

WEEK 7

BY THE FIRE:

A STORY OF RESTORATION

FIRST BAPTIST church

Cultivating Love, Choosing Progress, Cherishing Civility

First Baptist Church of Rancho Cucamonga
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☐	Day 1	1 Peter 1:1-2	☐	Day 21	1 Peter 4:12-15
☐	Day 2	1 Peter 1:3-8	☐	Day 22	1 Peter 4:16-19
☐	Day 3	1 Peter 1:9-12	☐	Day 23	1 Peter 5:1-4
☐	Day 4	1 Peter 1:13-16	☐	Day 24	1 Peter 5:5-11
☐	Day 5	1 Peter 1:17-21	☐	Day 25	1 Peter 5:12-14
☐	Day 6	1 Peter 1:22-25	☐	Day 26	2 Peter 1:1-2
☐	Day 7	1 Peter 2:1-3	☐	Day 27	2 Peter 1:3-8
☐	Day 8	1 Peter 2:4-7	☐	Day 28	2 Peter 1:9-11
☐	Day 9	1 Peter 2:8-12	☐	Day 29	2 Peter 1:12-16
☐	Day 10	1 Peter 2:13-17	☐	Day 30	2 Peter 1:17-21
☐	Day 11	1 Peter 2:18-21	☐	**Day 31**	**2 Peter 2:1-4**
☐	Day 12	1 Peter 2:22-25	☐	**Day 32**	**2 Peter 2:5-8**
☐	Day 13	1 Peter 3:1-6	☐	**Day 33**	**2 Peter 2:9-12**
☐	Day 14	1 Peter 3:7	☐	**Day 34**	**2 Peter 2:13-17**
☐	Day 15	1 Peter 3:8-12	☐	**Day 35**	**2 Peter 2:18-22**
☐	Day 16	1 Peter 3:13-17	☐	Day 36	2 Peter 3:1-3
☐	Day 17	1 Peter 3:18-22	☐	Day 37	2 Peter 3:4-7
☐	Day 18	1 Peter 4:1-3	☐	Day 38	2 Peter 3:8-10
☐	Day 19	1 Peter 4:4-7	☐	Day 39	2 Peter 3:11-16
☐	Day 20	1 Peter 4:8-11	☐	Day 40	2 Peter 3:17-18



Requests	Answers



NOTE: The foundation of spiritual growth is your understanding of God's Word.
Each week, bring your Bible and your study guide to the group meeting.

CONNECT ..... 15 minutes

1. Take a few moments to catch up on current events in your lives.

2. Share insights from the devotional section of **Follow Me: Stories from the Life of Peter**.

GROW ..... 30 minutes

Peter addresses a multifaceted problem in 2 Peter 2, focusing on both the doctrinal errors and moral failures of false teachers infiltrating the church. These teachers introduce "destructive heresies" and reject Christ's authority, while they deny Christ and distort Scripture. They also mock Christ's second coming.

Beyond doctrine, Peter emphasizes the teachers' immoral character. They pursue twisted sexual desires and reject legitimate authority (2 Peter 2:10-22), and their followers embrace both their false teaching and shameful immorality (2 Peter 2:1-3). Motivated by greed, they fabricate deceptive arguments to exploit believers financially (2 Peter 2:1-3). They commit adultery through lustful thoughts and deliberately seduce unstable people into sin while being thoroughly trained in covetousness (2 Peter 2:10-22).

A critical aspect of their deception involves their methodology. They operate secretly within the church under a facade of legitimacy, initially mixing false teachings alongside true doctrine before replacing truth with lies, while their conduct contradicts their words. They promise freedom while remaining enslaved to sin and corruption (2 Peter 2:10-22) – a fundamental contradiction that exposes their teaching as hollow.

Peter also addresses a false promise of liberation. They appeal to twisted sexual desires to lure back those barely escaping from deceptive lifestyles (2 Peter 2:10-22), suggesting that Christian freedom permits moral permissiveness. The false teaching presents sexual permissiveness as a legitimate Christian lifestyle, which Peter systematically refutes through his emphasis on moral accountability and God's judgment.

GROUP DISCUSSION:

- ✓ What is your favorite proverb or wise saying?

- ✓ What activities or pursuits are popular today?

- ✓ In what ways do people today abuse their freedom?

Read **2 Peter 2** and interact with the following questions:

The Danger of False Teachers

"But there were also false prophets in Israel, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will cleverly teach destructive heresies and even deny the Master who bought them. In this way, they will bring sudden destruction on themselves. **2** *Many will follow their evil teaching and shameful immorality. And because of these teachers, the way of truth will be slandered.* **3** *In their greed they will make up clever lies to get hold of your money. But God condemned them long ago, and their destruction will not be delayed.* **4** *For God did not spare even the angels who sinned. He threw them into hell, in gloomy pits of darkness, where they are being held until the day of judgment.* **5** *And God did not spare the ancient world – except for Noah and the seven others in his family. Noah warned the world of God's righteous judgment. So God protected Noah when he destroyed the world of ungodly people with a vast flood.* **6** *Later, God condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and turned them into heaps of ashes. He made them an example of what will happen to ungodly people.* **7** *But God also rescued Lot out of Sodom because he was a righteous man who was sick of the shameful immorality of the wicked people around him.* **8** *Yes, Lot was a righteous man who was tormented in his soul by the wickedness he saw and heard day after day.* **9** *So you see, the Lord knows how to rescue godly people from their trials, even while keeping the wicked under punishment until the day of final judgment.* **10** *He is especially hard on those who follow their own twisted sexual desire, and who despise authority. These people are proud and arrogant, daring even to scoff at supernatural beings without so much as trembling.* **11** *But the angels, who are far greater in power and strength, do not dare to bring from the Lord a charge of blasphemy against those supernatural beings.* **12** *These false teachers are like unthinking animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed. They scoff at things they do not understand, and like animals, they will be destroyed.* **13** *Their destruction is their reward for the harm they have done. They love to indulge in evil pleasures in broad daylight. They are a disgrace and a stain among you. They delight in deception even as they eat with you in your fellowship meals.* **14** *They commit adultery with their eyes, and their desire for sin is never satisfied. They lure unstable people into sin, and they are well trained in greed. They live under God's curse.* **15** *They*

have wandered off the right road and followed the footsteps of Balaam son of Beor, who loved to earn money by doing wrong. **16** *But Balaam was stopped from his mad course when his donkey rebuked him with a human voice.* **17** *These people are as useless as dried-up springs or as mist blown away by the wind. They are doomed to blackest darkness.* **18** *They brag about themselves with empty, foolish boasting. With an appeal to twisted sexual desires, they lure back into sin those who have barely escaped from a lifestyle of deception.* **19** *They promise freedom, but they themselves are slaves of sin and corruption. For you are a slave to whatever controls you.* **20** *And when people escape from the wickedness of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then get tangled up and enslaved by sin again, they are worse off than before.* **21** *It would be better if they had never known the way to righteousness than to know it and then reject the command they were given to live a holy life.* **22** *They prove the truth of this proverb: 'A dog returns to its vomit.' And another says, 'A washed pig returns to the mud.'"* [1]

WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE SAY:

1. What did Peter warn his readers that false prophets would attempt to do? (2:1)

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2. What did Peter say would happen when people followed false prophets? (2:2)

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3. Whom did Peter say God protected? (2:5)

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4. What effect did living among immoral people have upon Lot? (2:7-8)

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[1] Tyndale House Publishers, *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), 2 Pe 2:1–22.

5. What kind of people are unafraid to slander celestial beings? (2:10-15)

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6. What did Peter say was reserved for people who rebel against God? (2:17)

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7. How did the evil people of whom Peter wrote affect others? (2:18)

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8. How did Peter say a person could escape the corruption of the world? (2:20)

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THE DANGERS OF FOLLOWING FALSE DOCTIRNE:

False doctrine poses several interconnected dangers that threaten both individual believers and the broader church community.

Spiritual and Eternal Consequences

The consequences of false teaching are eternally disastrous, extending beyond temporary confusion to permanent spiritual damage. False teachers promote "destructive heresies" that bring sudden destruction on themselves, while many followers adopt their harmful practices, and the way of truth becomes slandered. The stakes involve nothing less than salvation itself – false doctrine opposes fundamental truths necessary for salvation.

Systemic Corruption Within the Church

False doctrine functions like poison in the bloodstream, destroying spiritual health from within whether preached openly or shared subtly. The damage spreads insidiously: false teaching spreads "like gangrene", a disease that kills tissue and requires amputation. Churches that prioritize comfort over doctrinal clarity produce theologically weak messages and doctrinally naive congregations that become defenseless against error.

Deception and Spiritual Vulnerability

Many contemporary believers lack spiritual discernment, remaining more attuned to cultural trends than to biblical doctrine. False teaching typically denies God's goodness and distorts God's Word – the same strategy employed in humanity's original fall. Without doctrinal grounding, believers become vulnerable to being "tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching" and manipulated by lies disguised as truth.

Broader Spiritual Decline

Abandoning sound doctrine produces cascading consequences: false humility, shallow faith, compromised unity, misguided activism, man-centered worship, and temporal focus that fails to prepare believers for eternity. The church's witness itself suffers when false doctrine takes root.

Biblical Passages on False Doctrine

The Holy Spirit warns that in the last times some will abandon true faith to follow deceptive spirits and demonic teachings (1 Timothy 4:1-3). People will reject sound teaching, seek teachers who affirm their desires, and chase after myths rather than truth (2 Timothy 4:3-4). Believers must watch for those teaching contrary doctrine who use smooth talk and flattering words to deceive the innocent (Romans 16:17-18).

THINKING THROUGH THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE PASSAGE:

9. What effect does living and working among sinful people have upon you?

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10. How do you deal with the influence of immoral or rebellious people around you?

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11. When are you tempted to return to some sinful activity or attitude? Why?

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12. To what sorts of desires can we become unknowingly enslaved?

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HOW GOD WANTS ME TO APPLY THIS PASSAGE TO MY LIFE:

13. What steps will you take today to ensure that you don't allow your exercise of freedom to result in your enslavement to sin?

_____

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14. How will you deal with the effect of living in a sinful world today?

_____

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SHARE ..... 10 minutes

Seek to invest in others who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and invite them to FBC.

SERVE ..... 5 minutes

Record progress on your service project …

_____

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WORSHIP ..... 15 minutes

Pray that God will keep you rooted in His word and that you will not neglect His truth.

Devotional Day 31:

Relax: Focus on God speaking to you through His Word today. ☐ **Prayer**

Read: 2 Peter 2:1-4 and The Devotional Thought

"But there were also false prophets in Israel, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will cleverly teach destructive heresies and even deny the Master who bought them. In this way, they will bring sudden destruction on themselves. **2** *Many will follow their evil teaching and shameful immorality. And because of these teachers, the way of truth will be slandered.* **3** *In their greed they will make up clever lies to get hold of your money. But God condemned them long ago, and their destruction will not be delayed.* **4** *For God did not spare even the angels who sinned. He threw them into hell, in gloomy pits of darkness, where they are being held until the day of judgment."*[2]

Devotional Thought

False prophets and teachers will always be around. They were present in Israel; they were present among Peter's audience in the early church; and they are with us today. Their teachings are destructive and many fall into the trap of their *"evil teaching"* and *"shameful immorality."* The result is a black eye for *"the way of truth."* Greed is what controls their hearts. However, God has condemned them, they will be held accountable, and their destruction is assured.

A distinctive feature of Peter's false teachers is their denial of Christ's future return (the parousia) and mockery of those anticipating it. Though they claimed Christian identity, their conduct contradicted their profession. Identifying false teaching requires developing spiritual discernment. Rather than relying on a single test, Christians should employ multiple approaches.

Examine the teaching's Christology. Since the Person and Work of Christ are central to authentic Christianity, false teaching will inevitably involve a false Christology. Any teaching that redefines the person of Jesus Christ – denying His deity, virgin birth, sinless nature, actual death, or physical resurrection – constitutes false doctrine. Ask: does this teaching elevate or diminish Christ?

Test against Scripture. Biblical literacy and critical thinking should be cultivated within churches, with believers remaining skeptical of received opinions and interpretations while never doubting Scripture itself. Although false teachers use the Bible, they disrespect the final authority of the gospel through "Scripture plus" or "Scripture minus" approaches.

Evaluate the teacher's character and motives. Consider whether their message promotes Christlikeness or self-promotion, whether they emphasize money over Jesus, and whether their egos overshadow Christ and His Word.

Distinguish false doctrine from legitimate disagreement. Different congregational groups see secondary issues in Scripture differently, and these differences are not always due to false doctrine. False doctrine opposes fundamental truths or what is necessary for salvation – matters like Christ's deity, salvation by grace alone, and the reality of judgment.

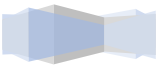
Father, we know that protection against heresy rests on biblical literacy. The most effective safeguard is knowing the truth found in Your Word. As we regularly read and study the Bible, align our beliefs and behavior with Your thoughts.

[2] Tyndale House Publishers, *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), 2 Pe 2:1–4.

Reflect: Focus your thoughts on what God has revealed to you through your reading.

Record: Your thoughts, impressions, things to remember, & an application statement.

Request: Based on what you have learned today, write out a prayer to God.



Devotional Day 32:

Relax: Focus on God speaking to you through His Word today. ☐ **Prayer**

Read: 2 Peter 2:5-8 and The Devotional Thought

5 *"And God did not spare the ancient world – except for Noah and the seven others in his family. Noah warned the world of God's righteous judgment. So God protected Noah when he destroyed the world of ungodly people with a vast flood.* **6** *Later, God condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and turned them into heaps of ashes. He made them an example of what will happen to ungodly people.* **7** *But God also rescued Lot out of Sodom because he was a righteous man who was sick of the shameful immorality of the wicked people around him.* **8** *Yes, Lot was a righteous man who was tormented in his soul by the wickedness he saw and heard day after day."*[3]

Devotional Thought

God did not spare the ancient world and He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah bringing righteous judgment upon all except a remnant in both cases; Noah and his family for the former and Lot and his family for the latter. These two instances were an example of what God has in store for ungodly people. Those who are righteous are often tormented in their souls by wickedness.

Peter describes Lot as righteous because he was deeply troubled by the immorality surrounding him in Sodom, suffering inner torment from witnessing the wickedness day after day. This characterization stands in tension with Genesis, where Lot willingly settled in Sodom, became a major player in the city, offered his virgin daughters to the mob to protect visitors, lingered when the angels told him to get out, quibbled about where to be resettled, and impregnated his daughters while drunk. In the Genesis account, Lot is not described as a good man; in fact, the actions recounted there show Lot as a person of questionable character. Yet Abraham obviously had his nephew very much in mind when he interceded for any "righteous" in Sodom, suggesting Lot retained some moral sensitivity despite his compromised circumstances.

Peter drew from a general expansion of knowledge that refurbished Lot's character. The author elaborated on how Lot's "righteousness" was reflected not in hospitality but in his longstanding distress over Sodom's evil. Peter is not speaking of a direct measurement or an estimated calculation of righteousness but about Lot's own actual feelings about Sodom. Lot's heart was still responsive to God, and the inner struggle he suffered meant that he was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless people – worn down by constant exposure to their vile manner of life.

Ultimately, Lot is singled out to show that God does make a distinction between righteous and wicked people, and that he does rescue the righteous from danger. Lot's righteousness, then, consists not in flawless conduct but in maintaining a conscience troubled by evil. It is a spiritual sensitivity that, despite his moral compromises, marked him as fundamentally different from Sodom's inhabitants. Living righteously in a wicked world requires internal transformation and intentional separation from worldly values. The foundation lies in resisting the patterns and customs of the world while allowing God to reshape your mind. When you view life from the perspective of God's sovereignty and holiness, you recognize that the wicked have miscalculated.

[3] Tyndale House Publishers, *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), 2 Pe 2:5–8.

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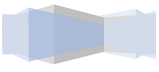

Devotional Day 33:

Relax: Focus on God speaking to you through His Word today. ☐ **Prayer**

Read: 2 Peter 2:9-12 and The Devotional Thought

9 *"So you see, the Lord knows how to rescue godly people from their trials, even while keeping the wicked under punishment until the day of final judgment.* **10** *He is especially hard on those who follow their own twisted sexual desire, and who despise authority. These people are proud and arrogant, daring even to scoff at supernatural beings without so much as trembling.* **11** *But the angels, who are far greater in power and strength, do not dare to bring from the Lord a charge of blasphemy against those supernatural beings.* **12** *These false teachers are like unthinking animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed. They scoff at things they do not understand, and like animals, they will be destroyed."*[4]

Devotional Thought

False teachers mock the return of Jesus. They claim that He should have arrived by now if indeed He were coming back. Peter does not make any effort to address this delayed return at this time. However, he does demonstrate its certainty. Peter describes these false teachers as proud and arrogant, scoffing at things they do not understand and destined to be destroyed. Peter addressed a group he called "false teachers" who identified themselves as Christians. These appear to have been Gentile Christians who appealed primarily to other Gentile Christians and promoted a form of Christianity more compatible with pagan culture than with Jewish-Christian tradition.

The false teachers' core problem involved theological skepticism paired with moral permissiveness. They rejected the apostolic teaching on eschatology, doubting divine intervention in the world – since the expected return of Christ had not occurred and evil persisted, they concluded such beliefs were illusions. This skepticism about God's judgment fueled their promotion of sexual and sensual freedom. Peter accused them of introducing destructive heresies, promoting immoral lifestyles, and exploiting believers through fabricated teachings for financial gain.

Avoiding evil desires requires spiritual empowerment, practical vigilance, and relational accountability. The Holy Spirit's guidance directly counteracts sinful impulses, making a vibrant relationship with God foundational to resistance. Without Christ's presence and the strength His Spirit provides, you lack the essential resources to stand against temptation. Grounding yourself in Scripture, internalizing God's Word, creates an internal defense against sin. God reliably provides a way through every temptation, ensuring no trial exceeds your capacity to endure it. Humble yourself before God and actively resist evil. Actively flee from situations that trigger lustful desires while simultaneously pursuing righteousness, faithfulness, love, and peace. A supportive community of like-minded believers who provide accountability and prayer becomes a source of strength when facing temptation. An accountability partner who asks difficult questions about your habits and practices can deter you from engaging in sin. Whatever captures your heart as most important will reshape your behavior. Remembering your identity in Christ, that you belong to Him rather than to sin provides the deepest motivation for resistance.

[4] Tyndale House Publishers, *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), 2 Pe 2:9–12.

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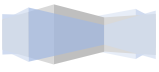

Devotional Day 34:

Relax: Focus on God speaking to you through His Word today. ☐ **Prayer**

Read: 2 Peter 2:13-17 and The Devotional Thought

13 *"Their destruction is their reward for the harm they have done. They love to indulge in evil pleasures in broad daylight. They are a disgrace and a stain among you. They delight in deception even as they eat with you in your fellowship meals.* **14** *They commit adultery with their eyes, and their desire for sin is never satisfied. They lure unstable people into sin, and they are well trained in greed. They live under God's curse.* **15** *They have wandered off the right road and followed the footsteps of Balaam son of Beor, who loved to earn money by doing wrong.* **16** *But Balaam was stopped from his mad course when his donkey rebuked him with a human voice.* **17** *These people are as useless as dried-up springs or as mist blown away by the wind. They are doomed to blackest darkness."*[5]

Devotional Thought

Apostasy is understood as deliberate and public refusal to submit to God and his will. Apostasy represents voluntary rejection of God's will. It extends beyond rejecting God to a departure from Jesus Christ as the agent of salvation. Some theologians argue only nonbelievers or those on the edge of saving faith can commit apostasy, while others contend that genuine believers can renounce their faith and jeopardize their standing before God.

Peter identifies the false teachers in this passage as former believers who have now rejected Christ's authority through their immoral conduct and denial of his return. The false teachers openly indulge in sexual sin and deception, seduce unstable believers into wrongdoing, and pursue greed relentlessly. These teachers become enslaved to corruption. Peter emphasizes that these teachers had genuinely experienced *salvation knowledge* through Christ but have now turned back from righteousness. Their destruction serves as wages for wrongdoing.

Have these false teachers lost their salvation? This question is at the heart of theological debate, which reveals genuine disagreement among scholars about whether these false teachers were ever truly saved. One interpretation argues these false teachers were never genuinely converted. They merely professed faith publicly while gradually succumbing to deceptive spiritual influences and false doctrines. Peter's language about "false teachers coming into the body with destructive heresies" suggests infiltrators rather than apostates. Similarly, 1 John 2:19 states these people "left our churches, but they never really belonged with us." Their departure proved they were never genuinely part of the community. The passage suggests they are denied heaven. Scholars dispute whether this represents *loss* of salvation or *revelation* that they never possessed it.

Identifying false teaching requires examining the content of the teaching and the character of those teaching it. Is the teaching consistent with Christian belief and practice? Does the message have scriptural basis, particularly whether it affirms the incarnation and deity of Jesus. Also, examine the *fruit* of the teaching. Teaching that reduces Christianity to a list of prohibitions is false. Teaching that removes moral seriousness contradicts the gospel. Teaching that severs religion from active engagement in the world is false. A self-centered lifestyle reveals false teaching. Ultimately, recognizing false teaching requires deep knowledge of God's Word.

[5] Tyndale House Publishers, *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), 2 Pe 2:13–17.

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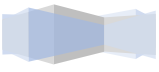

Devotional Day 35:

Relax: Focus on God speaking to you through His Word today. ☐ **Prayer**

Read: 2 Peter 2:18-22 and The Devotional Thought

18 *"They brag about themselves with empty, foolish boasting. With an appeal to twisted sexual desires, they lure back into sin those who have barely escaped from a lifestyle of deception.* **19** *They promise freedom, but they themselves are slaves of sin and corruption. For you are a slave to whatever controls you.* **20** *And when people escape from the wickedness of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then get tangled up and enslaved by sin again, they are worse off than before.* **21** *It would be better if they had never known the way to righteousness than to know it and then reject the command they were given to live a holy life.* **22** *They prove the truth of this proverb: 'A dog returns to its vomit.' And another says, 'A washed pig returns to the mud.'"*[6]

Devotional Thought

Peter finishes chapter two by describing further the actions and the consequences of the road these false teachers are traveling. It is devastating for these false teachers to know the way to salvation but then reject the command for holy living. It would be better that they never knew the truth. What makes 2 Peter's treatment distinctive is its emphasis on the insidious nature of apostasy. The departure doesn't announce itself or happen suddenly; instead, it operates covertly through the will, which in incremental steps rejects the Holy Spirit's illumination. Peter compares apostasy to cancer, spreading through the community and eating away at healthy cells before people recognize its advanced stages. The chapter also clarifies apostasy's inevitable consequences. It typically leads to moral failure, expressing itself in rejection of authority and sexual deviation. Those who boast of freedom through apostasy actually enter a degrading form of slavery worse than their original condition.

A crucial interpretive question concerns the apostates' prior spiritual status. Peter indicates these individuals experienced genuine Christian conversion – they escaped worldly corruption through saving knowledge of Christ. However, their absence of repentance and faith, combined with their return to former patterns, suggests they were unconverted professors who deliberately rejected the Gospel. Apostasy serves as evidence that those involved never truly belonged to Christ.

The passage does not directly address eternal security as a doctrine. Rather, it presents a challenging case that interpreters use differently in that debate. The language appears to describe genuine conversion followed by apostasy, which poses a direct challenge to eternal security. Scholars interpret this passage in different ways. One explanation says, Peter described false teachers as believers because they made a profession of faith and gave every appearance of genuine faith, but their denial of Jesus Christ reveals they didn't truly belong to God, even though they professed it. Alternatively, those Peter writes about have escaped the defilement of the world and have known Jesus Christ, with statements that signify the presence of true saving faith which has been forfeited. The passage functions as a test case for competing doctrines rather than as a straightforward teaching on eternal security. It forces readers to clarify what truly saved means and whether apparent conversion can be genuine conversion that's later lost.

[6] Tyndale House Publishers, *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), 2 Pe 2:18–22.

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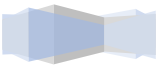



FBC Growth Group Covenant

Congratulations on your desire to grow deeper in your relationship with God through this weekly study and the relationships that will begin as a result of your participation.

As a member of this group, you will be asked to enter into a covenant with the other group members. You are requested to make this Growth Group a priority; by making the following commitments:

- ☐ I will make this group a priority by attending each week (call if I'm going to be absent or late), keeping up with my assignments and participating openly in group discussion.
- ☐ I will regularly attend church services and contribute to the ministry of the church through my attendance, giving, service and inviting of others.
- ☐ I will strive to build authentic relationships with those in this group by showing care, providing encouragement and praying for their needs.
- ☐ I will avoid gossip (including, what happens in the group stays in the group) and immediately resolve any concerns by following the "conflict resolution" principles of Matthew 18:15-17.
- ☐ I will limit my freedom by not serving or consuming alcohol during growth group meetings or events so as to avoid causing a weaker brother or sister to stumble. (1 Cor. 8:1-13; Romans 14:19-21)
- ☐ I will serve with my group once a month during the semester and will participate in a mission project and play together with my group once.
- ☐ I will honestly explore my next steps for spiritual growth and give permission for other group members to speak God's truth into my life.

_____ _____

NAME (Signature) DATE



BY THE FIRE: A STORY OF RESTORATION

Jesus Restores Peter

John 21:1-22

"Simon Peter, Thomas (also known as Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. 'I'm going out to fish,' Simon Peter told them, and they said, 'We'll go with you.'" – **John 21:2-3 (NIV)**

How Do I Respond to Jesus' Restoring Love

Three Lessons from the Life of Peter

- RETURN ENTHUSIASTICALLY TO JESUS.

"As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, 'It is the Lord,' he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water." – **John 21:7b (NIV)**

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him." – **Luke 15:20 (NIV)**

This Week's Follow Me Principle:

THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO TO MAKE JESUS LOVE ME LESS.

THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO TO MAKE JESUS LOVE ME MORE.

Memory Verse: *"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* – **Romans 8:38-39 (NIV)**



➢ RECEIVE COMPLETE RESTORATION FROM JESUS.

"Jesus said to them, 'Come and have breakfast.' None of the disciples dared ask him, 'Who are you?' They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish." – **John 21:12-13 (NIV)**

(Jesus) *"The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate."* – **Luke 15:21-24 (NIV)**

➢ RECOMMIT TO BEING USED BY JESUS.

"The third time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, 'Do you love me?' He said, 'Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.' Jesus said, 'Feed my sheep.'" – **John 21:17 (NIV)**

Then [Jesus] said to [Peter], 'Follow me!' Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. … When Peter saw him, he asked, 'Lord, what about him?' Jesus answered, 'If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me.'" – **John 21:19b-22 (NIV)**

(Jesus) *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."* – **John 3:16 (NIV)**

QUESTIONS FOR APPLYING GOD'S WORD

(S.P.E.A.K. T.O. M.E. QUESTIONS)

Is there …

Sin to Confess?

Promise to Claim?

Example to Follow?

Attitude to Change?

Knowledge to Embrace?

Thanks to Give?

Occasion to Pray?

Mandate to Obey?

Error to Avoid?



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