

Introduction to 2 Peter Chapter 3

*Scoffers, the Day of the Lord, and New Heavens and a New Earth Wherein
Dwelleth Righteousness*

Chapter 3 brings both this letter and the whole of Peter's New Testament writing to its close, turning directly to the specific form of scoffing denial chapters 1 and 2 have been quietly preparing readers to meet: mockers who will arise in the last days asking, "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." Rather than answering this scoffing with mere assertion, Peter grounds his response in the same created order the scoffers themselves appeal to, reminding readers that the world has already once been destroyed by the very word of God they claim has never intervened, and that the heavens and earth presently in place are being kept in store by that identical word, reserved now unto fire rather than water.

The chapter's central section reframes the entire question of apparent delay, insisting that God's reckoning of time is not bound by human impatience, one day being with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, and that what scoffers read as slackness is in fact longsuffering, God's patient unwillingness that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. When the day of the Lord does come, Peter insists, it will come suddenly and decisively, as a thief in the night, the heavens passing away with a great noise and the elements melting with fervent heat, an ending that is, notably, not the letter's final word.

The letter, and with it Peter's entire New Testament witness, closes not on judgment but on hope and practical exhortation: new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, awaited according to God's own promise, and a final charge to be diligent, to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, a fitting conclusion to a letter, and indeed to both letters bearing Peter's name, that has moved consistently from doctrine to exhortation, from what believers have been given to how they are therefore to live, ending, as First Peter itself ended, in doxology: to him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

Opening Prayer

Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ,

Stir up our pure minds by way of remembrance, that we may be mindful of the words spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of the apostles of the Lord and Saviour. Keep us from the error of scoffers who walk after their own lusts, and give us understanding that by your word the heavens were of old, and that by that same word the world that then was perished, and the heavens and earth that now are, are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

Lord, let us never forget that one day is with you as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, and that you are not slack concerning your promise, but longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Prepare us for the day of the Lord, which will come as a thief in the night, and let us look for and hasten unto the coming of that day.

And Lord, we look, according to your promise, for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Make us diligent, that we may be found of you in peace, without spot, and blameless, growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

2 Peter 3:1–4

Scoffers in the Last Days: Where Is the Promise of His Coming?

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

(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:

(3) Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

(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.

The Context

Verse 1's "this second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance" explicitly identifies this letter as Peter's second to these readers, confirming this letter's continuity with an earlier one, most naturally First Peter, and restating the pastoral method already named in chapter 1, reminder rather than novel instruction, now applied specifically to "pure minds," minds capable, when properly stirred, of clear, undistorted judgment.

Verse 2's "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" names the twin authorities this reminder rests upon, Old Testament prophecy and apostolic commandment, the identical pairing already established as sure foundation in chapter 1's closing verses, now deployed specifically against the scoffing this chapter is about to describe.

Verse 3's "knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts" issues a direct, specific prophecy of what these readers should expect, scoffers whose mockery, notably, is tied directly to lust-driven living rather than to sincere intellectual doubt, an observation consistent with chapter 2's extended portrait of false teachers motivated by covetousness and sensual indulgence. Verse 4's "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" quotes the scoffers' specific argument directly, an appeal to apparent uniformity, the observable fact that nothing catastrophic has yet interrupted ordinary experience, used to dismiss the promise of Christ's return as empty or indefinitely delayed, an argument the following verses will directly and specifically dismantle.

Plain American English

Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking, that you should recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles. Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, Where is this coming he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation.

Key Observations

“stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance”: This signifies **Reminder Named as the Deliberate Pastoral Method Best Suited to Minds Already Capable of Clear Judgment.**

By addressing “pure minds,” Peter treats his readers as already equipped for sound thinking, needing not new information but active stirring of what they already possess, a method that respects rather than bypasses their existing spiritual maturity.

“scoffers, walking after their own lusts”: This signifies **Mockery of Christ’s Return Tied Directly to Lust-Driven Living Rather Than to Sincere Intellectual Doubt.**

By linking scoffing explicitly to lust rather than to honest inquiry, Peter suggests that this particular rejection of Christ’s promised return has moral rather than purely intellectual roots, consistent with chapter 2’s portrait of false teachers driven by covetousness and indulgence.

“since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation”: This signifies **An Argument From Apparent Uniformity Used to Dismiss the Promise of Christ’s Return.**

The scoffers’ argument rests entirely on observed continuity, since nothing catastrophic has yet occurred, they conclude nothing ever will, a pattern of reasoning the following verses will directly refute by recalling an instance of exactly the catastrophic interruption they claim has never happened.

What This Means for Us Today

1. Receive Repeated Reminder of Core Christian Hope as Genuinely Necessary Rather Than Redundant: Peter’s explicit strategy of stirring up pure minds by way of remembrance invites contemporary believers and teachers to value the ongoing rehearsal of core truths, including Christ’s promised return, rather than assuming familiarity removes the need for reminder.

2. Recognize That Skepticism About Christ’s Return May Sometimes Have Moral Rather Than Purely Intellectual Roots: Verse 3’s pairing of scoffing with lust invites contemporary believers to consider, with appropriate humility and without presuming to

judge every skeptic, that dismissal of Christian hope can sometimes be shaped by a preference for an unaccountable lifestyle rather than by disinterested reasoning alone.

How This Relates to Today

This chapter's prophecy of scoffers asking "where is the promise of his coming" has proven remarkably durable, describing a form of skepticism about Christ's return that has recurred in every generation of church history since, offering contemporary believers the reassurance that such scoffing was itself anticipated and named nearly two thousand years ago.

Key Lesson: **This opening unit identifies this letter as Peter's second, restating his method of stirring up pure minds by way of remembrance of prophetic and apostolic authority, and issues a direct prophecy that scoffers, walking after their own lusts, will arise in the last days asking where the promise of Christ's coming has gone, appealing to apparent uniformity in creation as their argument against a return they have decided will never come.**

2 Peter 3:5–7

Willingly Ignorant: The World That Then Was Perished, Reserved Unto Fire

(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:

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

(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.

The Context

Verse 5's "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" begins Peter's direct

refutation, naming the scoffers' ignorance as deliberate, "willingly," a chosen blindness rather than innocent unawareness. The reference to creation, heavens formed and earth emerging from water by God's own spoken word, echoes Genesis 1's creation account, establishing that the created order these scoffers appeal to as evidence of permanence was itself brought into being, and is therefore never independent of, the same divine word they now claim has never intervened.

Verse 6's "whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" names the flood (Genesis 6–8) as the scoffers' own argument turned directly against them: the very continuity they cite as proof against divine intervention is factually false, since the ancient world already experienced exactly the kind of catastrophic, world-altering judgment they insist has never occurred, a single historical counterexample sufficient to collapse their entire premise.

Verse 7's "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" extends the same principle forward, the identical divine word that once judged the world by water now sustains the present created order while simultaneously reserving it for a future judgment by fire, the parallel structure, one word, two judgments, water past and fire future, making the scoffers' appeal to unbroken continuity not merely optimistic but factually and theologically mistaken.

Plain American English

But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

Key Observations

"this they willingly are ignorant of": This signifies **Deliberate, Chosen Blindness Rather Than Innocent Unawareness Named as the Real Character of the Scoffers' Position.**

The word "willingly" insists that the scoffers' ignorance of the flood is not accidental but chosen, a refusal to reckon with inconvenient historical fact rather than a genuine gap in available knowledge.

“the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished”: This signifies **The Scoffers’ Own Argument From Uninterrupted Continuity Directly Refuted by a Documented Historical Catastrophe.**

By recalling the flood, Peter does not merely assert a counter-opinion but points to a specific, factual historical event that directly contradicts the scoffers’ central premise, demonstrating that catastrophic divine intervention has, in fact, already occurred once before.

“the heavens and the earth, which are now... reserved unto fire against the day of judgment”: This signifies **A Deliberate Parallel Structure Naming the Present Created Order as Sustained and Reserved by the Same Word That Once Judged by Water.**

The parallel between past judgment by water and future judgment by fire, both accomplished by the identical divine word, presents present cosmic stability not as permanent immunity from judgment but as a temporary, purposeful reservation awaiting its own appointed day.

What This Means for Us Today

1. Engage Skepticism About Divine Judgment With Specific Historical Argument Rather Than Assertion Alone: Peter’s method here, recalling a documented past event to refute a present claim, models for contemporary believers a way of engaging skepticism that appeals to evidence and history rather than relying solely on unsupported claim against claim.

2. Recognize Present Stability as Purposeful Reservation Rather Than Permanent Exemption From Accountability: The image of the present world being “kept in store” rather than simply permanent invites contemporary believers to hold present circumstances with appropriate seriousness, aware that apparent stability is not evidence against, but is itself part of, God’s own ordered plan.

How This Relates to Today

This passage’s insistence that willful forgetting, rather than genuine ignorance, underlies much skepticism about divine judgment speaks to ongoing contemporary debates about the relationship between belief and evidence, suggesting that some rejection of

accountability before God may stem less from a lack of information than from an unwillingness to reckon with it.

Key Lesson: **This unit directly refutes the scoffers' argument from apparent uniformity by recalling the flood, a documented catastrophic judgment that already once interrupted the very continuity they claim has never been broken, and extends the same principle forward, naming the present heavens and earth as kept in store by the identical divine word, reserved now unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.**

2 Peter 3:8–10

One Day as a Thousand Years: The Lord Is Longsuffering, Not Willing That Any Should Perish

(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.

(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.

(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.

The Context

Verse 8's "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" deliberately contrasts the scoffers' chosen ignorance of verse 5 with a truth Peter insists his readers must not share, drawing on Psalm 90:4's meditation on God's relationship to time, reframing what appears from a human vantage as delay into a matter of entirely different divine time-perspective, not because God experiences duration differently in some mystical sense, but because his patience is not constrained by human urgency or impatience.

Verse 9's "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" directly answers the charge of broken or delayed promise, reframing apparent delay entirely as intentional longsuffering rather than failure or forgetfulness. "Not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" names God's own expressed desire in terms of universal invitation, apparent delay serving the positive purpose of extending opportunity for repentance rather than representing indifference or inability to act.

Verse 10's "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" insists, immediately after emphasizing patience, that this patience is not indefinite, drawing on Jesus' own thief-in-the-night imagery (Matthew 24:43; 1 Thessalonians 5:2) to describe the day's sudden, unannounced arrival, and describing its cosmic scope in the most dramatic terms available, heavens passing away, elements melting, earth and its works burned up, a vivid, total dissolution matching the total, world-altering judgment of the flood already recalled in verse 6.

Plain American English

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: with the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.

Key Observations

"one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day":

This signifies **Apparent Delay Reframed as a Matter of Divine Time-Perspective Rather Than Broken Promise.**

Drawing on Psalm 90, this observation dissolves the human complaint of delay by locating the entire premise of "slowness" within a purely human frame of reference, one that does not apply straightforwardly to God's own relationship to time.

“not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”: This signifies **Delay Named as Purposeful Longsuffering Aimed at Universal Opportunity for Repentance Rather Than Indifference.**

Rather than being explained away or excused, apparent delay is given a positive, active purpose here, patience extended specifically so that more might come to repentance, transforming waiting itself into an expression of divine mercy.

“the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night”: This signifies **Sudden, Unannounced Arrival Named as the Defining Character of the Coming Day, Immediately Following an Emphasis on Patience.**

By pairing patience with suddenness in the same breath, Peter refuses to let longsuffering be mistaken for indefinite delay, insisting the day will come precisely when least expected, matching Jesus’ own teaching on the subject.

What This Means for Us Today

1. Reframe Personal Impatience With God’s Timing as a Matter of Perspective Rather Than a Sign of Divine Failure: Verse 8’s teaching on divine time-perspective invites contemporary believers to hold their own sense of delay, whether regarding Christ’s return or unanswered personal prayer, with humility about the limits of a purely human vantage point.

2. View God’s Patience as Active Mercy Extended for Repentance Rather Than Passive Inaction: Verse 9’s naming of longsuffering as aimed at repentance invites contemporary believers to view any apparent delay in judgment, whether cosmic or personal, as continuing opportunity rather than divine absence, and to respond to that opportunity with genuine repentance rather than presumption.

How This Relates to Today

This passage’s reframing of delay as patience rather than failure offers real comfort to contemporary believers who have grown weary waiting for Christ’s return across nearly two thousand years since these words were written, naming that very waiting as evidence of God’s ongoing mercy rather than of his absence or unfaithfulness.

Key Lesson: **This central unit answers the scoffers' charge of a broken promise by reframing apparent delay first as a matter of divine time-perspective, one day as a thousand years, and then as purposeful longsuffering, God's patient unwillingness that any should perish but that all should come to repentance, while insisting immediately that this patience is not indefinite, for the day of the Lord will come suddenly as a thief in the night, with the heavens passing away and the elements melting with fervent heat.**

2 Peter 3:11–13

What Manner of Persons Ought Ye to Be: New Heavens and a New Earth Wherein Dwelleth Righteousness

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

(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?

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

The Context

Verse 11's "seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness" draws the direct ethical conclusion from the preceding cosmic description, the coming dissolution of the created order functioning not as fatalistic despair but as motivation toward holy, godly living, a pattern of eschatology producing ethics that runs throughout this letter, from chapter 1's virtue chain to this closing chapter's exhortation.

Verse 12's "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" restates the cosmic dissolution already described, adding the striking, debated phrase "hasting unto," which may describe eager anticipation or, in a stronger reading found in some interpretations, genuine participation in hastening that day's arrival through faithful living and gospel proclamation, either way naming an active, engaged posture toward the future rather than passive waiting.

Verse 13's "nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" pivots decisively from destruction to hope, drawing on Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22's prophecy of new heavens and a new earth, ensuring the chapter's vision of the future does not end in mere dissolution but in positive, promised renewal, "wherein dwelleth righteousness" naming the defining quality of that new creation, a permanent, settled home for the very righteousness this letter has repeatedly urged believers to pursue.

Plain American English

Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

Key Observations

"what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness": This signifies **Coming Cosmic Dissolution Deployed as Direct Motivation Toward Present Holy Living Rather Than Fatalistic Despair.**

By moving immediately from a description of the world's coming end to a direct question about present character, Peter refuses to let eschatology remain speculative, insisting instead that genuine belief about the future must shape concrete, present conduct.

"looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God": This signifies **An Active, Engaged Posture Toward the Future Commended Rather Than Passive or Resigned Waiting.**

Whether understood as eager anticipation or genuine participation in hastening the day's arrival, this phrase resists any picture of believers merely enduring time until the end, calling instead for active, purposeful engagement with the future they await.

"new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness": This signifies **A Positive, Promised Renewal Ensuring the Chapter's Vision of the Future Ends in Hope Rather Than Mere Destruction.**

By pivoting from cosmic dissolution to Isaiah's prophecy of new heavens and a new earth, Peter refuses to let judgment be the letter's final word about the future, naming instead a permanent home for righteousness as the ultimate destination of God's promise.

What This Means for Us Today

- 1. Let Belief About the Future Directly Shape Present Conduct Rather Than Remaining Merely Theoretical:** Verse 11's direct question invites contemporary believers to examine whether their own genuine convictions about Christ's return and coming judgment actually influence daily choices, or remain a separate, unintegrated compartment of belief.
- 2. Anchor Hope in the Promise of Renewal Rather Than Merely in the Avoidance of Judgment:** Verse 13's vision of new heavens and a new earth invites contemporary believers to root their hope positively in the promise of a righteous new creation, rather than framing Christian hope only negatively, as escape from coming destruction.

How This Relates to Today

The direct link between eschatological belief and holy living speaks to any contemporary tendency to treat end-times teaching as abstract speculation disconnected from daily conduct, insisting instead that genuine hope in Christ's return should visibly shape how believers actually live now.

Key Lesson: **This unit draws the direct ethical conclusion from the preceding cosmic description, asking what manner of persons believers ought to be in holy conversation and godliness while looking for and hastening unto the day of God, and closes with the positive, promised hope of new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, ensuring the chapter's vision of the future rests finally in renewal rather than mere destruction.**

2 Peter 3:14–18

Grow in Grace: Beware Lest Ye Fall From Your Own Stedfastness

(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.

(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;

(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.

(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 stedfastness.

(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.

The Context

Verse 14's "wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless" returns to "diligent," the same keyword already central to chapter 1's virtue chain, now applied specifically to present readiness for the coming day, "without spot, and blameless" drawing a deliberate contrast with chapter 2's description of false teachers as "spots and blemishes" among the church, believers called instead to be found free of exactly the corruption those teachers embodied.

Verse 15's "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" restates verse 9's teaching on divine patience as itself salvific opportunity, and remarkably names Paul directly as "our beloved brother," an explicit, warm acknowledgment of apostolic unity between Peter and Paul despite whatever earlier tension Galatians 2:11–14 records between them, and "according to the wisdom given unto him" attributing Paul's writing to genuine, God-given wisdom rather than mere human cleverness.

Verse 16's "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" contains one of the New Testament's most historically significant statements, explicitly classing Paul's letters alongside "the other scriptures," an early and direct testimony to Paul's writings already

being received as authoritative Scripture, while honestly acknowledging their genuine difficulty and naming the real danger of their deliberate misuse, “wrest,” meaning twist or distort, by the unlearned and unstable, a danger explicitly tied to “their own destruction” rather than to any fault in the writings themselves.

Verses 17 and 18 close both the chapter and the entire letter: “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. 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.” The warning against falling and the positive command to grow are offered together, negative vigilance and positive pursuit as two sides of a single, sustained faithfulness, and the letter’s very last words, “to him be glory both now and for ever,” return the entire correspondence, and with it Peter’s whole New Testament witness, to simple, settled doxology, the fitting final word after everything chapters 1 through 3 have argued and warned.

Plain American English

So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless, and at peace with him. Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction. Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

Key Observations

“be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless”:

This signifies **A Deliberate Verbal Contrast Between the Believer’s Sought Character and the “Spots and Blemishes” of Chapter 2’s False Teachers.**

By choosing language directly opposite to chapter 2’s description of the false teachers as spots and blemishes among the church, this closing exhortation frames present diligence explicitly as the opposite of the corruption the letter has spent an entire chapter unsparingly describing.

“our beloved brother Paul... hath written unto you... as also in all his epistles... as they do also the other scriptures”: This signifies **An Early, Direct Testimony to Paul’s Letters Already Being Received Alongside the Rest of Authoritative Scripture.**

This casual, matter-of-fact classification of Paul’s epistles as “scriptures” provides significant historical evidence of how quickly apostolic writings came to be regarded with the same authority as the Old Testament, even while honestly acknowledging their genuine interpretive difficulty.

“beware lest ye also... fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ”: This signifies **Vigilance Against Falling and Active Pursuit of Growth Named Together as Two Inseparable Sides of Sustained Faithfulness.**

The letter’s closing pairs a negative warning with a positive command rather than offering either alone, insisting that genuine steadfastness requires both guarding against specific danger and actively pursuing ongoing growth in grace and knowledge.

What This Means for Us Today

1. Pursue Present Holiness as the Active Opposite of the Corruption Already Named and Warned Against: The deliberate echo of chapter 2’s language invites contemporary believers to understand personal holiness not merely as abstract virtue but as the concrete, specific opposite of the false teaching and corruption Scripture has already unsparingly described.

2. Hold Both Vigilance Against Error and Active Growth in Grace Together as a Single, Unified Discipline: The closing pairing of “beware” and “grow” challenges contemporary believers to resist treating spiritual defense and spiritual growth as separate pursuits, recognizing instead that genuine steadfastness requires sustained attention to both simultaneously.

How This Relates to Today

This passage’s honest acknowledgment that Paul’s letters contain things “hard to be understood,” capable of being twisted by the unlearned and unstable, speaks directly to

ongoing contemporary debates over biblical interpretation, offering ancient, apostolic acknowledgment that genuine difficulty exists within Scripture even as its overall authority remains firmly affirmed.

Key Lesson: **This closing unit charges believers to be diligent, found in peace, without spot, and blameless, precisely the opposite of the false teachers just described, affirms Paul's epistles as scripture alongside the rest even while acknowledging their genuine difficulty, and closes both the chapter and the entire letter with a final, paired charge to beware lest believers fall from their own steadfastness, but to grow instead in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom be glory both now and for ever. Amen.**

Closing Prayer

Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ,

Stir up our pure minds by way of remembrance, that we may be mindful of the words spoken by the holy prophets and the commandment of the apostles of the Lord and Saviour. Guard us from the error of scoffers who say, where is the promise of his coming, and let us never be willingly ignorant of your mighty works, that by your word the heavens were of old, and the world that then was perished by water, and the heavens and earth that now are, are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment.

Lord, let us remember that one day is with you as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, and that you are not slack concerning your promise, but longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Prepare us for the day of the Lord, which will come as a thief in the night, and let us look for and hasten unto the coming of that day, according to your promise, looking for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

And Lord, make us diligent, that we may be found of you in peace, without spot, and blameless, accounting your longsuffering as salvation. Keep us from being led away with the error of the wicked, that we may not fall from our own stedfastness, 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.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria

Glory to God Alone