hermeneutic.
- Then, the word of God must be rightly divided so we know what applies to us today.
- Next, the word of God must be developed into categories of doctrine and principles of application in our thinking.
- Finally, the word of God must be objectively applied to the experiences of our lives.
- Each of these steps requires faith and humility as we must yield to the ministry of God the Holy Spirit.
- Failure to do so opens the door for the lies of the world and the deception of sin to influence our perspective.
- Peter, James and John saw Jesus transfigured into His millennial glory alongside Moses and Elijah [Mt 17:1-3].

- When Peter saw this he wanted to set up tabernacles in honor of Jesus, Moses and Elijah [Mt 17:4].
- At that very moment God the Father interrupted Peter declaring from heaven that they were beholding His beloved Son in whom He was well pleased and that they needed to listen to Him [Mt 17:5].
- Jesus then gave them instruction that the things they saw would not come about until after He suffered the cross – the cross must come before the crown [Mt 17:9].
- Peter learned that day that he should understand things according to God's timeline and he let his readers know that they were doing well by paying close attention to the prophecies of Scripture.
- All prophecy of Scripture will literally be fulfilled.
- Prophecy tells us that the world will be a dark and miserable place when Jesus returns at the 2nd Advent.
- The Light of Christ (the light-giver) will shine through the darkness of the Tribulation when He returns to establish His kingdom on earth.
- In the meantime, God shines His Light into our hearts day-by-day through the truth of His word [Ps 19:8; 36:9; 119:105; Pr 6:23].

Principles of 2 Peter 1:20-21

- It is imperative for us to understand that Scripture is not the product of human creativity or imagination.
- Bible haters will deny the divine origin of Scripture, but Peter makes it clear that these writings came from God.
- God spoke much of His word through the Old Testament prophets.
- These men wrote Scripture that contains law, songs, historical narrative, and predictions of future events.
- The word prophecy refers to the content of the message God delivers through His prophets which includes all of these writings, not just the predictive passages.
- God also spoke His word through the New Testament apostles.
- The word Scripture (singular) refers to the entire message God has delivered to us in His word which, though written by many human authors, is one in its teaching.
- It is important for us to learn the whole counsel of God [Acts 20:27] so that we do not make the mistake of deriving a distorted meaning from any isolated passage of Scripture.
- There are some passages of Scripture which are less clear to us today, but we can always use the crystal-clear passages to help us understand those that are less clear.
- Lesson: Always compare Scripture with Scripture.
- It is also important for us to derive the meaning from the Scripture in its proper context and not to try to read our own personal bias into a passage.
- The Holy Spirit spoke through the men who wrote the Scripture and He must help us interpret what He wrote.
- There is only one proper interpretation of each passage (the one that the author – God Himself – intended), but there will be many applications of the doctrines we learn.
- God chose the men who would write His word and the Holy Spirit “moved” them to write exactly what He wanted, but He did so without thwarting their intelligence, personality, vocabulary, or literary style.
- Such a process could only be supernatural as the Holy Spirit superintended the writing of Scripture.
- It was through this process of verbal inspiration that God was able to record Scripture with perfect accuracy.
- The Bible is the only such divinely inspired book on earth.
- Other writings may be inspirational or contain forms of wisdom, but we should always look to the Bible as our only valid source for God’s wisdom and His instruction for how to live our lives.
- This is based on our faith in God who told us that His almighty power has freely given us everything we need for life and godliness [2 Pet 1:3].

Principles of 2 Peter 2:1-3a

- Just as false prophets arose among the people of Israel [Jer 5:31; 6:13; 14:14; 23:25; 27:15; Lam 2:14; Ezek 13:9; 22:28] there will also be false teachers among us today [Acts 20:29-30; 1 John 2:18-19].
- These false teachers use clever deception and disguise to infiltrate churches [2 Cor 11:14].
- They do not position themselves as opponents of Christianity, but instead distort the truth of the Bible.
- Many people within the church will be gradually led away from the true doctrines of the Bible, unaware that they are adhering to false teaching.
- In order to do this, elements of the truth will be sprinkled in with their distortions in order to hook their “fish”.
- Believers cannot be possessed by demons, so Satan must use deception to lure people away from the true faith.
- All systems of religion originate from Satan.
- Religion attempts to gain God’s favor through works.
- Christianity is not a religion, but rather a relationship with God based upon salvation by grace through faith.
- These false teachers will manipulate people into believing lies such as, “We get to heaven by trusting in Christ and doing His works here on earth.” or “If you don’t persist in the faith until the end of your life then you were never a believer to begin with.”
- False teachers will teach things contrary to Scripture, but they typically do not admit that.
- Certain Bible verses are simply not taught or doctrines based upon Scripture are conveniently omitted.
- The congregation, if not grounded in Scripture, can easily be seduced into believing these false teachers because they come across as so sincere, their presentation style is so appealing, or they are such nice people.
- These false teachers are unbelievers (they have rejected Christ the Redeemer [Jude 4]) and, as such, are tools of Satan teaching doctrines of demons [1 Tim 4:1].
- One common element of false teaching is to deny that the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross was sufficient payment for our sins.
- These unbelievers were bought by Christ giving proof of unlimited atonement [1 Tim 2:6; Heb 2:9; 1 John 2:2].
- Because they have rejected Christ, these false teachers bring destruction upon themselves.
- We can never legitimately blame someone else (our family, the church we went to, etc.) for the choices we make – every unbeliever who ends up in the Lake of Fire will be there because of their own volitional choice.
- Sadly, many people will fall for their false teaching and be seduced by religion.

- For example, it is a very seductive message to hear that there is no such thing as hell or the Lake of Fire.
- This message gives a false sense of relief to those who are concerned about friends or family who might not have believed in Jesus Christ unto eternal life.
- This false teaching lures people in and makes them more susceptible to believing other false doctrines including distortions of the Scripture.
- Another tactic of these false teachers is to provide people with worldly “solutions” to the problems they face in everyday life.
- The teaching seems to provide a temporal benefit, so it is easily misunderstood as legitimate.
- Because the messages make people “feel good” they conclude that the teacher must be teaching the truth and, in doing so, abandon the truth of God’s word.
- The message of salvation by grace through faith alone in Christ alone [Acts 4:12; Eph 2:8-9] is not a popular message in the pluralistic world we live in that wants there to be many ways to heaven.
- It is also not a popular message to teach that our works are merely a response to God’s grace and not a way to earn favor in His eyes.
- People want their ears to be tickled [2 Tim 4:3].
- Because people are so entranced by the seductive messages of these false teachers, they become utterly devoted to them and will follow them no matter what.
- In doing so they bring great harm upon themselves – unbelievers suffering eternal condemnation, believers throwing away eternal rewards.
- In all of this, the way of truth (the word of God) is rejected and maligned.
- These false teachers have an insatiable greed for money, power, etc. to feed the lusts of their sin natures.
- They will say whatever they need to, no matter how deceptive and dishonest, in order to captivate their target audience.
- To these false teachers, the congregation is nothing more than a bunch of lemmings they can manipulate as needed to take advantage of them for their own gain.

Principles of 2 Peter 2:3b-10a

- Some falsely believe that God dealt with the human race with judgment in the O.T. and now grace in the N.T.
 - God does not change – He has always been merciful and gracious and, likewise, has always been just.
 - The judgment that these false teachers will face has been established by God from eternity past.
 - God is not slow in carrying out these judgments – He allows the false teachers time to repent [2 Pet 3:9].
- God's character and essence are immutable and all aspects of God's character and essence are always involved in everything He does.
 - Most unbelievers and many Christians emphasize only one aspect of God's essence – His love.
 - God is: Righteous, Just, Sovereign, Eternal, Omniscient, Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Truth, Immutable, Love, Gracious, Merciful, Longsuffering, Jealous, etc.
- God's perfect justice is applied to all His creatures including those of the angelic realm.
 - Fallen angels went outside of their domain and bore children with human women [Gen 6:1-4, Jude 6].
 - God dealt with these fallen angels by placing them in captivity until the day of judgment [2 Pet 2:4, Jude 6].
 - NOTE: Although fallen angels have already been separated from holy angels, judgment still awaits.
- God's perfect justice is also applied to nations, societies, cultures, etc. – Israel: Ezekiel chapters 4-24, Gentile Nations: Ezekiel chapters 25-32, Sodom and Gomorrah: Gen 19:23-29, The Ante-Diluvian World: Gen 6:5-13.
- Being the object of God's justice should not be viewed as a bad thing – this entails cursing for unrighteousness, but just as significantly it entails blessing for righteousness [Pr 3:33; Lev 26:3-18; Deut 28:1-20].
- We know that God is faithful [Deut 7:9; 32:4; Isa 25:1; 1 Cor 1:9; 10:13; 2 Cor 1:18], so we can count on the fact that He will punish those who oppose Him and provide protection/deliverance for those who follow Him.
- Sodom and Gomorrah serve as an example of what God will do in dealing with ungodly places and cultures.
 - Sexual perversion, including rampant homosexuality, had become commonplace in these cities.
 - He will deal likewise with corrupt cultures of today.
- Lot was delivered from Sodom and Gomorrah, but the example of Lot and his family teaches us that we should never allow prominence [Gen 19:1] or anything else that might draw us in [Gen 19: 26] to keep us from separating ourselves from unrighteousness [2 Cor 6:14-18].

- While changing our circumstances and conditions is not the solution to our problems if it is against God's will, we should never stay somewhere that makes provision for our flesh [Rom 13:14].
- God knows how to deliver us from temptation, if we seek His provision for doing so [Matt 6:13; 1 Cor 10:13].
- Those who indulge the flesh and reject the authority of God and His word have absolutely nothing to guide them toward righteous conduct in their lives.
- America has cut off its moorings for truth by removing God's word from our schools and promoting ungodly lifestyles in the name of political correctness.
- We have failed as a people to pass on the lessons of Scripture to our children and, as a result, have spawned generations that despise the authority of the home, work, government, etc.
- This is all rooted in a rejection of the authority of God and of His word as the final authority of what is true.
- The idea of someone being Lord over us is a concept that is viewed with great contempt today.
- Our souls may be tormented as we observe the lawless deeds of the increasingly godless world we live in, but we must always remember...
 - In this world we have tribulation, but Christ has overcome the world [John 16:33].
 - We are still in this world, but we are not of this world [John 15:19; 17:14-16; Phil 3:20].
 - Anxiety is not God's plan for us [Phil 4:6; 1 Pet 5:6-7].

Principles of 2 Peter 2:10b-12

- The lack of respect these false teachers have for all authority and lordship reveals itself in their attitude toward the angelic realm.
- Angels are part of a realm of creation that is higher than the Adamic race [Heb 2:7, 9].
- This distinction includes the 1/3 of all angels that are fallen angels, even though they have rebelled against God by following Satan.
- The Adamic race is a realm of creation that is higher than the animals.
- This is true even of unregenerate people (including these false teachers) who are under condemnation as the penalty of sin.
- If these false teachers had an ounce of humility they would have respect for all members of the angelic realm and tremble at the thought of reviling them.
- Instead, their arrogance has caused them to be bold to the point of recklessness in maligning fallen angels.
- This may seem odd since the false teachers and fallen angels are on the same “team”.
- Discord within the “kingdom” of Satan can be clearly seen in Daniel 10:20 where the fallen angel known as the prince of Greece is about to come to engage in battle against the fallen angel known as the prince of Persia.
- Evidence of the division within Satan’s “kingdom” is also evident in the world around us.
- A very subtle, yet powerful, nuance underlies Jesus’ statements in Matt 12:25-27.
 - Jesus successfully made His case that He was not casting out demons by the power of Beelzebul.
 - While doing so, Jesus foretold the demise of Satan’s “kingdom” – it is divided and won’t stand.
- As a consequence of the rebellion of the fallen angels, they have damaged intellect and diminished power as compared to the holy angels [Ezek 28:12-19].
- However, even though the holy angels are greater in strength and power, they do not take it upon themselves to speak against these fallen angels, but prefer to let the Lord deal with them [Jude 9].
- We should take the same approach as the holy angels.
- The actions of the false teachers defy rational thought.
- They clearly do not have a good understanding of the hierarchy of God’s creation nor the power that the fallen angels still possess.
- They are slaves to their impulses, acting like irrational beasts that follow their natural drives.
- Just like animals that are born to be captured and killed, these false teachers will eventually meet their demise.
- The Lake of Fire has been prepared for Satan and the fallen angels [Mt 25:41; Rev 20:10].
- All unregenerate humans who have not placed their trust in Jesus Christ as their Savior will face the second death by being thrown into the Lake of Fire [Matt 25:41; Rev 20:14-15].
- Because these false teachers have rejected the Master who bought them (Christ), they are unregenerate and face eternal destruction in the Lake of Fire.

Principles of 2 Peter 2:13-16

- False teachers love the money they rake in as a result of their con games, but the true “wages” they will actually receive will be their just desserts [Gal 6:7].
- These false teachers are unregenerate and, as such, are slaves to their sin natures [Rom 6:17-18].
- Their lustful desires have degenerated [Rom 1:18-32] to the point that they don’t think anything of carousing even in the daytime [Rom 13:12-13].
- These false teachers have a tainted character and are blemishes (a disgrace) upon the Church and society.
- They are so given over to their sin natures that they deceitfully indulge in their own lusts even while participating in the Lord’s Supper [Jude 12].
- Many people (believers and unbelievers) are susceptible to the lies of these false teachers because they are looking for someone who will justify their sinful lifestyles.
- These false teachers are consumed with sexual lust and view women as mere sex objects [Lam 3:51; Matt 5:28].
- They always sin with their eyes through sexual lusts, covetousness, etc. [Pr 27:20; Ecc 1:8; 4:8; 1 John 2:16].
- These false teachers can read people and know exactly what kind of bait to use as a lure to entice anyone who has not been stabilized in his own soul through the truth of God’s word [Eph 4:14; 2 Pet 1:12; 3:16; James 1:6-8].
- These false teachers have been “exercising” their greedy ways for a long, long time and have become experts in this area of lust [Eph 4:17-19].
- Their greed, however, is insatiable and they will never be able to satisfy their lust for more and more [Col 3:5].
- They have rejected Christ [2 Pet 2:1] so they are under eternal condemnation [Gal 3:13] and their actions reflect their subservience to their sin natures [1 John 3:9-10].
- We, as believers, should not join the rest of society on the treadmill of covetousness and greed attempting to gain more status and/or money [Luke 12:15].
- If we allow ourselves to become consumed with temporal riches we will damage our spiritual walk and cause ourselves grief [1 Tim 6:6-10].
- Instead, we should flee from such things and pursue spiritual riches [1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 2:22].
- These false teachers had been presented with truth, but they chose to reject the right way and allowed themselves to be misled by their desire for riches.
- They followed the pattern of Balaam who was driven by an irrational lust for money.
- God used a donkey that Balaam had mistreated to rebuke him and get his attention so God could teach Balaam a lesson [Num 22:21-35].
- If these false teachers had understood this lesson from Scripture, they might have seen the folly of their ways.
- If the people these false teachers were enticing with their “bait” understood this lesson from Scripture, they might not have been lured in by their deceptions.
- This is a reminder that all lessons from Scripture are important for us to learn [2 Tim 3:16-17; Acts 20:20, 27; Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 10:6].

Principles of 2 Peter 2:17-19

- False teachers are unable to offer spiritual refreshment because, as unbelievers, their spiritual well is empty.
- They are like clouds that seem to promise of refreshing showers, but are blown by the stormy winds and yield nothing but fine mists.
- Those who are seduced by the boastful promises made by these false teachers will, in the end, find nothing but disappointment.
- Many of these false teachers deny the existence of hell or the Lake of Fire even though they themselves are slated for eternal separation from God because of unbelief.
- During His earthly ministry Jesus talked more about hell than He did about heaven, so denying the existence of hell is rejecting the credibility of Christ.
- These false teachers speak boldly and make high sounding claims that are without substance.
- The only power these empty claims possess is as bait that draws people in to the false teachers' systems of lies.
- In contrast, the truth of God's word is inherently powerful [Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 1:18, 24; Heb 4:12].
- These false teachers appeal to the weaknesses of the sin nature in their prey and promise that their followers will have no restraints (false freedom) which will be very attractive to believers trapped in legalistic churches.
- Instead of understanding the true freedoms they have in Christ, these believers swallow up the promise of "freedom" from moral constraint which is nothing more than giving in to the lusts of the flesh and returning to the slavery to sin they knew as unbelievers.
- The irony is that the false teachers who are promising "freedom" are themselves enslaved to the corruptions of their own sin natures.
- Many false teachers today are denying the teaching of the Bible regarding the sinfulness of the homosexual lifestyle [Rom 1:26-27; 1 Cor 6:9-10; 1 Tim 1:8-11] and are seducing many believers into voluntarily enslaving themselves to their own sexual lusts.
- The believers that are susceptible to the deception of the false teachers are typically infants in Christ who have only barely escaped from the life they had as an unbeliever.
- These people are saved by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, but they have never grown up in the faith and are not grounded in the truth [Eph 4:14-15].
- If they understood the principle that anything that overpowers them will enslave them, perhaps they would not willingly give in to the power of the flesh, but would instead yield to the power of God the Holy Spirit and grow to be bond-servants of Christ.

Principles of 2 Peter 2:20-22

- When you place your trust in Jesus Christ as your Savior, God the Father rescues you from the domain of darkness and transfers you to the kingdom of His Son [Col 1:13].
- God does not immediately remove the newborn believer from the world, but does provide him with the ability to escape from the defiling influences of the world [John 17:15; 1 Cor 10:13; 2 Cor 7:1; 2 Pet 2:9].
- However, sin can easily entangle any believer [Heb 12:1].
- If a believer does not avail himself of God's perfect provision and continues along the path of sin, he will gradually become less and less able to say no to temptation in the power of the flesh.
- Such a carnal believer will eventually find himself overpowered by the defilements of the world.
- God does not discipline unbelievers, but will deliver increasing discipline to the carnal believer [Heb 12:6-8].
- Believers should know the way of righteousness and are held accountable for turning away [Luke 12:48; Jas 4:17].
- If a believer persists in a pattern of continual sin for long enough, God may remove him from the world through the sin unto death [Ezek 18:20-28; 1 John 5:16-17].
- Even so, God is faithful to restore such a believer if he humbles himself, repents (changes his mind) and confesses/forsakes his sin [Prov 28:13; 1 John 1:9].
- The believer that turns away from what has been handed down to him from God and resumes the life of sin he knew as an unbeliever has, just like a dog, disgustingly returned to partake of his own "vomit".
- This makes no more sense than the sow that is washed clean running back to roll around in the mud of the sty.
- NOTE: Peter's examples were particularly powerful to Jews who saw dogs and pigs as unclean animals [Mt 7:6].
- Our sin nature has been crucified with Christ, so it makes no sense to return to wallow in our sins [Rom 6:6-7].
- We have been given a new nature which has been created in righteousness and is being renewed to full knowledge [Eph 4:24; Col 3:10], so it is insanity for us to act like animals that are creatures of instinct [2 Pet 2:12].
- Believers have been freed from sin and should no longer present themselves as slaves of sin [Rom 6:16-20].
- All of us were once unbelievers living a life of sin, but we have been washed and set apart by God [1 Cor 6:9-11].
- We should now consider ourselves as dead to the sin in which we once walked [Col 3:5-8].

- The foolishness we knew as unbelievers should be set aside now that God has saved us by grace [Titus 3:3-7].
- If we put aside all of that filthiness, we must then receive the word of God implanted in our souls [Jas 1:21].

Principles of 2 Peter 3:1-2

- The truth we learn from Scripture is so vitally important that we need reminders to stir up our memory.
- It is as we cycle the truth of God's word through our conscious thoughts that it is able to transform us when united by faith [Col 3:16; Heb 4:2; Rom 12:2; Eph 4:23].
- When we center our thoughts on worldly things instead, Satan has succeeded in lulling us into spiritual slumber [Rom 13:11; 1 Cor 11:28-30 ; 1 Thess 5:4-8; 2 Cor 10:5].
- Mediating upon the word of God [Josh 1:8] will allow our thoughts to be unhindered by sin [Ps 119:11] and uncluttered by false teaching [Ps 119:78].
- We are able to comprehend the reality of the world we live in only when we thoughtfully evaluate it on the basis of the objective truth which is found in God's word.
- Satan and his world system try to numb our minds through inane influences like TV and pop culture.
- Temporal prosperity can also draw our focus toward worldly things and lure us into taking a spiritual nap.
- It is only as our soul prospers that we are able to handle temporal prosperity [3 John 2; Phil 4:11-13].
- We need to have God's word at the forefront of our thinking at all times in order to be alert and ready to defend ourselves in the spiritual battles of the angelic conflict [1 Pet 5:8].
- One way to keep the word of God resonating in your soul is to memorize Scripture, keeping in mind the meaning of the words, not simply utilizing rote memorization.
- This includes passages from both the O.T and N.T. which are able to nurture and rescue our souls [Jas 1:21].
- Just as we carefully choose the right furniture to place in the rooms of our home, we must carefully choose the right thoughts to place in the "rooms" of our souls.

Principles of 2 Peter 3:3-7

- We should be aware that there will be people who mock our faith in the promises of the Bible and the attacks will come from believers and unbelievers alike.
- These mockers are living according to the flesh and their views are colored by their own subjectivity.
- Because they are fleshly, these mockers are often very belligerent and seek to impose their worldly viewpoint upon Bible-believing Christians.
- One area of Scripture that will be mocked is eschatology because unbelievers and untaught believers do not have a thorough, literal understanding of God's grace eternal plan for the ages.
- These mockers question our faith in the promise of the return of Jesus Christ (Rapture and/or 2nd Advent) and base their disbelief on the erroneous assertion that everything in the universe continues on as it always has.
- We should be able to articulate, as Peter did, how the earth itself has already undergone major changes since creation in the restoration process and the flood event.
- Both of these examples show how God has been actively working in the events of history and provide evidence that He will continue to do so in the future.
- The sending of His Son from heaven to die on the cross for our sins is another wonderful example to cite.
- Peter goes on to slam the mockers' belief in the constant universe by pointing out that a day will come when God is going to completely destroy this universe.
- In describing this, Peter makes two important points...
 - The destruction of this universe has been part of God's plan from the very beginning.
 - God will Himself preserve and protect this universe until it is time for Him to vaporize it.
- Peter's response to the mockers gives us a great example of how knowledge of the Bible is a critical weapon against the attacks of the adversary.
- Jesus showed us the importance of this when He cited Scripture in response to every temptation of the devil [Luke 4:1-13].
- The armor of God passage in Eph 6 tells us that the word of God is the sword of the Spirit [Eph 6:17].

Principles of 2 Peter 3:8-9

- Believers who do not know the essence and character of God need to study the Bible (preferably under the shepherding care of a pastor-teacher) in order to come to know who God really is.
- Believers who know the essence and character of God should be careful to keep those things in mind when evaluating the world around them, especially when confronted with mockers.
- Knowing God's essence and character as well as the doctrines and principles of the Bible is essential in the process of applying truth to our experiences.
 - It is important to be a diligent student of the Bible so truth can be understood categorically which is essential for proper application of truth in our lives [2 Tim 2:15].
 - Note that the proper way to live as a Christian is to apply God's absolute truth to our experiences, not to allow our experiences to shape our understanding of what is true.
- As we explore the essence of God we learn about His "omni" attributes – omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence.
- Just as God is omnipresent, meaning that He is always at every location in the universe, He is also omnichronomic, meaning that He is always at every time in history.
- As a result, God is able to see everything on the entire timeline from A to Ω , giving Him a perfect, simultaneous view of all events that were, are, and will be.
- With God's infinite view of time, nothing is ever early or late as we might understand things from our finite view.
- The Bible gives us prophecy about future events in God's plan and those events will take place at the perfect time according to God's perfect plan and purpose.
- We should not allow the mockers to disturb our faith in God's promises just because they make the erroneous assumption that nothing is going to change.
- The return of our Lord Jesus Christ was imminent almost 2,000 years ago when the N.T. Scriptures were written and it remains imminent today.
- Those 2,000 years seem like a long time for us, but in God's view they take up a very short time [Ps 90:4].
- Our lives may seem to us to last for a long time, but in God's view we are here in this world for just a little while and then we vanish away [Jas 4:14].

- We see the world in terms of people arriving too early, packages arriving late, flights being delayed, deadlines that are too soon and vacations that aren't soon enough.
- God's plan does not involve events occurring too soon or events being delayed [Hab 2:3; Heb 10:37].
- What we view as a "delay" in Christ's return is actually evidence of God's amazing grace as He provides more time for people to be saved [Rom 2:4; 1 Tim 2:4].
- We should not allow ourselves to become impatient regarding God's perfect timetable.
- The moment will surely come when the body of Christ will be complete and God the Father will send His Son to claim His bride [Acts 1:7; 1 Thess 4:16].
- The Tribulation will follow in its perfect time after which we will return with Jesus as He defeats the rebellion at Armageddon and establishes His kingdom on earth.
- After the 1,000 years, the final rebellion will be put down and this universe will be destroyed by fire.
- The Great White Throne judgment follows and, once completed, the stage is set for the eternal state.
- God will create a new universe in which righteousness dwells and there is no more sin and no more death.
- We can be sure of all of these things – God promised it and it will come to pass according to His perfect timing.

Principles of 2 Peter 3:10-12

- The Day of Christ refers to the Rapture event in which Christ returns to meet the Church in the air and take His bride home for the wedding.
- The Day of the Lord refers to the period which comes after the Rapture, beginning with the Tribulation and extending through the destruction of this universe.
- The Day of God refers to the eternal state on the New Heavens/Earth in the fullness of the times [Eph 1:10].
- The Rapture is never mentioned in the O.T. whereas the Day of the Lord is mentioned fairly often.
- As with the Rapture, the Day of the Lord will come when no one is expecting it [1 Thess 5:1-2; Rev 16:15].
- The timing of these events is already set in God's plan, but remains a mystery to us.
- At the end of the Millennium, this universe will be obliterated into nonexistence [Rev 20:11].
- This event will not entail rapid oxidation (fire, as we know it) or the conversion of matter into energy ($e = mc^2$).
- Instead, just as God brought the heavens and earth into existence from nothing (ex nihilo), He will render the heavens and earth into nothing (in nihilum).
- This event is so complete that every single element that makes up this world we live in will be dissolved away into nothing.
- This will remove all traces of the corruption that came upon the universe during the falls of Satan and Adam.
- Together with the various judgments of man, this event will expose and destroy all of the works of man on the earth that have been dishonoring to God.
 - Judgment Seat of Christ
 - Sheep and Goats/Wilderness Judgments
 - Great White Throne Judgment
- Given that this event is sure to occur, it is necessary for us to be people who...
 - Live sanctified lives, distinct from that of unbelievers.
 - Exhibit reverent conduct with our focus upon God.
 - Expect and anticipate the eternal state in which righteousness dwells [v. 13].
- The eternal state cannot come until this universe and all the works in it are obliterated.

Principles of 2 Peter 3:13

- God has promised us that a day will come when He will create a brand new universe from scratch.
- The promise of this new universe was given in the O.T. [Isa 65:17; 66:22] and elsewhere in the N.T. [Rev 21:1-4].
- We should be just as sure that He will fulfill this promise as we are that He will fulfill His promise to save everyone who believes in Jesus Christ [John 3:16, 36; 11:25-26].
- This new universe will not be created until after the current universe has been obliterated out of existence.
- This new universe will be fresh and completely untainted by the curses which befell this universe when sin entered into the world through the falls of Satan and Adam.
 - Satan [Isa 14:12-14; Ezek 28:12-18].
 - Adam [Gen 3:1-19; Rom 5:12].
- This new universe will be free from all unrighteousness.
 - There will be no need to lock things up for fear of theft or vandalism.
 - There will be no need for police or armed forces.
 - There will be no nuclear arms race, terrorism, etc.
 - There will be no lying, conniving politicians.
 - There will be no gossip, jealousy, slander, etc.
 - There will be no self-pity.
 - There will be no worry.
 - There will be no anxiety.
 - There will be no fear.
 - There will be no guilt.
 - There will be no unhappiness of any kind.
 - There will be no murder, adultery, etc.
 - There will be no false religions or idolatry.
 - There will be no disrespectful behavior.
 - There will be no road rage or grouchy customer service representatives.
 - There will be nothing sinful of any kind.
- Everyone in the new universe will be free from their sin natures and unable to fall from righteousness as Satan and Adam had done.
- The righteousness that will dwell forever in the new universe corresponds to God's perfect righteousness.
- We, as believers, should live in expectant anticipation of the life we will live in this perfect universe... forever.

Principles of 2 Peter 3:14

- Peter assumes here that we are expectantly anticipating the coming of the Day of the Lord and the promised new heavens and new earth.
- Unbelievers do not understand the truth of God's A to Ω plan which includes judgment for everyone and a perfect environment for all of eternity for those who love God.
- Sadly, many born-again believers are also ignorant regarding these things.
- If we do indeed confidently expect these things to occur, then we ought to make every effort to live a life that is pleasing in God's sight [Phil 2:12-16].
- We also ought to understand that this current universe is not even close to a perfect environment and we should set our expectations accordingly.
- We should seize the opportunity to have peace in the midst of a world of turmoil.
- This opportunity for peace began the moment we were eternally reconciled to God through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ [Rom 5:10; Col 1:21-23].
- As believers, we can enjoy temporal peace in our souls as we exercise the faith-rest technique [Phil 4:6-9].
- This peace does not come about through the absence of problems, but rather the absence of anxiety and fear that results from a believer living in harmony with God.
- A believer who consistently walk in the Light and grows in the faith will begin to develop a mastery of the details of life over time [Phil 4:11-13].
- This is the result of a soul that is filled with the truth of God's word and has all of these truths well-arranged.
- This "tidying up" of the soul takes place as we dwell on the things we have learned at church and read in the Bible [Col 3:16].
- To make progress toward this goal, a believer must live a life that is characterized by being unstained by sin.
- This requires the believer to rely upon the sustaining ministry of God the Holy Spirit and the word of God resident in the soul in order to avoid sin [Psalm 119:11; Gal 5:16; Jas 1:27; 1 John 1:7].
- If the believer stumbles, he must be quick to recognize the slip-up and confess the sins immediately [1 John 1:9].
- Complacency or even human laziness can cause a once-diligent believer to lead an undisciplined spiritual life.
- Continuance in this undisciplined walk will result in the gradual acceptance of worldly ideas which will crowd out the divine viewpoint standards in the believer's soul.
- This is why Satan continually attacks the believer in an attempt to lead us astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ [2 Cor 11:3].

Principles of 2 Peter 3:15-16

- Believers are called to a walk of faith, but are often reminded in the Scriptures to use their minds.
- We are never called to stop thinking, but we must be willing to recognize that God is capable of doing things that go beyond the natural [Isa 55:8; Mt 14:22-31; 19:26].
- Although our minds should be focused on things eternal, we should not become impatient – God’s timeline allows for more people to come to Christ before the Rapture.
- Peter was not alone in teaching these things – Paul also wrote about having an eternal focus [2 Cor 4:17-18] and about the Lord’s patience toward those who would eventually believe in Him [Rom 2:4; 1 Tim 1:15-16].
- At the time of the writing of this letter, many of Paul’s letters were available for churches to study.
- Peter recognized that Paul’s letters were part of the Scriptures which God had delivered to the Church.
- This is important for a couple of reasons...
 - The acknowledgement of the fact that Paul’s letters were Scripture confirms their proper place in the Bible and tells us that believers in the 1st century were concerned about canonicity.
 - Even though Peter and Paul had at least one confrontation in the past [Gal 2:11-21], Peter did not harbor anger or bitterness toward his brother Paul.
- Some of the things Paul writes about in his letters are deep theological issues which can be hard to understand.
- It is through a lifetime of study with the help of God the Holy Spirit that we are able to gain a grasp the depths of Paul’s writings.
- Some people who do not have the Holy Spirit to help them (because they are unbelievers) distort what Paul teaches for their own personal gain.
- If these unbelievers continue to distort the Scriptures, they will never understand the truth of the gospel so as to be saved [1 Pet 1:22-23].
- Believers can also distort the Scriptures for their own purposes according to their own biases.
- Pastors must be diligent to maintain objectivity in their studies and avoid “adulterating” the word of God in their teaching [2 Cor 4:1-2; 2 Tim 2:15].
- All of us need to be humble and set aside our personal biases in order to clearly understand the things we learn from the Bible [Jas 1:21].
- Most importantly, we all must rely upon the Holy Spirit who teaches us the truth of God’s word [John 16:13].
- If we are truly humble and willing to accept what the Holy Spirit teaches us, the truth of God’s word will pierce us to the very core [Heb 4:12].

Principles of 2 Peter 3:17-18a

- We should be well aware that there are many people out in the world who twist the meaning of the Scriptures.
- This includes false teachers, untaught believers, so-called religious scholars, etc.
- If we have been forewarned about these people then we ought to be forearmed with the spiritual wisdom we need to protect our souls from their harmful distortions of the truth of God's word.
- The only way to recognize and stand firm against false doctrine is to be grounded in sound doctrine.
- Many, if not most, of the believers in the world today are not grounded in the truth and, as a result, have unstable souls which are vulnerable and can easily be led astray.
- When we allow ourselves to get caught up in false teaching for whatever reason (emotion, approbation lust, frantic search for happiness, etc.) we are in danger.
- When we choose to expose ourselves to distortions of God's word, it does not take very long before we begin to drift away from the solid grounding in the truth that gives us stability within our souls.
- Once we have gotten a firm hold on the truth of God's word, we should not let go [Col 2:5; 1 Pet 5:9].
- Knowing God's word enable us to distinguish between truth and error [1 John 4:6].
- This is why it is imperative for us to continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior.
 - It is the knowledge of God's word that forms the building blocks of spiritual truth in our souls.
 - As building block is placed upon building block, we progress toward spiritual maturity.
 - As we grow we become grace-oriented in our thinking and begin to love with ἀγάπη love.
- All of God's word is spiritually profitable [2 Tim 3:16] and gives us knowledge of God [Pr 2:5; Rom 11:33; 2 Cor 10:5; Col 1:10].
- However, it should be a particular focus of ours to come to know our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ [2 Cor 2:14; Eph 1:17; 4:13; Col 2:2; 2 Pet 1:2, 8; 2:20].
- We came to know Him as our Savior when we believed in Him and were born-again and we spend the rest of our lives coming to know Him as our Lord.

Principles of 2 Peter 3:18b

- It is our blessing as born-again believers to praise our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, recognizing and proclaiming His glory.
- We have that blessing now, in these fallen bodies and in this fallen world.
- We will also have that blessing in His very presence for all of eternity [Heb 13:21; 1 Pet 4:11; Rev 5:13].
- As we are looking for the New Heavens and New Earth, we should relish the fact that we will have unending opportunities to sing God's praises.
- We will also be rid of these bodies of sin which will give us the ability to worship God in an unhindered way as we have never been able to do before.
- Just the very thought of what this will be like for all eternity should be a source of joy for us today.
- This eternal perspective should be reflected in our thoughts, words and deeds every single day.
- In our prayers we should praise God for who He is and thank Him for the many blessings we have.
- In addition, we should not be ashamed to proclaim God's glory and share the glories of the gospel of grace with those we encounter in our daily lives [Rom 1:16; 2 Tim 1:8, 12; 1 Pet 4:16].