

**THE SECOND LETTER OF
PETER
VERSE BY VERSE**

Featuring

- **The RSVCE Catholic Bible**
- **Catholic Commentary**
- **Catholic Catechism Insights**

**CATECHISM
of the
CATHOLIC CHURCH**

**(Second Edition, Revised in accordance with the
official Latin text promulgated by Pope John Paul II)**

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Instructions for individual study or a group:

Read each verse from the **Revised Standard Version Catholic Bible** along with the **Catholic Commentary** and **Catechism of the Catholic Church**. If in a group, you may stop and discuss at any time that which you have read. Proceed through the text at your own pace until you have studied the whole book of 2 Peter.

2 PETER

General Information: Second Peter is probably the latest book written in the New Testament, written around A.D. 100-25. The authorship is attributed to Simon Peter. It is believed that this Epistle, like the First, was sent to the Christians of Asia Minor, the majority of whom were converted Gentiles. False teachers (2 Pet. 2:1), heretics and deceivers (2 Pet. 3:3), of corrupt morals and denying the Second Advent of Christ and the end of the world, sought to corrupt the faith and the conduct of the Christians of Asia Minor. Peter wrote to excite them to the practice of virtue and chiefly to turn them away from the errors and bad example of the false teachers. (The Catholic Encyclopedia, Volume XI 1911 edition.) *Nihil Obstat, February 1, 1911.* Remy Lafort, S.T.D.,

Censor. *Imprimatur.* +John Cardinal Farley, Archbishop of New York.

2 PETER CHAPTER 1

2 Peter 1:1 - ¹ Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours in the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: ^(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 1:1) – “Simeon Peter” was one of the original twelve disciples of Jesus. The name “Peter” in Greek is *Petros* and means *a rock*. Peter holds first place among the twelve in that our Lord declared that “on this rock I will build my Church” (Matt. 16:18). His mission was to keep the faith from every lapse and to strengthen his brothers in it (Lk. 22:32; CCC 552-553).

Catechism of the Catholic Church

552 - Simon Peter holds the first place in the college of the Twelve; Jesus entrusted a unique mission to him. Through A revelation from the Father, Peter had confessed: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Our Lord then declared to him: "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it." Christ, the "living stone," thus assures his Church, built on Peter, of victory over the powers of death. Because of the faith he confessed Peter will remain the unshakeable rock of the Church. His mission will be to keep this faith from every lapse and to strengthen his brothers in it.

553 -Jesus entrusted a specific authority to Peter: "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The "power of the keys" designates authority to govern the house of God, which is the Church. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, confirmed this mandate after his Resurrection:

"Feed my sheep." The power to "bind and loose" connotes the authority to absolve sins, to pronounce doctrinal judgments, and to make disciplinary decisions in the Church. Jesus entrusted this authority to the Church through the ministry of the apostles and in particular through the ministry of Peter, the only one to whom he specifically entrusted the keys of the kingdom.

(2 Pet. 1:1) – Simeon Peter was “**a servant**” that is, he gave himself up to the will of Jesus his Messiah and Savior. “**And apostle of Jesus Christ**” “Apostle” (Gk. *apostolos*) means *one who is sent, an ambassador of the Gospel, a messenger of Christ*. Apostles often were given grace from God to perform miraculous signs and power (See 2 Cor. 12:12). Peter healed the sick, cast out devils, and raised the dead (See Matt. 10:1, 7-8; Acts 3:6-7; Acts 5:12-16; Acts 9:33-35; CCC 434, 548-549).

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434 Jesus' Resurrection glorifies the name of the Savior God, for from that time on it is the name of Jesus that fully manifests the supreme power of the

"name which is above every name." The evil spirits fear his name; in his name his disciples perform miracles, for the Father grants all they ask in this name.

548 The signs worked by Jesus attest that the Father has sent him. They invite belief in him. To those who turn to him in faith, he grants what they ask. So miracles strengthen faith in the One who does his Father's works; they bear witness that he is the Son of God. But his miracles can also be occasions for "offense"; they are not intended to satisfy people's curiosity or desire for magic. Despite his evident miracles some people reject Jesus; he is even accused of acting by the power of demons.

549 By freeing some individuals from the earthly evils of hunger, injustice, illness and death, Jesus performed messianic signs. Nevertheless he did not come to abolish all evils here below, but to free men from the gravest slavery, sin, which thwarts them in their vocation as God's sons and causes all forms of human bondage.

(2 Pet. 1:1) – “To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours” Peter is writing to believer’s who share in common his Christian faith. **“In the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:”** Peter’s point is that believers share equally in the Christian faith because God is righteous, just and fair. The word “faith” could refer to the whole content of the Christian faith (See Jude 3) or to God’s grace in giving us as an individual the ability to believe (See CCC 153).

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153 When St. Peter confessed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus declared to him that this revelation did not come "from flesh and blood," but from "my Father who is in heaven." Faith is a gift of God, a supernatural virtue infused by him. "Before this faith can be exercised, man must have the grace of God to move and assist him; he must have the interior helps of the Holy Spirit, who moves the heart and converts it to God, who opens the eyes of the mind and 'makes it easy for all to accept and believe the truth.'"

2 Peter 1:2 - ² May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. (RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 1:2) - “May grace and peace be multiplied to you” Peter opens his letter by wishing the multiplication of both “grace and peace” to the Church. **“Grace”** is *favor, the free and undeserved help of God*, especially the divine influence upon the heart and its reflection in one’s life (CCC 1996).

Catechism of the Catholic Church

1996 *Our justification comes from the grace of God. Grace is favor, the free and undeserved help that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life.*

(2 Pet. 1:2) - “Peace” carries the fundamental ideas of prosperity and well-being. **“In the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord”** “Grace and peace” is multiplied to us in the **“knowledge”** of God and Jesus our Lord.

This Greek word for “**knowledge**” is *epignosis* and carries the idea of a more complete comprehension of something that is already known. It is a greater participation in the truth of the Father and His Son, that more powerfully influences us (CCC 94).

Catechism of the Catholic Church

94 *Thanks to the assistance of the Holy Spirit, the understanding of both the realities and the words of the heritage of faith is able to grow in the life of the Church:*

- "through the contemplation and study of believers who ponder these things in their hearts"; it is in particular "theological research [which] deepens knowledge of revealed truth."

- "from the intimate sense of spiritual realities which [believers] experience," the sacred Scriptures "grow with the one who reads them."

- "from the preaching of those who have received, along with their right of succession in the episcopate, the sure charism of truth."

2 Peter 1:3 - ³ His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, (RSVCE)

(2 Peter 1:3) - “His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness,” God’s divine power has bestowed upon us all things that belong and relate to an active, vigorous life devoted to God. **“Through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,”** Through a better acquaintance of God (spiritual knowledge), He has called us to His own glory and moral excellence (divine power expressing itself in character and conduct) (2 Thess. 2:14; 1 Pet. 5:10; CCC 2708).

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2708 Meditation engages thought, imagination, emotion, and desire. This mobilization of faculties is necessary in order to deepen our convictions of faith, prompt the conversion of our heart, and

strengthen our will to follow Christ. Christian prayer tries above all to meditate on the mysteries of Christ, as in lectio divina or the rosary. This form of prayerful reflection is of great value, but Christian prayer should go further: to the knowledge of the love of the Lord Jesus, to union with him.

2 Peter 1:4 - ⁴ by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature. ^(RSVCE)

“Partakers of the divine nature” (2 Pet. 1:4) denotes human participation in the divine life of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is a mystery of grace that Paul describes as the indwelling of the Father (1 Cor. 6:16), the Son (Rom. 8:10; Gal. 2:20), and the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). Sharing in God’s divine nature sums up the fruits that grace (by God Spirit) produces in the life of His people (Rom. 8:12-14; Gal. 6:8-10) (CCC 1997).

Catechism of the Catholic Church

1997 Grace is a participation in the life of God. It introduces us into the intimacy of Trinitarian life: by Baptism the Christian participates in the grace of Christ, the Head of his Body. As an "adopted son" he can henceforth call God "Father," in union with the only Son. He receives the life of the Spirit who breathes charity into him and who forms the Church.

2 Peter 1:5-7 ⁵ For this very reason make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, ⁶ and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, ⁷ and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. (RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 1:5-7) - The divine nature is expressed through these virtues. It begins with faith and ends with love. As

the Apostle Paul expresses, “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith working through love” (Gal. 5:6) (CCC 25).

Catechism of the Catholic Church

25 To conclude this Prologue, it is fitting to recall this pastoral principle stated by the Roman Catechism:

The whole concern of doctrine and its teaching must be directed to the love that never ends. Whether something is proposed for belief, for hope or for action, the love of our Lord must always be made accessible, so that anyone can see that all the works of perfect Christian virtue spring from love and have no other objective than to arrive at love.

2 Peter 1:8,9 - ⁸ For if these things are yours and abound, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ For whoever lacks these things is blind and shortsighted and

has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. (RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 1:8-9) – “Unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” A true knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ engulfs the virtues listed in verses 5-7. The one who does not possess these qualities becomes like a branch that does not bear fruit (Jn. 15:2, 6) or like a seed that is choked by thorns (Mk. 4:18-19). This person is blind because he has closed his eyes to the truth. Peter reflects on the need of *continual conversion*. **“Cleansed from his old sins”** means *past sins* that were committed prior to their initial conversion.

Conversion means a radical reorientation of the whole life away from sin and evil, and toward God. This change of heart or conversion is a central element of Christ’s preaching, of the Church’s ministry of evangelization, and of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation (CCC Glossary, p. 873; CCC 1427, 1432).

Catechism of the Catholic Church

1427 Jesus calls to conversion. This call is an essential part of the proclamation of the kingdom: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel." In the Church's preaching this call is addressed first to those who do not yet know Christ and his Gospel. Also, Baptism is the principal place for the first and fundamental conversion. It is by faith in the Gospel and by Baptism that one renounces evil and gains salvation, that is, the forgiveness of all sins and the gift of new life.

1432 The human heart is heavy and hardened. God must give man a new heart. Conversion is first of all a work of the grace of God who makes our hearts return to him: "Restore us to thyself, O LORD, that we may be restored!" God gives us the strength to begin anew. It is in discovering the greatness of God's love that our heart is shaken by the horror and weight of sin and begins to fear offending God by sin and being separated from him. The human heart is converted by looking upon him whom our sins have pierced:

Let us fix our eyes on Christ's blood and understand how precious it is to his Father, for, poured out for our salvation, it has brought to the whole world the grace of repentance.

2 Peter 1:10,11 - ¹⁰ Therefore, brethren, be the more zealous to confirm your call and election, for if you do this you will never fall; ¹¹ so there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. ^(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 1:10) “Therefore, brethren, be the more zealous to confirm your call and election” The Apostle Peter urges his readers to confirm their call and election. The believer who pursues the spiritual virtues listed in 2 Peter 1:5-7, guarantees to himself by spiritual fruit that he was called and chosen by God to salvation (1 Pet. 1:2; CCC 2087). **“For if you do this you will never fall;”** Such a believer will never fall. The Greek word for “fall” means “to trip up” or “to experience a reversal” or “to fail” to receive salvation.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2087 Our moral life has its source in faith in God who reveals his love to us. St. Paul speaks of the "obedience of faith" as our first obligation. He shows that "ignorance of God" is the principle and explanation of all moral deviations. Our duty toward God is to believe in him and to bear witness to him.

(2 Pet. 1:11) - "So there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The one whose faith is accompanied by good works, that is, works that demonstrate his faith, will have an entrance richly provided into the eternal kingdom (See Matt. 25:31-46; CCC 2447).

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2447 The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities. Instructing, advising, consoling, comforting are spiritual works

of mercy, as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. The corporal works of mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead. Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God.

2 Peter 1:12-15 - ¹² Therefore I intend always to remind you of these things, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have. ¹³ I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to arouse you by way of reminder, ¹⁴ since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. ¹⁵ And I will see to it that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things.
(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 1:12-15) – It was revealed to Peter by the Lord Jesus that his death was at hand. Peter was martyred and crucified upside down at his own request not feeling worthy to die in the same manner as his Lord (CCC 2473). Peter wanted his readers to remember what he had taught long after his death, thus he penned this inspired letter.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2473 Martyrdom is the supreme witness given to the truth of the faith: it means bearing witness even unto death. The martyr bears witness to Christ who died and rose, to whom he is united by charity. He bears witness to the truth of the faith and of Christian doctrine. He endures death through an act of fortitude. "Let me become the food of the beasts, through whom it will be given me to reach God."

2 Peter 1:16-18 - ¹⁶ For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were

eyewitnesses of his majesty. ¹⁷ For when he received honor and glory from God the Father and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,” ¹⁸ we heard this voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. ^(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 1:16-18) – A Christian’s faith does not rest on cleverly devised myths as did the doctrines of the false teachers. Peter says that the apostles were eyewitnesses of the gospel events. Peter recalls vividly hearing the voice of Almighty God who proclaimed on that holy mountain. “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” Peter knew what he was talking about when he preached. Could false teachers have this kind of authority? This *past* revelation of Christ’s glory seen in the transfiguration (See Matt. 17:1-8; Mk. 9:2-8; Lk. 9:28-36) (by Peter, James and John) is considered a preview of the *future* revelation of the glory of Christ to be seen at his Second Coming (CCC 554-555, 673).

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554 From the day Peter confessed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, the Master "began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things . . . and be killed, and on the third day be raised." Peter scorns this prediction, nor do the others understand it any better than he. In this context the mysterious episode of Jesus' Transfiguration takes place on a high mountain, before three witnesses chosen by himself: Peter, James, and John. Jesus' face and clothes become dazzling with light, and Moses and Elijah appear, speaking "of his departure, which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem." A cloud covers him and a voice from heaven says: "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!"

555 For a moment Jesus discloses his divine glory, confirming Peter's confession. He also reveals that he will have to go by the way of the cross at Jerusalem in order to "enter into his glory." Moses and Elijah had seen God's glory on the Mountain; the Law and the Prophets had announced the

Messiah's sufferings. Christ's Passion is the will of the Father: the Son acts as God's servant; the cloud indicates the presence of the Holy Spirit. "The whole Trinity appeared: the Father in the voice; the Son in the man; the Spirit in the shining cloud."

673 Since the Ascension Christ's coming in glory has been imminent, even though "it is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority." This eschatological coming could be accomplished at any moment, even if both it and the final trial that will precede it are "delayed."

2 Peter 1:19-21 - ¹⁹ And we have the prophetic word made more sure. You will do well to pay attention to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. ²⁰ First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, ²¹ because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man,

but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. (RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 1:19-21) This section contains a strong statement concerning the inspiration of the Scripture. The Scripture is not a collection of fables about God. It is God's very words that were given *through* people to people. Nearly 40 writers were involved over a period of some 1,500 years. Peter emphasized his authority as an eyewitness to Christ's glory (2 Pet. 1:16) and the God-inspired authority of Scripture (2 Pet. 1:21; CCC 104, 120, 123, 134) to prepare his readers for the harsh words that will follow concerning false teachers (2 Pet. 2:1-3). If these wicked men are contradicting the apostles and the Scripture, then their message cannot be from God.

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104 In Sacred Scripture, the Church constantly finds her nourishment and her strength, for she welcomes it not as a human word, "but as what it really is, the word of God." "In the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven comes lovingly to meet his children,

and talks with them."

120 It was by the apostolic Tradition that the Church discerned which writings are to be included in the list of the sacred books. This complete list is called the canon of Scripture. It includes 46 books for the Old Testament (45 if we count Jeremiah and Lamentations as one) and 27 for the New.

123 Christians venerate the Old Testament as true Word of God. The Church has always vigorously opposed the idea of rejecting the Old Testament under the pretext that the New has rendered it void (Marcionism).

134 All Sacred Scripture is but one book, and this one book is Christ, "because all divine Scripture speaks of Christ, and all divine Scripture is fulfilled in Christ" (Hugh of St. Victor, De arca Noe 2, 8: PL 176, 642: cf. ibid. 2, 9: PL 176, 642-643). (See Luke 24:27).

2 PETER CHAPTER 2

2 Peter 2:1 - ¹ But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. ^(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 2:1) – In Deuteronomy 13:1-5 God warned the people that if a false prophet came and tried to draw them away from the worship of the true and living God that they should not listen. The Apostle Peter is telling his readers the same thing (CCC 2089).

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2089 *Incredulity* is the neglect of revealed truth or the willful refusal to assent to it. "*Heresy* is the obstinate post-baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with divine and catholic faith, or it is likewise an obstinate doubt concerning the same;

***apostasy* is the total repudiation of the Christian faith; *schism* is the refusal of submission to the Roman Pontiff or of communion with the members of the Church subject to him."**

2 Peter 2:2 - ² And many will follow their licentiousness, and because of them the way of truth will be reviled. (RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 2:2) – The problem facing Peter and the Church is that “many shall follow” the immoral behavior of false teaching and teachers. The Apostle Paul mentioned a great falling away from the true faith at the end of time (See 2 Thess. 2:3; 2 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 4:3-4). Many people will profess to be Christians but deny Christ’s lordship over their lives. The world mocks and scoffs the gospel because of hypocritical people who profess that they know Christ yet deny Him with their actions (See Titus 1:16; CCC 2472).

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2472 The duty of Christians to take part in the life of the Church impels them to act as witnesses of the Gospel and of the obligations that flow from it. This witness is a transmission of the faith in words and deeds. Witness is an act of justice that establishes the truth or makes it known.

**2 Peter 2:3 - ³ And in their greed they will exploit you with false words; from of old their condemnation has not been idle, and their destruction has not been asleep.
(RSVCE)**

(2 Pet. 2:3) – Peter observed that the underlying motive of the false teachers was not love for people, but love of money (See 2 Pet. 2:14; CCC 2514). They exploit people through their lies and falsehoods. Judgment and destruction are sure since they are the enemies of God.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2514 St. John distinguishes three kinds of covetousness or concupiscence: lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life. In the Catholic catechetical tradition, the ninth commandment forbids carnal concupiscence; the tenth forbids coveting another's goods.

2 Peter 2:4 - ⁴ For if God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of nether gloom to be kept until the judgment;
(RSVCE)

(2 Peter 2:4) The Apostle Peter draws from the Old Testament the fact that false teachers will certainly be punished in the Day of Judgment by our Righteous and Just God. Three examples are given. **“For if God did not spare the angels when they sinned.”** In Jude 6 they are called “the angels that did not keep their own position but left their proper dwelling.” These are said to be in “eternal chains in the deepest darkness until the Judgment of the Great Day.” (CCC 391)

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391 *Behind the disobedient choice of our first parents lurks a seductive voice, opposed to God, which makes them fall into death out of envy. Scripture and the Church's Tradition see in this being a fallen angel, called "Satan" or the "devil." The Church teaches that Satan was at first a good angel, made by God: "The devil and the other demons were indeed created naturally good by God, but they became evil by their own doing."*

2 Peter 2:5 - ⁵ if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven other persons, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; (RSVCE)

(2 Peter 2:5) The second example is “**the ancient world**,” meaning the people who lived before the Flood in the time of Noah. God destroyed the whole world by “**a flood**” (Gen. 6-8), and preserved (or saved) only eight people (1 Pet. 3:20). The word “**preserved**” here

literally means *to guard* or *protect*, and this is what God did for Noah and his family. (CCC 1219)

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1219 *The Church has seen in Noah's ark a prefiguring of salvation by Baptism, for by it "a few, that is, eight persons, were saved through water":*

The waters of the great flood you made a sign of the waters of Baptism, that make an end of sin and a new beginning of goodness.

2 Peter 2:6 - ⁶ if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction and made them an example to those who were to be ungodly; (RSVCE)

(2 Peter 2:6) The third example is the destruction of "Sodom and Gomorrah" from which only Lot was delivered or rescued (Gen. 19:29). These examples are a warning to those who continue to live ungodly, filthy

lives of evil. It is interesting that the Flood and Sodom and Gomorrah were also used by Jesus as examples of judgment (Lk.17:26-29). (CCC 1022)

Catechism of the Catholic Church

1022 Each man receives his eternal retribution in his immortal soul at the very moment of his death, in a particular judgment that refers his life to Christ: either entrance into the blessedness of heaven - through a purification or immediately, or immediate and everlasting damnation.

At the evening of life, we shall be judged on our love.

2 Peter 2:7-9 - ⁷ and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the licentiousness of the wicked ⁸ (for by what that righteous man saw and heard as he lived among them, he was vexed in his righteous soul day after day with their

lawless deeds),⁹ then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trial, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, ^(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 2:7-9) The Apostle Peter had spoken about the deliverance of Noah and his family in 2 Peter 2:5. He now speaks about another rescue, that is, righteous Lot (2 Peter 2:7). Lot hated the sins of his culture and was greatly distressed by their life style. He also sought to protect God's angels that entered the city and obeyed the Lord by not looking back at Sodom's destruction (See Gen. 19:4-8; Gen. 19:17). Lot was deeply troubled about the behavior of the people living in Sodom and Gomorrah.

These examples were cited by the Apostle Peter to show that **"the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trial, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the Day of Judgment"** (2 Peter 2:9) (CCC 681, 682).

Catechism of the Catholic Church

681 *On Judgment Day at the end of the world, Christ will come in glory to achieve the definitive triumph of good over evil which, like the wheat and the tares, have grown up together in the course of history.*

682 *When he comes at the end of time to judge the living and the dead, the glorious Christ will reveal the secret disposition of hearts and will render to each man according to his works and according to his acceptance or refusal of grace.*

2 Peter 2:10-11 – ¹⁰ and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and wilful, they are not afraid to revile the glorious ones, ¹¹ whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a reviling judgment upon them before the Lord. (RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 2:10-11) Like the wicked people of Noah's and Lot's time, the false teachers followed the desires of their

corrupt nature and had no respect for the Lord's authority. They also blasphemed and ridiculed angels, probably fallen creatures of a higher order of being (2 Peter 2:10; CCC 311). Angels who are greater in power than human beings, would not make an accusation against these wicked spirits in the Lord's presence (2 Peter 2:11). Jude 8-9 tells us that the archangel Michael, recognizing the presence and power of Satan would not speak evil of him but said "The Lord rebuke you" (Jude 9). Peter describes the false teachers as bold and willful slanders even of celestial beings that they know nothing of.

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311 Angels and men, as intelligent and free creatures, have to journey toward their ultimate destinies by their free choice and preferential love. They can therefore go astray. Indeed, they have 396 sinned. Thus has moral evil, incommensurably more harmful than physical evil, entered the world. God is in no way, directly or indirectly, the cause of moral evil. He permits it, however, because he respects the freedom of his creatures and, mysteriously,

knows how to derive good from it:

For almighty God . . ., because he is supremely good, would never allow any evil whatsoever to exist in his works if he were not so all-powerful and good as to cause good to emerge from evil itself.

2 Peter 2:12-13 - ¹² But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and killed, reviling in matters of which they are ignorant, will be destroyed in the same destruction with them, ¹³ suffering wrong for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their dissipation, carousing with you. ^(RSVCE) Some manuscripts have “and the meals they eat with you are spoiled by the shameful way they carry on during your feasts of Christian love.”

(2 Pet. 2:12-13) “The meals they eat with you” (CEV). In the early Church this celebration feast was probably a meal that ended with the Eucharist. The false teachers, although they were in willful sin, took part. In doing so they partook in one of the greatest of hypocritical acts. The apostle Paul told the Corinthians, “Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord” (1 Cor. 11:27; CCC 1385).

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1385 *To respond to this invitation we must prepare ourselves for so great and so holy a moment. St. Paul urges us to examine our conscience: “Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself.” Anyone conscious of a grave sin must receive the sacrament of Reconciliation before coming to communion.*

2 Peter 2:14 - ¹⁴ They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children! (RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 2:14) “They have eyes full of adultery.” In Greek this statement is in the present tense meaning, *Having and continuing to have eyes full of adultery*. In Scripture, doctrine and morals are never divided by any sharp line. *Errors* in doctrine are not infrequently the effect of relaxed morality, and vice versa (Vine’s Greek Lexicon). These false teachers thought only of adultery when they saw women (CCC 2380). **“Insatiable for sin”**, that is, *unceasing in sin*. **“They entice unsteady souls.”** To *entice* means to catch with bait. These men do not capture those strong in the faith, but prey on the weak and unstable. **“They have hearts trained in greed.”** They concentrate on nothing but forbidden things for which their passions lust. **“Accursed children!”** A Hebraism denoting certain destruction from the hand of God.

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2380 Adultery refers to marital infidelity. When two partners, of whom at least one is married to another party, have sexual relations - even transient ones - they commit adultery. Christ condemns even adultery of mere desire. The sixth commandment and the New Testament forbid adultery absolutely. The prophets denounce the gravity of adultery; they see it as an image of the sin of idolatry.

2 Peter 2:15-16 - ¹⁵ Forsaking the right way they have gone astray; they have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing, ¹⁶ but was rebuked for his own transgression; a dumb ass spoke with human voice and restrained the prophet's madness. ^(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 2:15-16) “Forsaking the right way.” The “**right way**” is an Old Testament metaphor for obedience to God (Acts 13:10). Balaam was hired by a pagan king to curse Israel. He did what God told him to do for awhile (Numbers 22-24), but eventually his evil desire for money won out (Num. 25:1-3; 31:16)

“Balaam” served as an illustration and example of false teachers and prophets. He was an Old Testament compromising prophet who went bad for the love of wealth over faithfulness and obedience to God (CCC 2536). Through a talking donkey, God kept him from cursing Israel (Numbers 22:21-35), but later he urged the Moabites to trick Israelite men into illicit relationships with Moabite women, thereby introducing immorality into the camp of Israel. (Num. 31:16; Num. 25:1-3). The misuse of money and sex continue to bring spiritual ruin to many people. This is the error of Balaam that is mentioned in Jude 11, and Revelation 2:14.

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2536 The tenth commandment forbids greed and the desire to amass earthly goods without limit. It forbids avarice arising from a passion for riches and their attendant power. It also forbids the desire to commit injustice by harming our neighbor in his temporal goods:

When the Law says, "You shall not covet," these words mean that we should banish our desires for

whatever does not belong to us. Our thirst for another's goods is immense, infinite, never quenched. Thus it is written: "He who loves money never has money enough."

2 Peter 2:17 - ¹⁷ These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm; for them the nether gloom of darkness has been reserved. ^(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 2:17) "These are waterless springs." Peter uses two poetic figures (waterless springs and mists driven by a storm). A waterless spring would be a major disappointment in a hot and dry land. Likewise, false teachers have a pretense of spiritual water to quench the thirsty soul, but actually have nothing. **"Mists driven by a storm."** A storm that drives away moisture would leave the land hot and dry. The false teacher seems to promise spiritual refreshment, but were all show with no substance (see Jude 12). **"The nether gloom of darkness has been reserved"** for these false teachers (see Matthew 8:12; Jude 13; CCC 1033).

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1033 ... To die in mortal sin without repenting and accepting God's merciful love means remaining separated from him forever by our own free choice. This state of definitive self-exclusion from communion with God and the blessed is called "hell."

2 Peter 2:18-19 ¹⁸ For, uttering loud boasts of folly, they entice with licentious passions of the flesh men who have barely escaped from those who live in error. ¹⁹ They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption; for whatever overcomes a man, to that he is enslaved. (RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 2:18) "Uttering loud boasts of folly." False teachers deceive with high sounding words that sound like profound spiritual insight. They may contradict the plain historic teachings of the Church and of Scripture.

“They entice with licentious passions of the flesh.”

In spite of all the empty talk, false teachers entice others to their philosophies. They offer a kind of religion that can embrace and still hold on to their fleshly desires.

Peter may also be implying the false teachers desire to seduce women. **“Men who have barely escaped from those who live in error.”** The false teachers exploit and lure back into sin those who have just escaped from their sinful living (CCC 2284)..

(2 Peter 2:19) “They promise freedom, but they themselves are slaves.” While the false teachers promise freedom from law and needless restraints, they themselves are slaves to corrupt living. A man is a slave and overcome by whatever controls him.

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2284 Scandal is an attitude or behavior which leads another to do evil. The person who gives scandal becomes his neighbor's tempter. He damages virtue and integrity; he may even draw his brother into spiritual death. Scandal is a grave offense if by deed or omission another is deliberately led into a grave offense.

2 Peter 2:20 - ²⁰ For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overpowered, the last state has become worse for them than the first. ^(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 2:20) A person is better off to have never known the Christian message, than to have known it and deliberately turned away. Peter and the other apostles warn that believers can turn away from God's grace (2 Cor. 6:1; CCC 2089)

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2089 Incredulity is the neglect of revealed truth or the willful refusal to assent to it. "Heresy is the obstinate post-baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with divine and catholic faith, or it is likewise an obstinate doubt concerning the same;

apostasy is the total repudiation of the Christian faith; schism is the refusal of submission to the Roman Pontiff or of communion with the members of the Church subject to him."

2 Peter 2:21-22 ²¹ For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them. ²² It has happened to them according to the true proverb, The dog turns back to his own vomit, and the sow is washed only to wallow in the mire.
(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 2:21) It is more advantageous for people not to become acquainted with the way or course of righteousness, than after they have known, to turn their backs from the apostolic message (CCC 675)

(2 Peter 2:22) Jews considered dogs and pigs among the lowest of creatures (Matt. 7:6) so Peter chose

these animals to describe people who knew the truth and turned from it.

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675 Before Christ's second coming the Church must pass through a final trial that will shake the faith of many believers. The persecution that accompanies her pilgrimage on earth will unveil the "mystery of iniquity" in the form of a religious deception offering men an apparent solution to their problems at the price of apostasy from the truth. The supreme religious deception is that of the Antichrist, a pseudo-messianism by which man glorifies himself in place of God and of his Messiah come in the flesh.

2 PETER CHAPTER 3

2 Peter 3:1-2 ¹ This is now the second letter that I have written to you, beloved, and in both of them I have aroused your sincere mind by way of reminder; ² that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles.
(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 3:1-2) Through the writings of 1 & 2 Peter, Peter reminds the Christians that, although there are false teachers among them who claim to be representing God, they must recognize, accept, and obey only the holy prophets of God (as recorded in the Old Testament) and the preaching of the apostles (meaning himself and the others). **“The commandment of the Lord and Savior”** refers to Jesus teachings, which were then proclaimed by the apostles (See Jude 17). We must remember what the apostles told us and commanded us to do (CCC 84).

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84 *The apostles entrusted the "Sacred deposit" of the faith (the depositum fidei), contained in Sacred Scripture and Tradition, to the whole of the Church. "By adhering to [this heritage] the entire holy people, united to its pastors, remains always faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. So, in maintaining, practicing, and professing the faith that has been handed on, there should be a remarkable harmony between the bishops and the faithful."*

2 Peter 3:3-4 ³ **First of all you must understand this, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own passions ⁴ and saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things have continued as they were from the beginning of creation."** (RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 3:3) Peter understood that he and his readers were living **“in the last days.”** **“Scoffers”** are people who deny Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 2:1) and His promised return (2 Pet. 3:4). Jesus had said these deceivers would come (Matt. 24:3-5, 11, 24-25). The Apostle Paul had also written of these deceivers (1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-9). Peter now echoes the warning and adds their scoffing will be accompanied by the following of their own evil passions and desires.

(2 Pet. 3:4) Their mocking and scoffing are accompanied by this stinging question: **“Where is this coming He promised?”** The scoffers wanted to push their argument as far back as possible. So they referred to the fathers, our ancestors and to **“the beginning of Creation.”** Since nothing has happened in all this time, mockers reasoned, why expect the Lord to return now? (CCC 524)

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524 When the Church celebrates the liturgy of Advent each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Savior's first coming, the

faithful renew their ardent desire for his second coming. By celebrating the precursor's birth and martyrdom, the Church unites herself to his desire: "He must increase, but I must decrease."

2 Peter 3:5-6 ⁵ They deliberately ignore this fact, that by the word of God heavens existed long ago, and an earth formed out of water and by means of water, ⁶ through which the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. ^(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 3:5-6) "They deliberately ignore this fact"
(Greek progressive present). The fact is, God destroyed the world in judgment once, and this confirms rather than disproves the warning that he will do it again (CCC 1040)

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1040 *The Last Judgment will come when Christ returns in glory. Only the Father knows the day and*

the hour; only he determines the moment of its coming. Then through his Son Jesus Christ he will pronounce the final word on all history. We shall know the ultimate meaning of the whole work of creation and of the entire economy of salvation and understand the marvelous ways by which his Providence led everything towards its final end. The Last Judgment will reveal that God's justice triumphs over all the injustices committed by his creatures and that God's love is stronger than death.

2 Peter 3:7 - ⁷ But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist have been stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.
(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 3:7) Verses 7, 10, and 12 depict the future destruction of the world by fire. In the past the world was destroyed in the Flood (CCC 681)

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681 *On Judgment Day at the end of the world, Christ will come in glory to achieve the definitive triumph of good over evil which, like the wheat and the tares, have grown up together in the course of history.*

2 Peter 3:8-9 ⁸ But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow about his promise as some count slowness, but is forbearing toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ^(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 3:8-9) Why should the Lord delay His coming? Peter offered two answers. (1) Peter quotes Psalm 90:4. People see time against time; but God sees time against eternity. (2) God does not want people to perish. God wants all to repent and receive the salvation offered in Christ (1 Tim. 2:4; CCC 1037)

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1037 God predestines no one to go to hell for this, a willful turning away from God (a mortal sin) is necessary, and persistence in it until the end. In the Eucharistic liturgy and in the daily prayers of her faithful, the Church implores the mercy of God, who does not want "any to perish, but all to come to repentance."

2 Peter 3:10¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and the works that are upon it will be burned up. ^(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 3:10) The description of the judgment of that Day is given in the most vivid apocalyptic terms: Noise, destruction of all the elements by burning, and the leveling of all earthly constructions. This will be unexpectedly and without warning (CCC 673). God will level the site in preparation for the new (2 Peter 3:13).

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673 *Since the Ascension Christ's coming in glory has been imminent, even though "it is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority." This eschatological coming could be accomplished at any moment, even if both it and the final trial that will precede it are "delayed."*

2 Peter 3:11 - ¹¹ **Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness,** ^(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 3:11) Peter now reminds his readers that in the light of the coming Day, they should live holy and godly lives. The word “**lives**” is in the present tense, indicating that the qualities of holiness and godliness are to be constantly present in light of the Lord’s return (see Titus 2:12-14; 1 John 3:2-3; CCC 671)

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671 *Though already present in his Church, Christ's reign is nevertheless yet to be fulfilled "with power and great glory" by the king's return to earth. This reign is still under attack by the evil powers, even though they have been defeated definitively by Christ's Passover. Until everything is subject to him, "until there be realized new heavens and a new earth in which justice dwells, the pilgrim Church, in her sacraments and institutions, which belong to this present age, carries the mark of this world which will pass, and she herself takes her place among the creatures which groan and travail yet and await the revelation of the sons of God." That is why Christians pray, above all in the Eucharist, to hasten Christ's return by saying to him: Marana tha! "Our Lord, come!"*

2 Peter 3:12-13 ¹² waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be kindled and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire! ¹³ But according to his promise we wait

for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 3:12-13) When the “Day of God” comes the “day” of fallen man will be over. The corruption of the universe by man and Satan will be terminated and judged. The promise of new heavens and earth that is rooted in the Old Testament (see Psa. 102:25-26; Isa. 65:17; 66:22) will come into being. The universe will be new because righteousness has moved in and taken up permanent residence. The Apostle Paul too anticipates a future liberation of the created order from bondage of death and decay (Rom. 8:18-23) (CCC 1042-48).

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1042 At the end of time, the Kingdom of God will come in its fullness. After the universal judgment, the righteous will reign for ever with Christ, glorified in body and soul. The universe itself will be renewed:

The Church . . . will receive her perfection only in the glory of heaven, when will come the time of the

renewal of all things. At that time, together with the human race, the universe itself, which is so closely related to man and which attains its destiny through him, will be perfectly re-established in Christ.

1048 "We know neither the moment of the consummation of the earth and of man, nor the way in which the universe will be transformed. The form of this world, distorted by sin, is passing away, and we are taught that God is preparing a new dwelling and a new earth in which righteousness dwells, in which happiness will fill and surpass all the desires of peace arising in the hearts of men."

2 Peter 3:14 ¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, since you wait for these, be zealous to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. (RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 3:14) What kind of people should Christians be? Spotless [pure], without blemish [morally clean], and at peace with Him (CCC 2045). The false teachers, Peter said, "are blots and blemishes" (2 Peter 2:13), but

Christians are to be morally clean (2 Peter 1:4) and like Christ the spotless One (1 Peter 1:19). This is the practical result of the grace of God described in 2 Peter 1:5-8.

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2045 Because they are members of the Body whose Head is Christ, Christians contribute to building up the Church by the constancy of their convictions and their moral lives. The Church increases, grows, and develops through the holiness of her faithful, until "we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

2 Peter 3:15-16 ¹⁵ And count the forbearance of our Lord as salvation. So also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, ¹⁶ speaking of this as he does in all his letters. There are some things in them hard to

understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other scriptures. ^(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 3:15-16) “Count the forbearance of our Lord as salvation.” The Lord’s forbearance and patience is because His desire is that people come to salvation (2 Peter 3:9)

Peter makes a point of affirming that both he and Paul are united in doctrine and in opposition to the false teachers. In Peter’s day (as today), there was perversion of the apostolic teaching. The fact that distorting Paul’s writings leads to destruction, proves that Paul was writing Scripture. Peter realized that the New Testament writers brought divine truth and insight that completed the Old Testament (1 Peter 1:10-12; CCC 106).

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106 God inspired the human authors of the sacred books. “To compose the sacred books, God chose certain men who, all the while he employed them in this task, made full use of their own faculties and

powers so that, though he acted in them and by them, it was as true authors that they consigned to writing whatever he wanted written, and no more."

2 Peter 3:17-18 ¹⁷ You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, beware lest you be carried away with the error of lawless men and lose your own stability. 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.
(RSVCE)

(2 Pet. 3:17-18) Peter closes his personal epistle with a word of warning (2 Peter 3:17) and with a word of encouragement (2 Peter 3:18).

(Verse 17) “**Beware lest you be carried away with the error of lawless men.**” Peter warned, Be on your guard or you could be carried away by the error of lawless men. Those who pay attention to the warnings, can maintain their secure position.

(Verse 18) “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” (CCC 428-429). The verb **“grow”** is a present imperative, which could be translated “be continually growing.” Believers are to grow “in the grace,” the exercise of spiritual graces which Peter spoke on in 2 Peter 1:5-7. **“To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”** Peter concludes with an affirmative word of praise.

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428 Whoever is called "to teach Christ" must first seek "the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus"; he must suffer "the loss of all things. . ." in order to "gain Christ and be found in him," and "to know him and the power of his resurrection, and [to] share [his] sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that if possible he may attain the resurrection from the dead."

429 From this loving knowledge of Christ springs the desire to proclaim him, to "evangelize," and to lead others to the "yes" of faith in Jesus Christ.

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