

2 Peter 3 - The Mockery of the Last Days; God's Relationship to Time; The Great Tribulation

III. Refutation of false teachers' doctrine (2 Peter 3:1-18)

- (1) Peter's second purpose statement (3:1-2)
- (2) Refutation of false teachers' denial of the Second Advent (3:3-14)
 - (A) False teachers' motives for denying second Advent (3:3-4)
 - (a) Lust (3:3)
 - (b) Uniformitarianism (3:4)
 - (B) Refutation of uniformitarianism (3:5-10)
 - (a) Argument from history (3:5-7)
 - (i) Creation (3:5)
 - (ii) Flood (3:6-7)
 - (b) Argument from Scripture (3:8)
 - (c) Argument from God's character (3:9)
 - (d) Argument from divine promise (3:10)
 - (C) Practical ramifications of refuting Uniformitarianism (3:11-14)
 - (a) Practical impact (3:11a)
 - (b) Holiness (3:11b)
 - (c) Evangelism (3:12)
 - (d) Hope (3:13)
 - (e) Holiness reiterated (3:14)
- (3) Concluding exhortations (3:15-18)
 - (A) Paul as an example of grace (3:15a)
 - (B) Be on guard against false teachers (3:15b-17)
 - (C) Press on to maturity (3:18)

2 Peter 3

III. Refutation of false teachers' doctrine (2 Peter 3:1-18)

- (1) Peter's second purpose statement (3:1-2)

1 Beloved, this is **now** the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your **sincere** mind by way of a **reminder**,

1 This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder,

1 Dear friends, this is now the second of two letters I am writing to you, in which I have been trying to stimulate your pure minds by reminding you

1 This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:

- As Peter transitions to began writing about the mockery of the last days, he again points out the purpose of this epistle: to bring to remembrance

— This is not a new truth, but a reminder of what they have already been taught

- "...now" - *ede*, now, already; implies that the interval between the two Epistles was not long

- "...sincere" - *heilikrines*, found pure when unfolded and examined by the sun's light

- "...reminder" - remembrance is a key word throughout 2 Peter

— Peter's audience were believers, but Peter wanted to remind them to continue in their spiritual growth in the Lord

— Peter tells them how in v2: to "remember" the words given by the prophets (OT revelation) and the commandment of the Lord spoken by the apostles (NT revelation)

Remembrance in 2 Peter

- Has forgotten that he has been cleansed (1:9)
- I will always remind you of these things (1:12)
- It is right to refresh your memory (1:13)
- You will always be able to remember these things (1:15)
- **I have written both of them as reminders (3:1)**
- Do not forget (3:8)
- Bear in mind (3:15)

2 to remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior *spoken* by your apostles.

2 that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior *spoken* by your apostles.

2 to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the commandment of our Lord and Savior spoken through your apostles.

2 That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:

- In v1-2 Peter reiterates his purpose for writing this epistle: to warn his readers in north central Asia Minor that false prophets would arrive shortly, and to encourage them to grow in Christ so that they would not be carried away or deceived by this false doctrine

- Peter's original purpose statement for this epistle was given in 1:12-15
- Peter urged them to get "back to basics," to the foundational truths of Christianity. He didn't want them to be swayed by the false teachers, who would appeal to their pride, and tell them that the Bible wasn't enough (they needed additional revelation, their "secret knowledge").
- Notice in this verse that Peter puts OT revelation on the same level as NT revelation. There are many OT passages affirming divine inspiration and inerrancy of the Scripture, but it's rare to find NT passages affirming the same.
- Peter does exactly that here...he places the NT at the same level as OT revelation, which was important to his Jewish readers. Peter does this again in v15.
- Another place where NT revelation affirms the authenticity and divine inspiration of the NT is in 1 Tim 5:18 where Paul quotes both the OT (Deut 25:4) and the NT (Luke 10:7) and equates them both as "Scripture."

(2) Refutation of false teachers' denial of the Second Advent (3:3-14)

(A) False teachers' motives for denying second Advent (3:3-4)

(a) Lust (3:3)

- 3 Know this first *of all*, that in the last days **mockers will come with *their* mocking, following after their own lusts**,
- 3 Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with *their* mocking, following after their own lusts,
- 3 First of all you must understand this: In the last days mockers will come and, following their own desires, will ridicule us
- 3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,
- Peter warns his readers, before the false teachers ever arrived, of the heresy that they will teach...
 - These false teachers will take aim at eschatology, specifically the return of Jesus Christ at the Second Coming. They will deny that Jesus will return to the earth a second time.
 - The doctrine of the Second Coming is one of the oldest doctrines in the Bible, dating all the way back to Job 19:25
 - "...mockers will come with *their* mocking" - these false teachers will not come with a five-point argument on why the Second Coming of Christ is not scriptural
 - They will come "mocking" this doctrine, but have no clear and concise argument, scriptural or otherwise, to refute it
 - They will put anyone who holds to this doctrine under derision or ridicule; they will malign and make fun of people who believe in the earthly return of Christ

— The false teachers also mocked and ridiculed God's prophets when they prophesied the exile of the southern kingdom (Judah) (2 Chr 36:16). This is how we know that Judah was ripe for God's discipline...because of how they were treating the prophets.

- "...following after their own lusts" - following the desires of the sin nature

— If a Christian is following the sin nature instead of the new nature, the last doctrine they want to be confronted with is eschatology, in particular the Second Coming, because it demands accountability.

— This is one of the reasons why these false teachers will attack the doctrine of the Second Coming: it has more to do with their own sinful state and their avoidance of wanting to confront some future accountability they will have, than it does anything else.

You don't have to search far and wide to find modern day mockers of the Second Coming of Christ:



Rick Warren

Purpose Driven Life, 285-86.

“When the disciples wanted to talk about prophecy, Jesus quickly switched the conversation to evangelism. He wanted them to concentrate on their mission in the world. He said in essence, “The details of my return are none of your business. What is your business is the mission I have given you. Focus on that!” If you want Jesus to come back sooner, focus on fulfilling your mission, not figuring out prophecy. Speculating on the exact timing of Christ’s return is futile, because Jesus said, “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.” Since Jesus said He didn’t know the day or hour, why should you try to figure it out? What we do know for sure is this: Jesus will not return until everyone God wants to hear the Good News has heard it.”

The opening sentence of this quote (above) is patently false (Cf. Matt 24-25).



Rick Warren

Purpose Driven Life, 285-86.

Jesus said, "The Good News about God's kingdom will be preached in all the world, to every nation. Then the end will come." If you want Jesus to come back sooner, focus on fulfilling your mission, not figuring out prophecy. It is easy to get **distracted** and sidetracked from your mission because **Satan** would rather have you do anything besides sharing your faith. He will let you do all kinds of good things as long as you don't take anyone to heaven with you. But the moment you become **serious about your mission**, expect the Devil to throw all kinds of diversions at you. When that happens, remember the words of Jesus: "Anyone who lets himself be distracted from the work I plan for him is **not fit for the Kingdom of God.**"

Eschatology A Sin?



*"Therefore, I conclude that it is sin to divide the body of Christ—to divide the body that he prayed would be united. Therefore for us to conclude that we must agree upon a certain view of alcohol, or a certain view of schooling, or a certain view of meat sacrificed to idols, or a certain view of the millennium in order to have fellowship together is, I think, not only unnecessary for the body of Christ, but it is therefore both unwarranted and therefore condemned by scripture. **So if you're a pastor and you're listening to me, you understand me correctly if you think I'm saying you are in sin if you lead your congregation to have a statement of faith that requires a particular millennial view.** I do not understand why that has to be a matter of uniformity in order to have Christian unity in a local congregation."*

Justin Taylor, "Dever: 'You Are in Sin If You Lead Your Congregation to Have a Statement of Faith that Requires a Particular Millennial View,'" online: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/dever-you-are-in-sin-if-you-lead-your/>, July 14 2009, accessed May 28, 2019.

(b) Uniformitarianism (3:4)

4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, **all things continue** just as *they were* from the beginning of creation."

4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."

4 by saying, "What happened to the Messiah's promise to return? Ever since our ancestors died, everything continues as it did from the beginning of creation."

4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

- These scoffers will be mocking the Second Coming. At first read, many think this passage refer to non-believers mocking believers about the promise of the Rapture or Second Coming, but it's likely referring to believers mocking other believers.

— Words such as "since the fathers fell asleep" and "creation" imply that these "mockers" will be believers. People within Christianity will be the people denigrating the doctrine of the Second Coming.

— See [The Coming Kingdom 79 How Kingdom Now Theology Impacts the Church: Rejection or Marginalization of Bible Prophecy](#) for more information.

- "...all things continue" - these false teachers will teach that life is a "closed system"...all things simply continue in a linear fashion until the end, and God does not intervene in His creation
- This is a form of uniformitarianism: one who speculates about what happened in the the past, and what will happen in the future, based solely on what they observe in the present. The idea that what you see right now is what has always been and what will always be. Those who hold to this doctrine say that nothing will ever interrupt this cycle.
- This is the foundational idea in the theory of evolution (naturalism)
- Peter here connects protology (the study of beginnings) with eschatology (the study of the end)
- The implication they are making is that God never interfered supernaturally with this natural cycle, and they make two assumptions:
 - (1) That their knowledge of historic events and processes is full and complete; if there was divine intervention in the past, they would know it and be able to prove it scientifically.
 - (2) The second assumption is the absolute uniformity of nature; nothing breaks the cycle of "nature."

Peter states clearly that you should reject uniformitarianism because you cannot evaluate the past by what you see in the present because God in the past did two things that we would never know about without the Bible: Creation and the Flood. Because of these events, the present is not the key to the past, and we shouldn't interpret the fossil record by what we see today (the Lyell model) because this earth went through a major catastrophe with the flood.

Charles Lyell was a geoscientist, who had a huge impact on Charles Darwin. Charles Lyell's stated goal was to completely remove the interpretation of Moses (i.e. Genesis) from the fossil record. He was also very influential on William Whewell from the University of Cambridge, who is quoted above.

So to summarize, uniformitarianism seeks to explain everything not by sudden, miraculous interventions of God (i.e. creation and the global flood), but through slow processes that you can ascertain at the present time. You believe (without evidence; pretend) that these slow processes have always been in existence, and will always be in existence. On top of that, you deliberately push out of your mind and do not give credence or thought to the miraculous handiwork of God.

The world we're currently living in has been altered three times. After original Creation, there was the Fall; after the Fall came the Flood; after the Flood, it was altered again at the Tower of Babel when God confounded the language. This is the stage we're living in now. Unless you approach the fossil record with this understanding, which uniformitarians do

not because they don't believe in God or the Bible, you can't rightly understand the fossil record.

See [Rapture 62 One Second After the Rapture - Part 6 \(Rev 6:16-17\)](#) for more details and the history of Uniformitarianism.

Uniformitarianism Defined

<https://www.britannica.com/science/uniformitarianism>

“Uniformitarianism, in geology, the doctrine suggesting that Earth’s geologic processes acted in the same manner and with essentially the same intensity in the past as they do in the present and that such uniformity is sufficient to account for all geologic change. This principle is fundamental to geologic thinking and underlies the whole development of the science of geology... When William Whewell, a University of Cambridge scholar, introduced the term in 1832, the prevailing view (called catastrophism) was that . . .

Uniformitarianism Defined

<https://www.britannica.com/science/uniformitarianism>

“...Earth had originated through supernatural means and had been affected by a series of catastrophic events such as the biblical Flood. In contrast to catastrophism, uniformitarianism postulates that phenomena displayed in rocks may be entirely accounted for by geologic processes that continue to operate—in other words, the present is the key to the past.”

(B) Refutation of uniformitarianism (3:5-10)

After outlining for his readers the heresy that will be taught by the false teachers, and their motivation for teaching it, Peter will now explain to his readers how to refute these beliefs by providing various scriptural based arguments. Essentially, Peter is arguing why we can't evaluate the past and the future by what we see in the present.

(a) Argument from history (3:5-7)

(i) Creation (3:5)

5 For when they **maintain this**, it **escapes their notice** that **by the word of God** *the* heavens existed long ago and ***the* earth was formed out of water and by water**,

5 For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God *the* heavens existed long ago and *the* earth was formed out of water and by water,

5 But they deliberately ignore the fact that long ago the heavens existed and the earth was formed by God's word out of water and with water,

5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

- "...maintain" - *thelō*, to wish, to will; to desire

- "...this" - uniformitarianism, the idea that "all things continue" today just as they were from the beginning of creation (v4)

- "...escapes their notice" - a poor translation; a better translation is that they are "willingly ignorant" [*thelō*, KJV] or they "deliberately ignore the fact" [ISV]. It is because of their *own choice*, not because of a lack of knowledge or evidence.

— People don't believe in creation (v5) or the flood (v6) not because of the evidence, but because they purposefully (willingly/deliberately) push it out of their minds because they are living in their own lusts, and the fact that God has in these two examples intervened into life on earth is a reminder to them of divine accountability.

- "...by the word of God" - Latin: *ex nihilo*, God *spoke* and the universe came into existence (Cf. Ps 33:6-9)

— The phrase "Then God said" is found 10x in Gen 1

- "...earth was formed out of water and by water" - God spoke again and the dry land separated from the water ("earth standing out of the water" [KJV]) (Gen 1:9-10). Thus, God used water to form the dry land.

(ii) Flood (3:6-7)

6 through which the **world** at that time was **destroyed** by being flooded with water.

6 through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.

6 by which the world at that time was deluged with water and destroyed.

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

- Now Peter moves from the first historical event (Creation, v5) to the second historical event (the Flood)...

— The same God who spoke the universe into existence, spoke again and judged creation through the global flood during the days of Noah

— Both creation and the flood have one thing in common...God *spoke* and creation happened; God spoke again and creation was judged through the flood, demonstrating that God is sovereign over His creation and interferes in His creation, contrary to the teaching of uniformitarianism.

- "...world" - *kosmos*, doesn't refer to the world (globe, earth), rather it refers to people (Cf. "the world," John 3:16)

— Peter is not dealing with the impact of the flood waters on planet earth; he's dealing with the impact of the flood waters on the human population of the earth

— We discover that only 8 were saved through Peter's epistles (Noah and Mrs Noah; Noah's 3 sons + their wives)

- "...destroyed" - when God destroyed the world through the flood, He didn't completely wipe it out and create a new one; He essentially renovated (changed) it

— So the "renovationists" point to this verse and say that see, God "destroyed" the world through the Flood, but it didn't go away and God create another one

— However, this view misinterprets the meaning of "world" (*kosmos*) to refer to the earth itself instead of the human population

Peter's point in v5-6 is that God brought the whole universe into existence by His "Word" and "by water." He also used both means to destroy it (in Noah's day, v6), and He will use two means to destroy it again in the future: His Word and fire (v7).

7 But **by His word** the present heavens and earth are being reserved for **fire**, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly people.

7 But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

7 Now by that same word, the present heavens and earth have been reserved for fire and are being kept for the day when ungodly people will be judged and destroyed.

7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

- This "second world" is the one we are living in. It is subject to a form of "global warming" that will be quite a surprise!

— Peter spoke of world history in three periods divided by two cataclysms: the world before the Flood (v6), the present world (v7), and the future world (v13).

- "...by His word" - in the future, just as in the past with creation and the flood, God will speak again and the same word that brought the universe into existence, and the same word that brought the global flood, will be the same word that will come again out of God's mouth and will melt this world down by fire.

— The historical fact that God has demonstrated His involvement in His creation twice before (Creation and the flood) shows that what God says will happen at the end of the age, when He will melt the earth by fire, will surely come to pass

- "...fire" - next time *by fire* (Cf. Is 66:15; Dan 7:10; Mal 4:1; 2 Thess 1:8)

Peter's rebuttal to the doctrine of uniformitarianism is that God has supernaturally interfered with "nature" before, and He fully intends to do this again. These mockers have assessed these facts, but they are guilty of willful ignorance.

When people choose evolution, they are not choosing "science" over religion...they are choosing one religion (naturalism, uniformitarianism) over another religion (biblical Christianity). They do this because they want to continue living in their own lusts and deny their moral accountability before God. Peter here is seeing the entire thing materialize, and is refuting uniformitarianism about 1800 years before it ever became into philosophical existence, which was in 1832.

Before 1832, the dominant view of interpreting geology, strata and fossils was catastrophism (catastrophe, the biblical view). It was replaced by another philosophy (uniformitarianism)...it wasn't because of new scientific discoveries that catastrophism got pushed out (that's how the humanists want us to understand it). It's that one philosophy (catastrophism) got pushed out of favor by humanists in favor of another philosophy (uniformitarianism); one set of assumptions was replaced by another set of assumptions. The first set of assumptions honored the existence of God; the second set of assumptions dishonors and ignores God.

For more information on how every area of science was founded on the assumption and foundation of an all-powerful God, read *Men of Science, Men of God* by Henry Morris. He details how every area of science was founded by people who believed in God and the Bible, and how it was the basis for their scientific research.

According to the chart below, God has drastically altered the world three times according to the biblical record, and the world that we're living in now will be drastically altered three more times in the future.

UNIFORMITARIANISM IS NOT BIBLICAL			
	ERA	SCRIPTURE	DISTINCTIVES
1.	CREATION	Gen 1-2	No death
2.	FALL	Gen 3-6	Death, painful pregnancy & toil, long life spans, no human government
3.	FLOOD	Gen 7-10	Shorter life spans, human government, one language, no nations
<u>4.</u>	<u>BABEL</u>	<u>Gen 11 to present</u>	<u>No global government, multiple languages, nations, ethnicities</u>
5.	ANTICHRIST	Rapture to 2 nd Advent	Global government, restrainer removed
6.	KINGDOM	Rev 20:1-10	Long life spans, kingdom conditions, reality of death, renovated earth
7.	ETERNAL STATE	Rev 21-22	No death, new earth

Based on this chart, you can see the folly of trying to analyze the past or the future based on a process that you see in the present. This doesn't work because what we see in the

present has been drastically altered three times in the past. This isn't something that cannot be deciphered by our five senses, only by God's Word. The present era is Babel, in place from Gen 11 to the present day.

(b) Argument from Scripture (3:8)

8 But do not let this one *fact* escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is **like** a thousand years, and a thousand years **like one day**.

8 But do not let this one *fact* escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.

8 Don't forget this fact, dear friends: With the Lord a single day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a single day.

8 But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

- Peter is alluding to Ps 90:4 (Psalm 90, written by Moses, is the oldest psalm in the psalter, written 1500 years before the time of Christ)

— Many will use this verse to incorrectly to argue against the 24-hour days of creation; however, neither this verse nor Ps 90:4 refer to creation. Or, they will use this verse as a method for calculating time periods and redefining the scriptural calculation of "one day."

- This verse is an example of the futuristic present tense (Cf. Joshua 6:2; Rom 8:29-30; 1 John 2:17; Jude 14)

— What Peter is saying is that God's timing is not our timing because God is outside of time, He is not bound by a clock

— Delay does not equal denial; the fact that Christ has not yet returned bodily at the second coming does not mean it's not on track to happen at His appointed time

— To God, the future has already happened, which is why biblical authors often use the prophetic past tense (see Tag: Prophetic Past Tense) to describe future events

— From our perspective, things seem to take a long time to happen, but from God's perspective it doesn't seem that way because God is not bound by time

— An example would be a parade...those watching from the curb (the human viewpoint) see the parade go by one float or band at a time; however, if you were to watch from a helicopter, you would see the beginning, middle and end of the parade at the same time.

- "...like" [2x] - Peter uses a simile to describe that God doesn't reckon or see time like human beings do

— Many misinterpret this verse and take it literally, missing Peter's use of "like"

- "...one day" - "as yesterday" (Ps 90:4); not a calculation, but rather a simile

— Peter makes the point that what appears to man to be a delay is not a delay in God's timetable. Everything is going exactly according to His plan.

— Peter is countering what "mockers" will say in the last days in reference to why Jesus has not yet returned. Peter counters that when people begin to argue this way, it escapes their notice that God is outside of time. To God, there isn't a delay in His return, but rather patience.

— God is not bound by time, therefore there is no "delay" (v3-4) in God's timetable

— As evidence, Peter quotes from the oldest psalm (written by Moses)—Psalm 90

Old Earth believers and covenant theologians will use this verse, out of context, to "prove" that a "day" doesn't always mean a 24-hour day, but could mean millennia. However, this reading doesn't take context into account, and therefore is in error.

A closer look at the context (v3-8) shows that he is referring to mockers in the last days, who will challenge the promise of Christ's return (v3-4). They use the fact that nothing has happened for so long as evidence that nothing is ever going to happen. Peter, however, reminds them that dramatic interventions by God have taken place, and there's more to come. God's plan is unfolding, but at His pace (v5-7) not ours.

Peter's statement in v8 is meant to instruct us that God's personal experience of time is not like ours. He's not giving any instruction for calculating timeframes here. Rather, he's reminding us that the psychological *sense* of time is subjective. He's warning us not to be seduced by the *feeling* of tardiness. The passage of a day or even a thousand years is nothing *to God* (v8). To us He may seem slow—"as *some* [humans] count slowness." For God, though, there is no sluggishness, only patience. He is slow to visit wrath, but He is quick to extend mercy (v9).

(c) Argument from God's character (3:9)

9 The Lord is not **slow** about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, **notwilling for any to perish**, but for **all to come to repentance**.

9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

9 The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some people understand slowness, but is being patient with you. He does not want anyone to perish, but wants everyone to repent.

9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

- Peter moves from looking at Scripture and begins to look at God's character to refute uniformitarianism

— Peter explains that "delay" does not mean "denial" and that God has a very good reason for holding things up: His patience

— God is holy, creation is sinful. God has two choices: He can either destroy sinful creation, or, through the provision of His Son, He can wait as long as necessary for His creation (human beings) to repent and come under the provision provided by Christ.

— God, in His benevolent nature, thankfully, has chosen the latter. He is purposely holding everything up to give as many people as possible the opportunity to repent.

— God has a history of delaying events in order to provide more than enough time for repentance...God waited 120 years (Gen 6:3) before bringing judgment in the flood (Cf. 1 Tim 2:4; 1 Peter 3:20); in Gen 15:13,16 He gave the Canaanites 400 years to repent; Ezek 18:23,32 proclaim that God gets no joy from anyone who dies, and urges everyone to repent and live.

- "...slow" - *bradynō*, impotence, weak, inability

— The point is that God never delays because He is weak, impotent, or unable

— Any "delay" (from man's perspective) is because He is long-suffering; He is merely extending the period of grace in order to give everyone an opportunity to be saved

— Everything that God has prophesied in His Word will happen...nothing has changed, the plan is still in place and will come to pass just as He said it would. The problem Peter is addressing here is that it's not *our* timing...

- "...not willing for any to perish" - another refutation of Calvinism's idea of Limited Atonement

- "...all to come" - God desires every single person to be saved (Cf. 1 Tim 2:4)

— The great tragedy is that after the entire panorama of redemption, God *doesn't get what He wants* out of the deal! Not all will repent.

- "...repentance" - a change of mind about Jesus; whenever the word "repentance" is used in a justification context, it's used as a synonym for "faith" (Cf. Acts 17:30)

— Here you clearly see the convergence of repentance and faith: men will perish unless they come to faith in Christ, but men will not come to faith in Christ unless there is a change of mind about Him and His promises.

— If you don't have any background on the definition and usage of repentance, you don't know what this verse means. The only thing Peter is saying here is that the Lord wants the world to change it's mind about Jesus and to trust in Jesus.

Calvinism/Reformed Theology teaches that there are people who are born for the specific purpose of going to hell. They are like a "rock" and unable to respond to the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit because they are not one of the "elect." Thus, they believe, that God will not "regenerate" these people from their "total depravity" and give them the "gift" of faith so they can believe in Christ and be saved.

If you are not one of the "elect," according to Calvinism/Reformed Theology, your purpose in life is to go to hell, with the person having no choice in the matter.



John Calvin

Institutes of the Christian Religion, Vol. 3, (Orlando, Signalman Publishing, from the 4th edition, 2009, Kindle edition), Chapter 21, section 5, Kindle location 17221.

Calvin said: “By predestination we mean the eternal decree of God, by which he determined with himself whatever he wished to happen with regard to every man. All are not created on equal terms, but some are preordained to eternal life, others to eternal damnation; and, accordingly, as each has been created for one or other of these ends, we say that he has been predestinated to life or to death.”



John Calvin

Institutes of the Christian Religion, Vol. 3, Chapter 23, section 7.

Calvin said: “We say, then, that Scripture clearly proves this much, that God by his eternal and immutable counsel determined once for all those whom it was his pleasure one day to admit to salvation, and those whom, on the other hand, it was his pleasure to doom to destruction.”



John Calvin

Institutes of the Christian Religion, Vol. 3, Chapter 23, section 5.

Calvin said: “I say with Augustine, that the Lord has created those who, as he certainly foreknow, were to go to destruction, and he did so because he so willed. Why he willed it is not ours to ask, as we cannot comprehend, nor can it become us even to raise a controversy as to the justice of the divine will. Whenever we speak of it, we are speaking of the supreme standard of justice.”



John Calvin

Institutes of the Christian Religion, Vol. 3, Chapter 23, section 6.

Calvin wrote: “Now, since the arrangement of all things is in the hand of God, since to him belongs the disposal of life and death, he arranges all things by his sovereign counsel, in such a way that individuals are born, who are doomed from the womb to certain death, and are to glorify him by their destruction.”

In other words, according to Calvin, as these "non-elect" people go to hell, the flames embrace them, and when the smoke of their torment rises up to God, God is pleased and is

actually glorified.

So how does Calvinism/Reformed Theology square with 2 Peter 3:9? How can anyone buy in to a theology that believes that God has created people, in fact the vast majority of people, who have no hope of redemption, without even the ability to respond to redemption or the gospel, and their whole purpose is to go to hell so that God can be glorified?

This does not mean that every person will be saved, or that God will be patient until every person is saved. That is the doctrine of universalism, which is unbiblical. Scripture talks a lot that most people will end up spending eternity in hell (Matt 7:13-14; 13:39-40,49-50; 25:46; Rev 20:15). The differences between this and the view of Calvinism is...when people find themselves in hell, they have no one to blame but themselves. God has provided a simple, easy way for every single person to appropriate the sacrifice of Christ, through belief. Jesus holds unbelievers responsible for their decisions, and the accompanying judgment (eternity in hell, John 3:18; 5:40). Calvinism, however, believes that not every person is able to be saved unless they are one of the "elect" and thus God has destined people to hell, through no choice of their own. In this case, an unbeliever could rightfully argue that God is to blame for sending them to hell because they had no choice in the matter.

(d) Argument from divine promise (3:10)

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

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

10 But the Day of the Lord will come like a thief. On that day the heavens will disappear with a roaring sound, the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done on it will be exposed.

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

- "...day of the Lord" - here, referring to the Tribulation

- "...will" [3x, 4x in NASB95] - despite God's delay, He will fulfill His promise...

— The uniformitarians are confused by the fact that God has intervened in history in the past (v5-7), they are confused by the fact that God is timeless (v8), and they are confused as to the reasons why God does delay (v9)... these believers should not confuse delay for denial, because God will intervene in history again, in a big way.

— God was patient for 120 years before He brought the flood, in order to give time for repentance. During that time, people probably thought the flood would never come and forgot all about it. But in the 121st year, it came (like a thief) and caught the world off-guard.

— That's what Peter is saying here...yes, God is patient and He waits a long time for all to come to repentance, but one of these days the patience of God will run out and He will bring a miraculous termination to this universe in the same way He started it all.

— The miraculous ending of the earth as we know it is described in many passages throughout Scripture: Is 65:17; Matt 5:18; 24:35; 1 Cor 7:31; Heb 1:12; 1 John 2:17; Rev 21:1,4).

- "...like a thief" - the "Day of the Lord" will come suddenly and unexpectedly

— Only comes as a "thief in the night" *to those who are in darkness*: 1 Thess 5 (1 Thess 4:18 introduces)

— Clearly not describing the Rapture since it's linked to the "heavens passing away"

— "thief" - used 7x, all in the NT (Matt 24:43; Luke 12:39; 1 Thess 5:2,4; 2 Peter 3:10; Rev 3:3; 16:15); it always describes the judgment of God coming suddenly upon unsaved people

- "...with a roar" - *rhoizēdon*, it is the word used for the swish of an arrow, the rush of wings, the splash of water, the hiss of a serpent

- "...elements" - *stoicheia*, basic building blocks

- "...destroyed" - *luo*, to untie, loose

- "...intense heat" - if it's all going to burn, why are you hanging onto worldly things so tightly? (Cf. Matt 24:35; 1 Cor 7:31; Heb 1:10-12; 1 John 2:17)

During the Great Tribulation, the heavens shall pass away with a great noise. The OT background for this is Is 3:13; 34:4, which mention the same occurrence. Jesus emphasizes the same thing in Matt 24:29. It is also found in Rev 6:12-14; 8:12. While the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, the earth will be burned up by the judgments of the Great Tribulation. Many of these are fiery judgments. For example, in the Trumpet Judgments of Rev 8-9, the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 6th Trumpets are judgments of fire. In the Bowl judgments of Rev 16, the 4th Bowl is a judgment of fire. During the Great Tribulation, there will be a burning of the earth. In fact, somewhere between two-thirds and three-quarters of the earth's surface will be destroyed during this time. In this case, Peter is not dealing with the total destruction of the globe by fire; he is referring to the surface of the earth. Contrary to the mockers' claims, the earth is not eternal.

(C) Practical ramifications of refuting Uniformitarianism (3:11-14)

(a) Practical impact (3:11a)

(b) Holiness (3:11b)

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

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

11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, think of the kind of holy and godly people you ought to be

11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

- Because the Second Coming of Christ, which Peter is telling his readers will be denied by the false teachers, is a prophetic and eschatological certainty, Peter now explains how this eschatological reality should impact our lives today.

— Prophecy plays a huge role in the overall Scriptural narrative. The Bible is the only holy book that gives us history in advance, because it was written by an omniscient God, who is outside of time, and who knows the end from the beginning.

— In the Encyclopedia of Bible Prophecy, J Barton Payne found that 27% of the Bible was prophetic at the time it was written. The reason why God has given us so much prophecy in the Bible is to authenticate both Himself and the Scriptures, but also because if we understand Bible prophecy, it will change the way you live.

— Bible prophecy isn't given to us simply so we know the future, although that's part of it, but it's main purpose is to encourage us toward holy living. By studying prophecy, we discover God's priorities...the thing that are going to last.

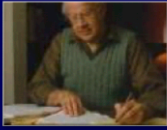
— Only two things will survive: (1) the souls of people (Eccl 3:11), and (2) God's Word (Is 40:8; Matt 24:35). When we invest our time today in either a person or in the study of God's Word, we are doing something that has eternal benefit.

— Peter said earlier (1:19) that Bible prophecy is a light shining in a dark place, and you do well to pay attention to it. Here is why we do well to pay attention: because if you understand Bible prophecy, it shapes your priorities in the present. We stop living for foolish things that are just going to burn anyway.

Everyone is looking for safe investments today, but there are only two safe investments: the Bible and people. Because God's Word and people's souls are the only two things that have eternal value in this life. The more time we spend studying and understanding the Bible, none of that time is wasted. When we forego other things, the cares of this world, to study and understand God's Word, that is an eternal investment. It will survive the fire.

And the more you invest in a person, the more time you spend helping, discipling or praying for someone...that is an eternal investment. But I wouldn't know that unless I understood eschatology. It's only through our knowledge of eschatology that I know what is going to

last. So God then tells us (in 1 Thess 2:12) to organize our lives according to God's future program. This is where we invest for the long haul.



J. Dwight Pentecost

Prophecy For Today, Page 20

“A short time ago, I took occasion to go through the New Testament to mark each reference to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ and to observe the use made of that teaching about His coming. I was struck a new with the fact that almost without exception, when the coming of Christ is mentioned in the New Testament, it is followed by an exhortation to godliness and holy living.”

(c) Evangelism (3:12)

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

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

12 as you look forward to and hasten the coming of the day of God, when the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved and the elements will melt with fire.

12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

- "...hastening" - *speudō*, quickening, happening earlier than anticipated or scheduled

— In v9 Peter explained that God deliberately holds back judgment to give plenty of time for people to come to repentance as possible

— Since God is holding things up to give people a chance to respond to the Gospel, the more we evangelize and spread the Gospel today, the sooner the end time program of God can come to pass

— Once God is done with the Church, the Rapture will take place and He will turn His attention again to Israel (Rom 11:25)

(d) Hope (3:13)

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

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

13 But in keeping with his promise, we are looking forward to new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

- We're looking for new heavens and a new earth because this heaven and earth are contaminated by sin and thus will be dissolved by fire

- Because of God's promise of a better world coming, we should not get down or depressed about the evil state of our current world; things are only going to get worse until they get much better

- Because there's a better world coming, a lot of things can go wrong in my life and I may be disappointed, but hope is not lost because I believe in God's promises of a better world coming

- God's Word doesn't promise us that this world is going to get better...it promises me that this world will be dissolved by fire and that a much better world is to come

- In today's English, "hope" is the idea of certainty or uncertainty, it's more of a probability; the biblical definition of "hope" is not a probability, it's an iron clad promise that we believe ("hope") in

- This means that you can go through all kinds of problems in this life, but never run out of hope because our hope is in the iron clad promises of God

- "...new heavens and a new earth" - Peter is not referring to the eternal heavens and new earth of Rev 21-22, but rather a "renovation" of the present heavens and earth prior to the inauguration of the kingdom

- After the Tribulation judgments, at the Second Coming, the earth will be "renovated" for the inauguration of the kingdom (Cf. Is 65:17-25; 66:22)

- The Tribulation judgments will take a toll on the earth's environment, leaving many locales unable to sustain life (Cf. notes on v10). In order to inaugurate the kingdom on the earth, the earth must first go through a renovation.

- "...which righteousness dwells" - the fact that righteousness will dwell in the kingdom is a truth also taught in Is 9:6-7; Jer 23:5-7; 33:16; Dan 9:24

(e) Holiness reiterated (3:14)

14 Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found spotless and blameless by Him, at peace,

14 Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless,

14 So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to have the Lord find you at peace and without spot or fault.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

- As a Christian, Peter is urging us to let our practice catch up with our position

- God has already declared us as holy, and we have the transferred righteousness of Christ imputed to us

- Since this is the positional reality of all believer, Peter is saying to live like it

- This is what prophecy does...it creates a natural desire in us to be holy

- 1 John 3:2-3 tells us that if we understand Bible prophecy, and we're thinking about the return of Christ and our accountability, it motivates us to holy living

(3) Concluding exhortations (3:15-18)

- (A) Paul as an example of grace (3:15a)

- (B) Be on guard against false teachers (3:15b-17)

15 and **regard the patience of our Lord as salvation**; just as also our beloved brother Paul, **according to the wisdom given him**, wrote to you,

15 and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you,

15 Think of our Lord's patience as facilitating salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him.

15 And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;

- "...regard the patience of our Lord as salvation" - when we understand God's patience toward us, we should in turn show that same patience to others

- God leads with patience, then follows with judgment; we, on the other hand, often lead with justice, with patience for others no where to be found

- Peter is exhorting believers to be patient before judgment, just as God is patient with mankind (v9), holding off judgment so that all may have an opportunity to come to repentance

- Peter uses Paul (Saul) as exhibit A for God's long-suffering

- Peter's audience would know of Saul/Paul very well...it was his persecution of the church that began to drive Christians out of Jerusalem and Israel and into other areas, even as far as north central Asia Minor (Acts 8:3-4; 11:19)

- Saul, once he was saved, never forgot about God's grace...he references it multiple times in his epistles (1 Cor 15:9; Eph 3:8; Phil 3:6; 1 Tim 1:12-15)

- "...according to the wisdom given him" - Peter, an apostle, authenticates Paul and confirms that he wrote under divine inspiration
— This is an example of a NT writer authenticating another NT writer. This is not common. It's very common for the NT writer to authenticate an OT book/writer. This chapter has two instances of a NT writer authenticating other NT books (Cf. v2).

Test of Canonicity

There have been many false teachers and false writings throughout the ages who have wanted their books to be part of the biblical canon. The Church took a position on canonicity and applied a basic test: the book had to be written by one of the original 12 apostles, or someone with a close connection or relationship with one of the 12 apostles. There are four places in Scripture where the 12 apostles are listed: Matt 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:13-14. Each of the 12 apostles are listed in each of these passages.

The church's test for canonicity was that if you were not one of these 12 apostles, or someone who knew one of those guys, your book was not considered to be divinely inspired.

Every NT book was written by one of the 12 apostles except those listed below. These books were accepted into the canon because of the writer's relationship with one of the apostles, or directly with Jesus Christ Himself:

- Mark - Mark knew Peter (1 Peter 5:13)
- Paul - Peter knew Paul (2 Peter 3:15)
- Luke - Luke knew Paul (2 Tim 4:11)
- James & Jude - half-brothers of Jesus (Matt 13:55)

16 as also in all *his* letters, speaking in them of these things, in which there are some things that are **hard to understand**, which the **untaught** and **unstable distort**, as *they do* also the rest of the **Scriptures**, to their own destruction.

16 as also in all *his* letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.

16 He speaks about this subject in all his letters. Some things in them are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, leading to their own destruction, as they do the rest of the Scriptures.

16 As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction.

- Peter says that Paul's writings, which he just authenticated as Scripture, have given an opportunity for false teachers because there are some things that Paul says that are hard to understand
 - The false teachers will come in, take these more difficult to understand passages, and exploit them and use them as a launching pad for teaching all kinds of false and perverse things
 - This is exactly what the kingdom of the cults does...they find a gray area, something that is debated, something that isn't clear, and they develop an entire false doctrine out of it
 - We must be very careful about developing doctrine out of a single verse or passage, particularly if you're developing it from one of the more difficult to understand passages. If you're going to develop a doctrine, you need to see it through the lens of multiple scripture passages.
 - This is how we determine what we believe...you can't defend the doctrine of the Trinity from one verse or passage; you can't defend the deity of Christ from one verse or passage...it takes multiple verses and passages, combined together, to come up with a doctrine.
 - But the kingdom of the cults won't recognize this principle...they intentionally look for ambiguous parts of the Bible through which to teach perversity and sweep people into confusion (Cf. 2:14).
- "...hard to understand" - *dusnoetos*, Peter doesn't elaborate on exactly what writings of Paul he thought were difficult to understand, but since Peter was the apostle to the Jews, it's likely that he is referring to the mystery of the Church, the fact that Jews and Gentiles are joined together in Christ together into one "new man" (Eph 3:3-6,9).
- In Acts 10, God had to give Peter a vision for him to minister to Cornelius, the first Gentile convert to Christianity. To God's instructions about food, Peter says "Not so Lord" (Acts 10:14).
- Peter's not rejecting Paul's teaching or doctrine (he authenticates it as Scripture), but he's was possibly either confused or had a hard time wrapping his mind around the doctrine of the church.
- Today the doctrine of post-modernism is prevalent...it promotes the idea of uncertainty. You have to be open to everything and certain of nothing, and the moment you become certain about something, they call you arrogant. They teach that you have to uncertain about everything except your own uncertainty.
- All of this masks itself in humility, but it's not genuine humility...it's unbelief. They'll say, I just don't think the Bible is clear on that, or I'm uncertain of your interpretation of that. So uncertainty masks their unbelief.
- Post-modernists use 2 Peter 3:16 like evangelical Christians use John 3:16...it's a cornerstone verse for them

— They reason that Peter could not even understand Paul, so how are we supposed to? This gives them license for their doctrine of uncertainty.

— But Peter doesn't say that everything Paul said is difficult to understand...he says "some things." He also doesn't say that some of these things are impossible to understand, he just says that some things Paul says require more effort to understand.

- "...untaught" - *amatheis*, those who had not received teaching concerning all that God had revealed

- "...unstable" - *asteriktoi*, those who were not always consistent in their allegiance to God or the world; double-minded, fence-straddling compromisers

— These two types of people would be easy-pickens when the false teachers arrived...

- "...distort" - *streblōo*, to pervert, to twist, to wrench; essentially, they take Paul's statements and twist and torture them to force them to say what they want them to say, with the goal of drawing disciples after themselves

— A parallel passage is Rev 22:18-19, where John gives a severe warning to anyone who would either add to or detract from the Scriptures. This is a severe warning to people who come to the Bible and intentionally distort or manipulate it to say what it doesn't say.

— If someone comes to the Bible with that mindset, what Peter (and John in Rev 22) is saying is that is a revelation of someone's unbelieving heart, because that is what unbelievers do.

— If someone comes to the Bible and taking an ambiguous section and developing a doctrine out of it to teach some strange idea, with the goal of drawing disciples after themselves, then this is most likely telling that they have never trusted in Christ.

— This is why Peter says that they twist the Scriptures to their own destruction

- It's important to recognize that Christians can also teach false doctrine...Peter himself is an example of this (Matt 16:21-23). In Gal 2, Peter was teaching legalism and Paul had to rebuke him to his face (Gal 2:10-14)

— However, this is not who Peter is dealing with here...he (and John in Rev 22) is dealing with people who come to the Bible and deliberately twist it (not that Christians can't do that, but that's not who Peter/John have in focus) in order to draw away people from the faith to follow them as disciples.

— The reason why these false teachers twist God's Word into a pretzel is because they cannot simply accept by faith what God says in His Word. When God speaks in His Word, the response of a believing heart is "Amen" but the unbeliever does not accept what God says at face value, so he must change it to suit himself and his sinful lusts.

— They are unbelievers, so they have no problem distorting or twisting the Word of God

— We are not here to sit in judgment of God's Word...God's Word is here to sit in judgment of us

- "...Scriptures" - Peter corroborates Paul's writings as in the same category as "the Scriptures"

— Paul's writings were not viewed by the apostles as epistles, they were viewed as having equal authority with the "other Scriptures," which refers to the OT

17 You therefore, beloved, **knowing this beforehand**, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unscrupulous people and **lose your own firm commitment**,

17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness,

17 And so, dear friends, since you already know these things, continuously be on your guard not to be carried away by the deception of lawless people. Otherwise, you may fall from your secure position.

17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

- "...knowing this beforehand" - Peter is telling his readers what will be coming to them in the near future, so they can be prepared

- "...lose your own firm commitment" - Peter says that if a Christian goes under the teaching of a false teacher or false doctrine for any amount of time, they run the risk of backsliding from fellowship with God, losing their firm commitment

— Peter is not talking about justification here, but their sanctification. Peter is dealing with their spiritual growth, so they won't be negatively influenced by false teachers. If they do become negatively influenced by false teachers, their growth in Christ (not their position in Christ) will be short-circuited.

— Peter's thrust in 2 Peter 1 is to urge his readers to spiritual growth, as a hedge against the coming false teachers. Now he says that if they do become influenced by these false teachers that he has warned them about, their growth in Christ will be negatively impacted.

— Paul tells Timothy to pay close attention (make sure it's true and accurate) to himself and his preaching (1 Tim 4:16). Paul tells this to Timothy because if he did not follow it, he'd be short circuiting the growth of his congregation.

(C) Press on to maturity (3:18)

18 but **grow in the grace** and **knowledge** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **To Him be the glory**, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

18 Instead, continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus, the Messiah. Glory belongs to him both now and on that eternal day! Amen.

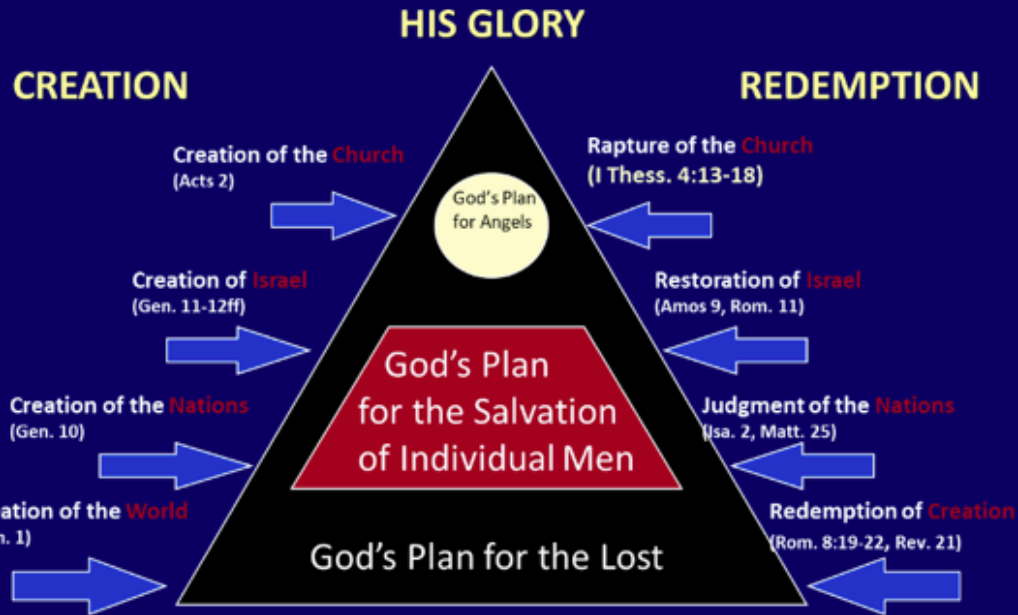
18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

- "...grow in grace" - how do we know we're growing in unmerited favor? How we treat other people: do you treat other people with justice or do you treat them with grace?
- The more Christians understand the fact that they are unconditionally accepted and forgiven in Christ, the harder it is to turn around and demand justice of someone who did something against you (Eph 4:30-32)
- We know we're growing in grace when we give each other the benefit of the doubt and not demonizing each other all the time
- "grow" - the best antidote to counter the false teachers is to grow in Christ
- This is one of the three purposes of the Church...to edify the saints and teach them so that they grow and mature in Christ
- Spiritual maturity inoculates the believer against false teaching, which is Peter's primary purpose and theme of this epistle (Cf. Eph 4:11-16)
- "...knowledge" - *gnōsis*, we often interpret "knowledge" as factual data, doctrinal truth understood intellectually and academically, but that's not the complete idea behind the biblical use of *gnōsis*
- Factual or doctrinal knowledge is a necessary first step, but it was never meant to be the last step
- When the Bible speaks of knowledge, it's speaking of a relationship (i.e. Adam *knew* Eve, Gen 4:1); Jesus tells those who are pleading their good works at the Great White Throne judgment, "I never *knew* you"
- So Peter is exhorting his readers to grow in our unmerited favor toward others, and in our relationship and intimacy with Jesus Christ. How do we do the latter? Through communication...prayer (us talking to God) and reading His Word (God talking to us). And the "grow" part is...has your intimacy with God, your prayer life and reading/study of God's Word gotten deeper over the past year? If not, you're not growing.
- "...To Him *be* the glory" - the ultimate motivation and end goal: God's glory.
- God's glory is the ultimate motivation for pressing on toward maturity and for growing relationally
- If we don't heed what is written in 2 Peter in the end we miss our purpose which is to glorify God. God's overall purpose is to bring glory to Himself (Eph 1:6,12,14).

The overarching point of the Bible is the doxological purpose of God, which is to glorify Himself. Salvation is not human-centered, as though salvation were the principle point, but God-centered, because His glory is at the center.

The glory of God is the primary principle that unifies all dispensations, the program of salvation being just one of the means by which God glorifies Himself. Each successive revelation of God's plan for the ages, as well as His dealings with the elect, non-elect, angels, and nations all manifest His glory.

THE FOCUS ON THE GLORY OF GOD IN DISPENSATIONALISM



Dr. Mike Stallard, Baptist Bible Seminary

The Westminster Shorter Catechism has some issues, but this is not one of them:

Question 1: What is the chief end of man?

Answer 1: Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever