



February 5/6, 2011

2 Peter

“How To Live Until Jesus Comes” Part 5

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This is the final study in the five-part series in 1 Peter and 2 Peter. It’s interesting to note that Peter starts and ends his second letter with verses warning us about the potential to fall,¹ which is an important counsel that every Christian should pay attention to as they live until Jesus comes. In this study we’ll learn about the seduction of false teachers and making our election and calling sure.

Discerning And Rejecting False Teachers

1. **2 Peter 2:1-3** - *“But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.”*
2. There is a seduction of false teachers that has caused good, trusting people to not exercise their God-given discernment concerning some Bible teachers, and they have been led astray, or worse, they have died in their blind allegiance.²
3. It’s important to remember that just because someone has a large church or a TV show or a radio broadcast, these things don’t automatically grant him or her credibility.³

¹ 2 Peter 1:10-11 and 2 Peter 3:17-18

² In his message, Pastor Gary made reference to Jim Jones and David Koresh. Use these links to read articles that summarize some of the details of these tragic stories.

<http://www.apologeticsindex.org/b10.html> and <http://www.apologeticsindex.org/p21.html>

4. Peter points out three telltale signs of a false teacher.
 - a. Doctrinal Error
 - i. Anyone can make a mistake and misspeak, however, these teachers, on matters of doctrine – faith or practice – are incompatible with the Bible.
 - ii. **2 Peter 1b-2** – *“They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute.”*
 1. Examples of false teachers also include false religions.
 - a. Mormons believe that Jesus and Lucifer are spirit brothers, which means they are a false religion.⁴
 - b. Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that Jesus and the archangel Michael are the same, which means they are a false religion.⁵
 - c. A pastor who alludes to himself as “high priest” or says that he is the only one who hears from God means that he is a false teacher.
 - d. A pastor who purports to have extra-biblical revelation is a false teacher.
 - e. Anyone who names a date for the Second Coming of Christ is a false teacher.⁶
 - i. **Matthew 24:36** – *“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.”*
 - b. Immoral Lifestyle
 - i. **2 Peter 2:17-18** – *“These people are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them. For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of the flesh, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error.”*
 - c. Spiritual Abuse of People
 - i. If people use their position or role to take advantage of people by exploiting them, controlling them, manipulating them or fleecing them, then that person is a false teacher.

³ In his message, Pastor Gary made reference to Randy and Paula White. Use these links to read two articles that provide some of the details of their story.

<http://www2.tbo.com/content/2007/aug/23/241529/church-change/news-breaking/> and <http://www.christianpost.com/article/20090712/paula-white-returns-to-lead-ailing-megachurch/>

⁴ <http://www.equip.org/articles/is-jesus-christ-the-spirit-brother-of-satan-> and

<http://lds.org/ensign/1986/06/i-have-a-question?lang=eng>

⁵ http://www.watchtower.org/e/bh/appendix_11.htm

⁶ Harold Camping has proclaimed that May 21, 2011 is the guaranteed date for the return of Christ. See the Study Guide for January 8/9, 2011 for more information.

<http://www.cornerstonechapel.net/pdf/studyguides/2011/2011%2001-09%20Study%20Guide.pdf>

- ii. **2 Peter 2:3, 14** - *“In their greed these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping... With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed—an accursed brood!”*

Make Your Calling And Election Sure

- 5. Something else Peter warns about beyond the problem from without (false teachers) is the problem from within, which is the neglect of our own hearts and our relationship with God.
- 6. We have a responsibility to maintain our relationship with God.
 - a. Some people think it's all up to God to maintain the relationship, and some Christians think it's all up to us to maintain the relationship, but the fact is that it's both!
 - b. **Jude 24** - *“[God] is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy.”*
 - c. **Jude 20-21** - *“But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.”*
 - d. The question is this: Is it God keeping us or are we to keep ourselves? The answer is, “Yes!”
 - e. Think of a marriage as an example of this kind of relationship. In a marriage there are two people (one man and one woman, by the way!) who are working together to keep the relationship strong.
 - i. In a real marriage there are two imperfect people, but in the marriage with Jesus, one is perfect.
 - 1. The Lord is perfectly loving, perfectly faithful, perfectly forgiving.
 - 2. The Lord always hopes, always trusts and always perseveres, and there will never be a cause for concern that he will end the relationship.
 - 3. In this relationship it is we who don't always love the Lord perfectly or always trust him or always demonstrate faithfulness.
 - ii. **Revelation 19:7** illustrates the marriage of the church (Bride of Christ) and Jesus (Groom).
- 7. **2 Peter 1:10-11** - *“Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never*

stumble, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

8. We have a responsibility in our relationship with God, which is to make our calling and election sure.⁷
9. Sometimes the enemy works on our minds to discourage us and cause us to doubt, but there are some things we do that contribute to our own spiritual insecurities:
 - a. Denying Jesus
 - i. If we don't acknowledge the Lord before men or if we pretend like we don't know him or if we're embarrassed to be associated with Jesus in other areas of our lives, we will begin to feel unsure about the relationship.
 - b. Unconfessed Sin
 - i. If there is hidden, unconfessed sin in our lives or if we're living in willful disobedience to the Lord, we'll have reason to be unsure about our calling and election.
 - c. Lack of time with the Lord
 - i. Like any relationship, it takes an investment of time:
 1. If you only talked with your spouse once a week, then the relationship wouldn't be as strong as it could be.
 2. If you only went to your spouse when you needed something or gave them your leftover time, there would be evidence for a troubled relationship.
 3. If you only said, "I love you," when you signed a greeting card, there would be no question that the relationship wasn't all it could be or should be.
 - ii. Peter understood what spiritual insecurity was all about.
 1. Remember that it was Peter who wrote this letter, so we're getting godly counsel from someone who had firsthand experience of what it feels like to have spiritual insecurity.
 2. Peter denied even knowing Jesus before the Lord was crucified, and he even went so far as to defiantly declare, "Everyone else may disown you, but I never will!" (Emphasis added)
 3. When the rooster crowed, as Jesus predicted, Peter "*went outside and wept bitterly.*"⁸

⁷ The Greek word for "sure" is *bebaios*, which means firm or stable.

⁸ [Luke 22:60-62](#) - "*Peter replied, 'Man, I don't know what you're talking about!' Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: 'Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times.' And he went outside and wept bitterly.*"

4. In [John 21](#), we read about the awkward conversation between the resurrected Jesus and Peter, and we learn that Peter is acquainted with falling and being restored.
5. [2 Peter 3:14](#) - *“So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.”*

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read [2 Peter 1:10-11 and 3:1-13, 17-18](#) to provide an overview for this study.
3. Read and discuss [2 Peter 2:1-3](#).
 - a. Briefly review some of the facts in the tragedy of Jonestown and Waco, Texas.
 - b. In your opinion, what was the motivating factor behind the decision of the members of these cults that caused them to choose to be followers, even to the point of death?
4. Do you think people see a large church, TV or radio ministry and naturally assume that the Lord is blessing that person's ministry because they are godly leaders who're preaching and teaching the Bible?
5. Review Pastor Gary's three-point outline that brings clarity to the definition of who is a false teacher. (See 4a, 4b, and 4c above)
 - a. Have you been involved in financially supporting, attending a church or service, a false teacher?
 - b. If so, how did the Lord lead you out?
 - c. Read and discuss [2 Peter 2:17-18](#).
 - d. Read and discuss [2 Peter 2:3, 14](#).
6. Read and discuss [2 Peter 1:10-11](#) and [Jude 20-21, 24](#).
7. Have you ever felt insecure about your relationship with God?
 - a. Do wonder about whether or not he really loves you?
 - b. Are you prone think about whether or not you're really saved?
 - c. Do you think it's possible to be forgiven by the Lord and have a 100% personal assurance of his forgiveness?
 - d. Why is it that when we have this sort of relationship with the Lord that we wonder why we feel insecure about our relationship with him?

8. Review Pastor Gary's three-point outline that explains the reasons why we feel disconnected from the Lord. (See 9a, 9b, and 9c above)
9. Has there been a time when you fell away from the Lord?
 - a. How did the Holy Spirit bring you back into a right relationship with the Lord?
10. If your time with the Lord is inadequate and has caused you to feel separated from him, what do you believe the Lord is calling you to do?
11. Close your time in prayer by asking the Holy Spirit to help each person: search their heart and ask themselves the question, "Have I fallen away from the Lord?" know that the Lord is the business of restoring the broken person and the broken relationship; consider whether or not they are at peace with the Lord; rejoice over the fact that they have had a consistent relationship with the Lord; rejoice in their restored relationship with the Lord.

Note: Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV).