Content James 1 2 Peter 1 2 3 John Jude Started 10/30/2024 Last Edit 12/4/2024

Started 1/24/2025 - includes my thoughts after reading Amplified Bible -

Small Edits 1/31/2025 2/1,2,4,5,6,7 2025

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Not finished. Search for \*\*\* and ??? and I might do some proofreading.

 This project started in 2023 as my attempt to create something like a Table of Contents for books (New Testament at least) of the Bible, but it expanded beyond a list of contents. This document rephrases the text in roughly paragraph blocks with some explanatory notes. This document should, in no way, replace your own reading of the Bible. You should read the Bible to get more of the original meaning and to get context. I plan to use this document when I make a shorter list of the topics or teachings for the verses.

I needed to decide whether to write in the past tense or write this document as a guide to what God wants us to know. A “report” of what the author wrote makes it sound like it is the author’s authority or thoughts all the way through. I don’t want that tone. This document is almost a paraphrase and a guide to what God wants us to know, rather than a “report.”

I wrote in the past tense for the historical comments made by the author, and in the present tense for discussions that are somewhat separate from the historical viewpoint that present day, and future Christians, can learn from. …and, later I will insert (APPL…for applications I see) related to the text. This will be done in a separate Google Doc.

References that I may use in this document are listed below.

NET (NET) Bible. THE NET BIBLE, NEW ENGLISH TRANSLATION, COPYRIGHT © 1996 BY BIBLICAL STUDIES PRESS, L.L.C. This Bible is a free download from [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org/). The First edition without notes is free from<https://netbible.com/download>. The second edition with notes is $4.95 download as of 2018. The NET 2nd edition can be read online for no cost at [https://netbible.org/bible/Romans+1](https://netbible.org/bible/Romans%2B1) (starts at Romans Chapter 1).

(AMP) Amplified Bible (at biblegateway.com [1 Corinthians 1 AMP - Appeal to Unity - Paul, called as an - Bible Gateway](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%201&version=AMP) ) I wrote my “paraphrase” after reading the NET Bible verses. Then I read the Amplified Bible and edited my “paraphrase.”

(ESV) ESV Study Bible 2007 Crossway Bibles (I read the study notes for some verses as I wrote my paraphrase.)

(QUEST) The Quest Study Bible 1983 Zondervan (I read the study notes for some verses as I wrote my paraphrase.)

Some of the Bible studies I create are posted on [www.gpclements.com](http://www.gpclements.com/).

James

(QUEST – Some believe the James that wrote this book was the half-brother of Jesus…Galatians 1:19. This may have been the first New Testament book to be written… perhaps between 40 and 50 A.D. )

(ESV — The author was the half-brother of Jesus, James the Just, Matthew 13:55; Acts 15. The letter was probably written in the mid-40s A.D. )

James 1:1 - 8 James describes himself as a bondservant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. James writes a greeting to the 12 tribes dispersed away from Palestine. The Christian men and women should regard the various trials they face with great joy because the testing of their faith produces endurance and perseverance. They should let endurance produce in them its good result, so that they would become perfect and complete, not lacking in anything. If anyone lacks enough wisdom, that person should ask God, who gives abundantly to everyone without ridiculing them, for more wisdom, and wisdom will be given to them. But the person must ask using their faith and not doubt, for the person who doubts is unsteady and lacks direction like a wave of a sea that is blown and moved around by the wind. The person who does not ask using their faith should not expect to receive anything from the Lord, since they are unfocused, with their mind divided between God and other things, and unstable in their living.

James 1:9 - 18 The Christian who does not have many earthly possessions should boast about their high spiritual position. But the person who is rich should live with humility because they will die as does a flower in a field of grass. For the sun rises and the heat of the day dries up the grass and the petal of the flower falls off and the flower’s beauty goes away forever. In a like manner, the rich person will decline while they are doing their earthly works. The person who endures hard times will be happy because when they have maintained their faith they will receive the crown of life that is promised to all who love God. No one should say that they are tempted by God when they face temptation, for God cannot be tempted by evil and God does not tempt anyone. What happens is that people are tempted when they are deceived and attracted by pleasure or advantage created by their own desires. Then, when desire develops and grows, it leads to sin, and when sin has developed and grown, it leads to death. Fellow Christians, don’t be misled away from your faith in Jesus. All worthy giving and all perfect gifts are from heaven, coming to us from the Father of lights, who is consistent and has no changes at all in contrast to what is seen for bodies in the sky. According to God’s sovereign design he gave us life through the message of truth, that we would be among the first of all he created. (QUEST…the readers were likely among some of the first to believe in Jesus…glc– perhaps the readers came to believe in Jesus in the Jerusalem area and then were persecuted and dispersed into Gentile countries.)

James 1:19 - 27 The author writes to Christian men and women, who he very much cares for, to be very aware and make the following part of their character. Every person should listen first, then take time before speaking, and then be restrained before becoming angry. Human anger does not bring the righteousness that God desires. Put away all unworthy thoughts and actions and abundance of evil and with meekness let the gospel be effective in you; the gospel that can save your soul. Make sure that your living agrees with the gospel because if you only hear the gospel you may deceive yourself. If someone only listens to the message and does not live in a way that agrees with the gospel, they are like a person who looks at their face in a mirror. They look at themself and then leave and immediately forget the type of person they are. But the person who looks deeply into the perfect law of liberty (glc…gospel of forgiveness of sin from Jesus’ sacrifice) and keeps their attention on the law of liberty, and does not forget what the gospel they heard but rather lives their life in alignment with the gospel - they will be blessed in what they do. If someone thinks they are following God’s pattern for living but does not control their tongue, and thus deceives their heart, their religious efforts have no effect. Pure and unpolluted religion in the sight of God the Father is caring for orphans and widows in their difficult circumstances and to turn away from being polluted by the world.

James 2:1 - 13 James wrote to the Christian men and women readers that if they have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, they should not have a preference or disdain for people. If a person comes into your Christian meeting place wearing expensive jewelry or clothing and a poor person also enters but is wearing dirty, worn-out, clothes, do you give your attention to the rich person and guide them to a preferred seat with a welcoming greeting, and to the poor person you speak roughly and guide them to stand, or sit on the floor, in a less desirable location? If this takes place you have made choices in your gathering and have judged with evil motives. (glc..seeking the favor of the rich person and ignoring a person God has created) James urged the Christian men and women readers to think about what he is writing. God chose the poor among us to be rich in faith and heirs of God’s kingdom he promised to those who love him. If this action takes place you have dishonored the poor. Think about how the rich people in this world have been oppressing you and using the law against you. They also speak irreverently the good name of Jesus. You would do much better to fulfill God’s wishes as written in the Old Testament: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (glc…Good Samaritan story in Luke 10:26-37 - csbible.com - “a person in need who you are able to help”) If you make distinctions between people that affects your thinking and actions you are committing sin and are in violation of God’s principles that were laid out in the Old Testament. The person who tries to obey the whole Old Testament law but fails in one item of the law has become guilty of all of the law, God’s standard. God said, “Do not commit adultery,” and “Do not murder.” (Exodus 20:13,14; Deuteronomy 5:17,18). If you don’t commit adultery but do commit murder you have transgressed against the law. You should speak and act like a person who will be judged by the law of freedom. (glc…God’s principle of love) Judgment is without mercy for the person who does not show mercy to others. Mercy has victory over judgment. (Matthew 5:7, 6:15, 18:32-35, 25:35-40)

James 2:14 - 26 James asks the Christian men and women to consider the situation where someone says they have faith in Jesus but they do not have outward evidence of doing good. Can this type of faith cause the person to be acceptable to God? If a Christian man or woman does not have necessary clothing and does not have daily food, and one of you tells them to “Go in peace, keep warm and eat well,” but you do not give them what is necessary for the body, what benefit is that? Just like the teaching of the previous sentence, faith that does not have associated good works, is dead, since it is by itself. (glc…God expects Christians to let their faith prompt them to do the good works God has planned for them to do. - Matthew 5:14-16; Galatians 6:9,10; Ephesians 2:10; 1 Timothy 6:17,18; Titus 3:8; Hebrews 10:24) Some may say “You have faith and I have works.” James tells this person to try to show evidence of their faith separate from works and he will show what faith is and means by his works. Some say that God is one, and that is true. But even the demons believe that statement - and they tremble with fear. James goes on to explain the lack of understanding how faith without works is useless. Abraham, our spiritual ancestor, was justified by works when he obeyed God and offered Isaac his son on an altar. Abraham’s faith was combined with his works and his faith was perfected by his works. The scripture was active: “Now Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness,” (Genesis 15:6) and Abraham was called God’s friend. (2 Chronicles 20:7; Isaiah 41:8; 51:2; Daniel 3:35) You should realize that a person is justified in God’s view by works along with faith, and not by faith alone. (glc…good works confirm a person’s faith in Jesus) Another example is how Rahab the prostitute (glc.. helped the Israelite spies in Jericho) was justified by works when she welcomed the spies and sent them out of the city by another way. Just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead. (glc…true faith in God will have an effect on you to lead you to do the good works God wants you to do - ask God to show you what he wants you to do - small good works are still good works - Perhaps your works will grow as your faith and trust in God grows. Don’t let others judge the goodness of your works, let God guide you.)

James 3:1 - 12 James wrote to Christian men and women that not many of them should become teachers because they should realize that teachers will receive a greater judgment. We all fail in different ways. If someone does not fail in what he speaks, they are a perfect person and able to control their whole body. If we put bits into the mouths of horses to control them then we guide their whole bodies. A similar thing occurs with ships. A ship is large and pushed by strong winds but the ship is guided by a small rudder in a direction the pilot chooses. So, also, the tongue is a small member of the body but it boasts of great things. Also, consider how a small flame can set an entire forest on fire. The tongue is a fire! The tongue manifests the misbehavior among the parts of our bodies. The tongue pollutes the whole body and sets fire to the course of our existence - and the tongue is set on fire by hell (NET - the place of divine punishment). Every type of animal, bird, reptile, and sea creature has been overcome or controlled by people. But no person can totally control the tongue; it is an uncontrollable evil, full of powerful poison. We use our tongue to bless the Lord and Father, and with the tongue we speak curses to people who are made in God’s image. Blessings and cursings come out of the same mouth. James instructs Christian mena nd women that this should not take place. Consider that a spring of water does not pour out fresh and bitter water from its one opening. A fig tree does not produce olives, and a vine does not produce figs. Neither can a spring that sends out salt water send out fresh water.

James 3:13 - 18 Is there someone among you who is wise and has understanding? That person should have good conduct and show their works in the gentleness that wisdom produces. But if you have active jealousy, and selfish thoughts in your heart, do not say you don’t have these thoughts and thus lie against the truth about yourself. This behavior does not come from heaven but is worldly, from a life apart from God, and from the influence of demons. Where there is jealousy and selfishness, there is a lack of order and many evil practices. But the heavenly wisdom is pure, peace-loving, gentle, open to persuasion, full of mercy and good works, impartial, and sincere. The good works of righteousness are planted in peace for those who make peace.

James 4:1 - 12 Think about what causes conflicts and quarrels with other people. If you are honest with yourself you will agree that your inner desires cause conflicts and quarrels. You want your way and things of the world so you spiritually murder and envy others and you don’t get what you want. You quarrel and fight. You don’t have good things in your life because you do not rely on God for them. When you ask God for them and don’t receive them it is because you ask with the wrong motive of wanting to please yourself. The adulterers among you should consider that friendship with the world and its ways means you have chosen to be hostile to God. Whoever decides to be influenced, and to follow, the ways of the world makes themselves to be God’s enemy. Think about the scripture where we learn, “The spirit that God put in us has an envious yearning.” (ESV…not an actual quote from the OT) But gives greater grace that can overcome. In the OT it is written, “God opposes the proud, but he gives grace to the humble.” (Proverbs 3:34) You should submit to God. But refuse to go along with the devil’s ways and he will flee from you. Seek out God and he will draw near to you. Put away sin and make your hearts pure. Stop being of two minds. Grieve, mourn, and weep. Let your laughter and levity change into mourning and your worldly joy into despair. Humble yourself before the Lord and he will exalt you. Peter asks the Christian men and women not to complain about, and attack, people. A person who complains about, and attacks, another Christian or judges another Christian is going against God’s law and judges God’s law. If you judge the law you are not someone who follows and implements God’s law but rather you put down the law. There is only one who is the lawgiver and judge - the one who is able to save and destroy. But regarding you, you have no standing to judge your neighbor.

James 4:13 - 17 Change your thinking pattern. If you say, “Today or tomorrow I will go on a trip to another town and spend a year there in business and make a profit.” You do not know the details of what will happen tomorrow. Think about the life of a person. A person is like a tenuous vapor in the air that can be seen for a short time and then is not seen. Instead, you should say, “If the Lord allows we will live and have our activities in life.” But now, you boast about your lofty plans that promote yourself. This boasting is evil. Whoever knows what is a good thing to do and does not do it, is guilty of sin.

James 5:1 - 6 James warns those who have worldly riches to weep and cry aloud about the trials and troubles that they will face. The rich's future is to have their wealth deteriorate and their clothes worn out. Their money will lose its value and that will be a witness against the formerly worldly-rich people. Their valueless riches will cause them troubles in their bodies (glc…stress, worry, loss of sleep, etc.?) The rich don’t realize that they have accumulated riches for themselves just before trouble is coming. The wages that the rich have wrongfully not paid their workers witnesses against them, and the complaints of those who harvest their fields has been heard by the Lord Almighty. The worldly-rich have lived in luxury for their selfish benefit. They have lived for themselves and ignored the coming troubles. They have judged and murdered the righteous people, even when the righteous are not fighting against them.

James 5:7 - 12 James advises Christian men and women to be patient and wait for Jesus' return. Consider how the farmer waits for the crops to grow and mature and is patient until the crop receives rain at the right time. Christians should also be patient and strengthen their inner thinking, for Jesus’ return is near. ( 2 Corinthians 4:16-18) (glc…the time of Jesus’ return is unknown but Christians have the confident hope that Jesus will return and take us to heaven.) James wrote that Christians should not grumble and complain against other Christians, as this would lead to judgment for them. (Matthew 7:1-6; Luke 6:37,38; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Ephesians 4:32) The judge (glc…Jesus) is approaching. James encourages Christian men and women to think about the examples of suffering and patience provided by the Old Testament prophets who brought God’s messages. You should think about how those who endure persecution are regarded as blessed. Think about Job’s endurance (glc…Job did not curse God when troubles came to him. Job trusted God through his troubles.) and think about the Lord’s (glc…Jesus) purpose (glc…Jesus came to Earth to provide the means of restoring our relationship to God.), that the Lord has an abundance of compassion and mercy.(Exodus 34:6; Nehemiah 9:17; Psalm 86:15, 102:13; Joel 2:13; Jonah 4:2) James wrote that it was very important that the Christian men and women did not swear, invoking things of heaven or Earth to try to give your answer more importance, but rather plainly spoke their “Yes” or “No” alone so they would not face judgment. (glc…for promoting their answer’s importance)

James 5:13 - 20 James gave instructions regarding people’s attitudes and responses to situations: those who are suffering should pray to God; those who are happy and rejoicing should sing praises (glc…to God); those who are sick should ask for the elders of the church to pray for them, agreeing with Jesus’ plan to bring healing, and anoint them with olive oil. The prayer offered in faith by the person praying will save the person who is sick and the Lord will give them wholeness and forgiveness (ESV – Jesus healed physically and spiritually) - if they have sinned, they will be forgiven. Confess your sins to other Christians (glc…be honest about yourself) and pray for each other so that you may be healed (glc…physically and spiritually). The prayer of a righteous person is very powerful in working. (glc…The righteous person trusts in God and God honors that trust and faith.) Elijah was a mortal human and he prayed intensely that it would not rain and it did not rain in his area for three years and six months. Then he prayed intensely and the land received rain and produced a harvest. (1 Kings Chapters 17 and 18) James instructed Christian men and women that if a Christian does not live according to God’s ways and someone helps that person return to God’s ways, the helper should know that the person who helps that person move away from sin and return to God’s ways is saving that person’s soul from separation from God and the result will be the forgiveness of many sins (glc…as the person repents and accepts forgiveness based on Jesus’ sacrifice for sins. God is doing the forgiving, not the Christian helper). (Galatians 6:1; Hebrews 3:13; 1 John 5:16,17)

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1 Peter

(QUEST – Peter, the apostle, wrote the book to believers scattered throughout Asia Minor, modern-day Turkey. Peter probably wrote the book while in Rome sometime between 60 and 64 A.D.)

(ESV – Peter wrote the book - 1 Peter 1:1 and 5:1 - probably in 62 or 63 A.D.)

1 Peter 1:1 - 2 Peter identifies himself as an apostle (glc…special messenger) of Jesus Christ. He is writing to Christians who are temporarily living on Earth (NET…resident foreigners who live in the world as strangers since their homeland is in heaven) - in Pontus (glc..northeast Turkey), Galatia (glc…mid-southern Turkey), Cappadocia (glc…eastern Turkey), the Roman province of Asia (glc…present-day Turkey), and Bithynia (glc…northwest Turkey) (glc…see Acts 2:9,10 where some of these regions are listed…Perhaps Peter came to know some of the people who heard him preach on Pentecost in Jerusalem.) who are chosen travelers, according to the complete knowledge of God the Father, by being separated from the world by the Spirit for obedience and for receiving the benefits of Jesus’ blood. Peter prays for much grace and peace for the readers.

1 Peter 1:3 - 12 God, the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is worthy of praise! Because of his abundant mercy, God gave us a new life in a living, certain, hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and an imperishable, unpolluted, ever-active inheritance. The inheritance is kept in heaven for Christians, who by God’s power are shielded by faith for a salvation that is ready to be brought forth in the last days. This inheritance gives you triumphant elation, even though it may be necessary for you to suffer many difficulties for a short time. These difficulties show the world your character of faith, which has much more value than gold - that perishes even though it is carefully refined by fire - and will result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Christians have not seen Jesus, but they love him. Christians do not see him at this time but they have faith in him, and thus rejoice with great joy beyond human description, because they are reaching the goal of their faith - the salvation of their souls. The Old Testament prophets, who wrote about the grace that is for Christians, searched and investigated about salvation carefully. They tried to discover what person and what time the Holy Spirit of Christ within them was telling them when the Spirit testified in advance about the sufferings that Christ was destined to experience and the glory that would follow these things. It was revealed to the prophets that they were not serving themselves, but rather the Christians now, regarding the things now proclaimed to you by those who tell you the good news of Jesus by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven - the good news that angels desire to see.

1 Peter 1:13 - 25 As a consequence of these things, prepare your minds for action by keeping clear thinking, and fully put your hope on the grace that will be given to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Be obedient children (glc…of God), do not go along with the evil desires you used to follow before you came to know Jesus, but like the Holy One who reached out to you, become holy in all aspects of your conduct, for we read in the Old Testament, “You shall be holy, because I am holy.” (Leviticus 19:2) And if you decide to call on God as Father, who fairly judges each person according to their work, have a reverent lifestyle in your temporary time on Earth. You should remember that Christ, like an unblemished and pure lamb of the sacrifice, has paid, with blood, and not with silver or gold that perishes, for your release from the valueless ways of life you inherited from your earthly ancestors. Christ’s destiny was known before the creation of the world but his destiny only came to take place at the last of times for the benefit of people. Through faith in Christ, you now are faithful to God, who raised Christ from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. You have cleansed your souls by having faith in the truth and can now have sincere brotherly love. So love each other sincerely from a pure heart. You have been reborn spiritually, not from what is perishable, but from an everlasting truth, through the living and everlasting word of God. For “all flesh (NET…people) is like grass and all its glory like the flower of the grass; the grass withers and the flower falls off, 25 but the word of the Lord (NET…scripture of OT… - glc…and NT) endures forever.” (Isaiah 40:6,8) And this is the message that was gladly spoken to you.

1 Peter 2:1 - 12 Put aside all evil thoughts and actions, deception, hypocritical actions, jealousy, and slander. Have a great desire, like a hungry newborn baby, for the pure, spiritual, nourishment of the word of God, so that from its instruction you may become mature in your salvation, if “you have experienced the Lord’s kindness.” (Psalm 34:8) As you are coming to Jesus, the living stone rejected by people, but chosen and of special value in God’s sight, you come as living stones and are being put together as a spiritual building to be a holy priesthood that offers spiritual sacrifices that are accepted by God through Jesus Christ. For it is written in the Old Testament, “Look, I lay in Zion a stone, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and whoever believes in him will never be put to shame.” (Isaiah 28:16) So you who have faith in Jesus see his value, but for those who do not have faith in Jesus, “the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” (Psalm 118:22, Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11) and “a stumbling-stone and a rock to trip over.” (Isaiah 8:14) People stumble concerning Jesus because they are not obedient to God’s word, and God knew some would stumble. But Christians are a chosen group, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, so that you may tell others the good characteristics (Exodus 19:5,6; 23:22; Isaiah 43:20,21; Malachi 3:17) of God who has removed you out of the darkness of evil and into his marvelous light of holiness. At one time you were not a special group of people, but now you are God’s people. You did not know God’s mercy in the past (Hosea 1:6, 9; 2:23) but now, Christians have received God’s mercy. Peter wrote to his dear friends that they should remember they are foreigners and living as heavenly exiles on Earth, so they should distance themselves from fleshly, worldly, desires that battle against their souls. Christians should keep their conduct good among those who are not Christians, so even though they disrespect you and label you as someone who does what is not accepted by the world, they may see your good deeds and eventually give glory to God when he visits the Earth. (NET…for blessing: Luke 1:68, 78; 7:16; 19:44 … for judgment: Isaiah 10:3; Jeremiah 6:15; … Matthew 5:16)

1 Peter 2:13 - 25 Be in submission to all human authorities as the Lord desires, whether to a king who is the final human authority or to the appointed governors who are in office to punish those who do wrong and to reward those who do good. It is God’s will that you silence the complaints of foolish people by doing the good that God wants. Live as free people, but don’t use freedom as a license to do evil; instead, be servants of God. Give proper honor to all people, show love to fellow Christians, have a reverent fear of God, and give honor to earthly authorities. Those who have a human supervisor (glc…slave or servant in NT times, employee in modern times) should submit to their supervisor with proper respect, not just to those who are fair and gentle, but also to those who are deliberately unreasonable and harsh. This behavior is pleasing to God, if because of your regard for God, you put up with hardships and unjust suffering. There is no credit to you if you sin and then are mistreated and endure it. If you have good behavior and endure suffering because of it, your behavior is pleasing to God. You should realize that this is the pattern for Christians since Christ endured suffering for you and provided an example for Christians to follow his actions and reactions. Christ “committed no sin nor was deceit found in his mouth.” (Isaiah 53:9) When he was wrongly accused, he did not answer back; when he suffered, he threatened no retaliation but put himself into the care of God who judges justly. He “himself bore our sins” (Isaiah 53:4,12) in his body on the cross, that we may turn away from sinning and live for righteousness. “By his wounds you were healed.” (Isaiah 53:5) For you were “going astray like sheep” (Isaiah 53:6) but now you have returned to the shepherd and protector of your souls.

1 Peter 3:1 - 7 Wives should also be subject to their husbands. (glc…A wife should have a good relationship with her husband. She should bless his life.) If the husband chooses to disobey God’s word, the good behavior of his wife may bring him closer to God as her actions and attitudes will speak to him more clearly than her words, when her husband sees her pure and God-honoring behavior. A wife’s attractiveness should not be gained through external items such as a nice hairstyle or fine jewelry but should come from her inner character and attitudes that show forth the enduring beauty of a gentle and peaceful spirit, which is something that God wants for people. This behavior and attitude was in the holy women of the past who trusted in God as they brought attractiveness to themselves by being subject to their husbands. Take the example of Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her authority. Wives become her spiritual children when they do what is good and don’t fear intimidation. A husband, in like manner, must behave with right thinking towards his physically-weaker wife, and must show her respect and value her as a fellow heir of God’s gift of eternal life. By doing this your prayers will be more effective.

1 Peter 3:8 - 22 Peter writes to close the letter by instructing all of the readers to get along well, to be sympathetic, to be concerned for each other, to have compassion, and to be humble. Do not give back evil when you receive evil treatment or insult others after you have been insulted, but instead, be a blessing to others because God has invited you to inherit a blessing. As it is written in the Old Testament: “the one who wants to love life and see good days must stop his tongue from speaking evil and his lips from uttering deceit. And he must turn away from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord see the righteous and his ears hear their prayer. But the Lord’s actions are against those who do evil.“ (Psalm 34:12-16) Consider this, people are not motivated to hurt you if you consistently do and say good things. However, if you do suffer because of your righteous actions and speech, you are blessed. “But do not fear their fear or be disturbed.” (Isaiah 8:12) But keep Christ as Lord in your thinking and attitudes and always be prepared to respond to anyone who asks you about the eternal hope you have inside you. Give your response with courtesy and respect, so your conscience will be clear, and those who slander your good behavior in following Christ’s example may feel shame when they accuse you. It is better to suffer for following God’s plan of doing good than for doing evil. Think about how Christ also suffered for the sins of people, he is just but suffered for the unjust (Isaiah 53:11,122), to provide the way for you to have a right relationship with God, by going through death in his body but by being made alive again in the spirit. In this process, Christ’s victory was announced to the spirits of those outside of heaven who disobeyed God’s plan for people even as God waited for Noah to build the ark. (NET and glc…Christians should stand for righteousness and try to influence people to believe in Jesus even if this brings suffering to Christians.) The ark provided the means to deliver eight people from drowning in the water. This is an example of water baptism, which now saves people - not by just washing off physical dirt but by their decision to seek God - because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ (glc…as a person repents and accepts Jesus’ sacrifice for their sin), who ascended to heaven after dying on the cross and is at the right hand of God with angels and authorities and powers subject to him.

1 Peter 4:1 - 6 Since Christ suffered as a human, you should also put the same attitude and commitment in yourself because the person who has suffered in their body has made a break from sin; that person spends their time in this life thinking about and doing the will of God and does not focus on human desires. You had enough time in the past to do what the non-Christians want to do. You used to live in sensual pleasures, give your thoughts to evil desires, drink too much alcohol, party excessively, and give your attention to worldly activities apart from God. Those who don’t have faith in Jesus are surprised when you do not eagerly join them in the many forms of wickedness and they talk dismissively about you and condemn you. These people will face judgment before Jesus Christ (John 12:48; Romans 14:10-12; 1 Corinthians 5:12,13; 2 Timothy 4:1) who is authorized and prepared to judge those who have died and those who are living (glc…when he returns…Before you die you have the opportunity to put your faith in Jesus’ sacrifice for your sins.). The gospel was preached to people before they died so they would be prepared for judgment (glc… by putting their faith in Jesus), so even though they were judged while living on earth by human guidelines, they may have a spiritual life in heaven according to God’s standards.

1 Peter 4:7 - 11 The grand finishing of all things is near. Consequently, be self-controlled and clear-minded so you can pray effectively. Have constant and active love for each other because “love covers a multitude of sins.” (Proverbs 10:12; James 5:20; Matthew 18:21-22; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7) Have friendly and welcoming treatment for others without complaining. Use the spiritual gifts and capabilities of your life to help each other as you make good use of the grace (glc…unmerited favor) God has given you. Let your speech be influenced by God’s words. Those who serve should serve with the strength and ability that God gives to them, so that in all things God will be glorified through Jesus Christ. He deserves and has the glory and power for eternity. Amen.

1 Peter 4:12 - 19 Peter compassionately addressed the Christians that they should not be surprised at the persecutions they were experiencing, and should not think this was unusual. Christians should rejoice that they have been identified as Christians and have shared in the sufferings of Christ, so that when Christ is revealed to the world they would rejoice and be glad. If you are insulted because you are a Christian, you are blessed, because the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of God is upon you. (Isaiah 11:2) But no one should think that suffering because you are a murderer, thief, criminal, or lawbreaker, is suffering for God. If you suffer for your Christian beliefs do not be ashamed, but give glory to God that you are a Christian. It is time for judgment to start and it will start with the house of God. If it starts with Christians, what will happen to those who turn away from the gospel of God? “If the righteous are barely saved, what will become of the ungodly and singers?” (Proverbs 11:31) Think about these things. Those who suffer according to the will of God should trust in our faithful God to take care of their souls as they do the good things God wants them to do.

1 Peter 5:1 - 4 Peter wrote from his position as an elder (glc…church leader), a personal witness of Christ’s sufferings, and a fellow Christian who will receive the glory that will be revealed. Peter urged the elders among the readers to act as shepherds for God’s people, whom they were leading. elders are to lead the church body, not just to fulfill a responsibility they were compelled to do, but, willingly as they are directed by God, not to receive undue income, but with enthusiasm. The elders should not take advantage of their position of shepherding people under their care and protection, but should set a good example for the church body. If they do this they will receive an everlasting crown of glory when the Chief Shepherd (glc..Jesus) appears.

1 Peter 5:5 - 11 Those who are younger (NET…elders were generally older in age, but also exercised spiritual leadership for others) should follow the good example of the elders and be in submission to the elders. All Christians should have humility in thoughts and actions for other Christians because God “opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” (Proverbs 3:34; James 4:6,7) God will give you recognition at the right time if you have humility in your thoughts and actions by letting God take care of you, and he does care for you and works in your life. Have a clear mind and keep alert. The devil is your enemy and is like a roaring lion (Psalm 22:13), prowling around, looking for someone to destroy. Resist the devil using your strong faith, because you know that Christian men and women in the Christian community in the world are experiencing and faithfully enduring the same types of suffering that you have. After you have had these troubles for a short time, the God of all grace, who invited you to be in his eternal glory in Christ, will restore, affirm, strengthen, and give you a firm position. He has eternal power. Amen.

1 Peter 5:12 - 14 Silvanus (QUEST - Silas; ESV - Acts 15:22, 16:19, 17:4; 2 Corinthians 1:19; 1 Thessalonians 1:1 ), a faithful Christian, helped deliver to the readers this short letter which should encourage them and testify to them that this is the true grace and favor of God. The readers were encouraged to keep a strong faith in this. The Christians in Babylon (glc…probably a code name for Rome), who were selected by God along with the readers, sent their greetings to the readers, as did Mark, Peter’s son (glc…in the faith - Acts 12:25, 13:5, 15:36-39; Colossians 4:10; 2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon 24). Peter asked them to greet each other with a holy kiss. (glc …chaste kiss, NT common greeting - today a handshake or chaste hug or short kiss on the cheek - Romans 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:26) Peter prayed for peace for all Christians.

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2 Peter

(QUEST - Peter wrote this letter to the same people who received 1 Peter. The letter was probably written from Rome sometime from 64 and 68 A.D.)

(ESV - Peter wrote this letter from Rome sometime from 64 to 67 A.D.)

2 Peter 1:1 - 11 Simeon Peter identifies himself as a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ. He is writing to people who, through the righteousness of Jesus Christ, our God and Savior (NET…one of the most direct statements in the New Testament that Jesus is God), have been allowed to receive something not deserved, a faith equal in value and honor to the faith of Jewish Christians. Peter prays for God’s grace and peace to be poured out on them as they increase in the fuller knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord! Peter could pray this because God’s divine power has given to us all that is needed for life and godliness through the rich knowledge of the one who invited us with full effect by his own glory and excellence. Through his glory and excellence he has given to us his valuable and glorious promises, so that through what was promised Christians may have a solid connection with God, with the result that they escape the worldly pollution produced by evil desires. Because of this fact, Christians should make full effort to add to their faith moral excellence (NET…virtue), to moral excellence, knowledge, to knowledge, self-control; to self-control, steadfastness (NET…stick-to-it-iveness), to steadfastness, godliness, to godliness, Christian affection, to Christian affection, unselfish love. (NET…each Christian is responsible for this growth, but this growth could not occur without God’s prior work and enabling.) If these qualities are yours and are always growing they will prevent you from becoming ineffective and unproductive in your increasing in rich knowledge of our Lord Jesus. Regarding the people who do not have these qualities, they are spiritually blind. Or to put it another way, they can’t see spiritual things clearly, since they have forgotten the forgiveness of their past sins. Therefore, Christian men and women should make all efforts to make their invitation (glc..to accept Jesus’ sacrifice for sins) and selection sure. (NET…virtue and holiness don’t produce salvation, rather, virtue and holiness give evidence of salvation) By having these qualities you will never go astray and sin. Rather, you will be richly guided into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 1:12 - 21 In light of this, Peter planned to remind the readers always about these things even though they knew them and the people were fully committed to these truths. As long as Peter was alive, he planned, and thought it the right thing to do, to refresh their spiritual thinking, especially since he knew that he would soon die, as the Lord Jesus Christ had revealed this to him. Even more, Peter was making efforts to make a testimony of these things that would be effective after he died. (glc…This is part of my goal for typing the various documents about the Bible and books of the Bible that you are even reading now. May God give you clear understanding of spiritual truths and help you increase your faith in Jesus. November 12, 2024) Peter and his companions did not tell the people cleverly planned stories when they told them about the power and coming again to Earth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Rather, they were eyewitnesses of Jesus’ glory. Jesus received honor and glory from God the Father when the unique proclamation was made to him by God: “This is my dear Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matthew 17:1-6) Peter, James, and John heard the voice from heaven as they were on the mountain with Jesus. In addition, Peter and his companions have the completely trustworthy prophetic word. Christians would do well to follow and obey the prophetic word (NET…Old Testament prophecies) as they would a bright light shining in a dark place, until the day comes and the morning star (glc…Jesus) gives light to their hearts. (NET…All will see the glorious return of Jesus, but Christians will have full comprehension of it.) It is most important that you know this: The prophecies in scripture do not come from the writers’’ own thoughts or planned stories, for no prophecy comes from human impulse, instead, the prophets receive messages carried by the Holy Spirit from God. (Joel 2:20; Luke 2:36; Acts 21:9)

2 Peter 2:1 - 3 False and misleading prophets were present among the people (Deuteronomy 13:1-3; Judges 3:5-7; 1 Kings 18:19, 23:11; Jeremiah 19:14-20L6, Chapter 28, 29:21-32), and false teachers will speak to Christians. The false teachers will slowly work their way into Christian groups and deliver destructive opinions and viewpoints, and some will deny Jesus who was sacrificed for all. This will bring quick destruction upon these false prophets. But many people will follow their examples of sensual living and lack of self-control. The teachings and lifestyles of these false teachers will cause people of the world to treat the message about Jesus with contempt and false statements. Their greed will lead the false prophets to take advantage of Christians with misleading words. The condemnation of false prophets was written and spoken about from times long ago is still active and appropriate and the destruction of today’s false prophets will take place.

2 Peter 2:4 - 16 Consider this, God did not overlook and ignore the angels who sinned (Jude 6; Revelation 20:2,3,10), but threw them into hell for punishment and handed them over in chains into darkness (glc…separated from the light of God) where they are kept until the day of judgment, and if God did not overlook and ignore the ancient world, but did protect Noah, a speaker of righteousness, along with his wife, three sons and their wives (Genesis Chapters 7 and 8), when God caused a flood across a world that had turned away from God, and if God completely destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah when he condemned them to destruction (Genesis 18:16 - 19:29), deciding that these cities should be an example to teach future generations of those who would turn away from God, and if God rescued Lot, a righteous man who was grieved by the lifestyle of the people disobeying God’s principles in the city, (for Lot lived among them daily and his righteous soul was distressed by the actions he saw and heard) - if all these are true (glc…and they are), then the Lord knows how to rescue and remove those who seek to follow God from their difficult situations, and to keep the unrighteous identified for future punishment at the day of judgment, especially those who participate in lust with their bodies and who have no regard for authority. (Romans 13:1) The false prophets are bold and arrogant and are not afraid to insult angels, yet, in contrast, the angels, who have much more power, do not insult or slander them with judgment in the presence of the Lord. But the unrighteous, like unthinking animals - who follow their instincts and live to be caught and killed - do not understand whom they are insulting, and this will lead to their full destruction, in which they will receive harm in payment for their harmful attitudes and actions. When they think it is fun to even do wild partying in the daytime they spoil and devalue the times they gather with Christians for meals as they participate in deceitful pleasures. Their eyes are on the watch for and seek out adultery, they never stop sinning, they lead into sin the people who have weak spiritual commitment. They have repeatedly guided their thinking towards greed and are cursed children! Because they turned away from God’s principles they have gone astray and have followed the pattern of Balaam son of Beor, who sought after the wages of unrighteousness, but was rebuked for his sin ( by a simple donkey that spoke with a human voice - Numbers Chapters 22,23,24; 31:8,16) which held back the prophet in his madness.)

2 Peter 2:17 - 22 These false prophets are like springs without water and vapors easily blown about, and their end will be in the remote depths of darkness (glc…separation from God). They use important-sounding, but valueless, words to lure people who have barely escaped deceitful teachers with sensual desires and indulgence in sensual pleasures. The false teachers promise people freedom but the false teachers are living in a pattern of corruption and depravity. Whatever a person yields to, to that he is enslaved. For, if a person escapes the things in the world that defile and pollute a person through the rich knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again get entrapped and entangled in those things and get overcome by them, they end up worse than when they began. It would have been better for them not to know about the path to righteousness than to know it and then reject the holy commandment that had been told to them. These people are illustrations of the proverb: “A dog returns to its own vomit.” (Proverbs 26:11) and “A sow, after being washed, wallows in the mud.” (Proverbs 26:11)

2 Peter 3: 1 - 7 Peter comments to his dear friends that this is his second letter to them. His purpose for this letter was to refresh their spiritual minds by prompting them to remember two things, the prophecies foretold by the holy prophets and the commandment from the Lord and Savior that came through the New Testament apostles (NET…both are authoritative). It was very important that the readers understood that in the last days, false teachers would come who would boldly mock, ridicule, and scorn the godly truths the readers had heard. These false teachers would be motivated by their own ungodly desires and impulses to say, “Where is the fulfillment of the promise of his return? For in all the days since our ancestors (NET…OT patriarchs or first generation Christians) nothing has changed from the beginning of creation.” These false teachers have made a decision to ignore that by the word of God creation existed long ago and the Earth was formed out of water and by using water. Through the water and the word (Genesis 6:11, 7:11) the previous world was destroyed when it was overcome with water. But by the same word (glc…of God) the current heavens (glc…’heaven’ in the Bible can be the dwelling place of God, beyond our universe, or the abode of the stars, or the sky - Earth’s atmosphere depending on the context …here I think it is our atmosphere) and earth are being kept for fire, by being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of those who reject God.

2 Peter 3:8 - 13 Peter instructs his dear friends not to let this characteristic of God be forgotten, that one day is just as a thousand years for the Lord and a thousand years is just like one day. (glc…God exists outside of our human concept of time. God not only created the material universe, God also created the time that we experience. God can move in and out of our timeline. The fact that God let humans develop from Genesis through the Old Testament times, through the time of Jesus, and now over 2000 years later, only shows the patience and mercy of God. God could have wiped out humanity at the time Adam and Eve sinned or when humanity sinned in so many ways since then.) The Lord is not delaying the fulfillment of his promise, as some would measure events, but the Lord is showing patience because he does not want anyone to perish, but wants all to turn away from their sin and put their faith in Jesus’ sacrifice for their sin. The day of the Lord (glc…judgment by God) will come when we don’t expect it; on this day the heavens will be taken away with a loud noise and the celestial bodies will melt away being burnt up and the Earth and all the actions done on it will be revealed before God. (glc…If God does not intervene, science predicts that the Sun will last about 5 billion more years, but will gradually output more energy all the time. There will come a point in the life of the Sun when it expands so much that Mercury, Venus, and the Earth will be enveloped by the outer layers of the Sun and will be vaporized. <https://www.space.com/22471-red-giant-stars.html>) Since the world will be dissolved like this, consider what type of person you should be and live a life of holiness and godliness, while waiting for and doing what you can to help in the arrival of the day of God. (Matthew 24:14) On this day the heavens will be burned up and dissolved and the celestial bodies will melt away in fire. But, according to God’s promise, Christians should wait for the new heavens and new Earth, in which righteousness fully dwells. (Matthew 2:23; Acts 17:26, 22:12; Ephesians 3:17; Colossians 1:19, 2:9, Revelation Chapter 21)

2 Peter 3: 14 - 18 Peter writes to his dear friends that because of these things they are waiting for they should make good efforts to live in peace, and have pure lives, when they find themselves in the presence of God. They should also look on the patience of the Lord as salvation, just as Paul, who was one of the apostles, wrote to them according to the wisdom given to him (glc…from God), writing of these things in all of his letters. Some things in Paul’s letters are hard to understand so the ignorant and unstable distort to their own destruction, as these people also distort the rest of the scriptures. (NET..this gives affirmation that the New Testament, including Paul’s writings, are scripture.) Peter reminds his dear friends that they have been warned in advance so they can be spiritually prepared and alert so they are not led astray by the wrong thinking of these false teachers, who don’t follow God’s principles, and loose their confident faith in the truth. Instead, the readers should increase in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the honor and proper recognition both at this time and until the day of eternity. (glc…perhaps when eternal time mechanisms are restored and earthly time ends)

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1 John

(QUEST – The apostle John wrote this letter probably late in the 80s A.D., late in his life. It was written to churches that were in the western half of present-day Turkey.)

(ESV – John, son of Zebedee, who wrote the gospel of John is the most likely author from comparing the vocabulary and style of this letter and the gospel of John. The writings of early church leaders cite verses from 1 John so the date of the letter is no later than the early 90s A.D.)

1 John 1:1 - 4 John and his companions (glc…John can speak/write for all the disciples who were with Jesus) are writing about what was from the beginning (ESV - beginning refers to the era before the creation of the universe; glc…compare to chapter 1 of the gospel of John), and are writing from the background of their personal experience regarding what they heard, what they saw with their own eyes, and who (glc…Jesus) they had touched with their own hands (regarding the word of life - the life that was revealed (glc…when Jesus came into the world), and John and the disciples saw and can testify and proclaim to the readers about the eternal life that was with God the Father and was revealed to them). The things they saw and heard John is proclaiming to the readers, so they may have a genuine association with Christians (John and the disciples' association was with God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ). The purpose of this letter is that John’s and their joy would be fulfilled.

1 John 1:5 - 10 This is the gospel message that John and the disciples heard from Jesus and are proclaiming to the readers: God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all. (Psalm 27:1; 119:105; Micah 7:8; James 1:17) If someone says they have fellowship with Jesus but continues to live in the darkness (glc…willful sin), they are lying and not living according to the truth. But if we keep living in the light as Jesus himself is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son’s sacrifice, purifies us from all sin (NET….sin is the departure from God’s standard). If someone says they are not guilty of sin, they are deceiving themselves and God’s truth is not in them. But if someone confesses their sin, they are faithful and righteous, this leads to forgiveness and purifying them from all unrighteousness. If someone says they have not sinned, they are calling God a liar and his word is not in them.

1 John 2:1 - 2 John wrote with affection to the readers that his purpose for writing was that they would not sin. (John 5:14) But, if a person does sin, they have someone who will speak in their defense and support them (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25) with God the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and Jesus himself provides the sacrifice that turns aside God’s wrath and cleanses them from sin, and not only for the sins of you and people you know but also for everyone in the world. (glc…for all who put their faith in Jesus and accept his forgiveness)

1 John 2:3 - 11 A person can be assured that they have a relationship with God if they keep his commandments (glc…follow his instructions in our thinking and actions). The person who says “I have a relationship with God” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and that person does not have truth in them. But whoever follows and obeys God’s word truly has a well-developed love of God in them. This is how we know we are spiritually aligned with God. The person who says they have a close and permanent relationship with God should have the behavior and conduct that Jesus had on Earth. John again addresses the readers as dear friends as he writes that he is not giving them a new commandment, but is writing to them about the old commandment that they had from the beginning. (Jesus told his disciples to love one another John 13:34,35) The old commandment is the spiritual preaching they had already heard. However, John is writing a new commandment to them, which is true in Jesus and in you, because the time of darkness is ending and the victory of Jesus’ light is beginning. (John 1:5,9, 8:12) The person who says they are in Jesus’ light but hates their Christian brother has not left the realm of darkness. The person who shows true love for their Christian brother or sister is remaining in the light, and their life does not lead to stumbling. (Psalm 119:165). But the person who hates their Christian brother or sister has not left the darkness, walks in the realm of darkness, and has no clear view of their future path because the darkness has taken away their spiritual view.

1 John 2:12 - 17 John wrote this letter to the growing Christians to remind them that their sins have been forgiven because of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross. John wrote for the older readers to remind them that they have known Jesus who has been in existence from the beginning. John wrote to the young people to remind them that they had overcome the devil. (John 17:15) John wrote to the very young people that they have known God the Father. John wrote to the older readers that they have known him who has existed from the beginning. John wrote to the young people to remind them they were strong and the word of God remains in them and they have conquered the devil. Do not love and desire the world or the things in the world. If anyone focuses their love on the world, the love of God the Father is not living in that person, because everything in the world (fleshly desires, seeking after what we see in the world around us, taking great pride in material possessions) (NET…having affections set on the world and having no love for God or spiritual things) is not from God the Father, but is from the world. The world and all its misleading desires are passing away, but the person who lives out the will of God remains forever.

1 John 2:18 - 29 John wrote to those he felt responsible for that the time was at the last hour, and as they had been warned that the antichrist (glc…one opposed to Christ) was coming, even as he wrote, many opposed to Christ had become active in the world. There was evidence that the current times were the last hour: People had gone out from the Christian communities, but they did not really have a spiritual bond to those communities because if they had that bond they would have stayed with the group. But they left the group (glc…and its teachings) to show that they did not continue in fellowship with the Christian communities. But the readers were different, they had an anointing from the Holy One, and they all knew this. John did not write to the readers that they did not know the truth, but rather that they did know the truth, and to remind them that lies are not part of the truth. The person who denies that Jesus is the Christ is the liar. This person who denies God the Father and the Son is the antichrist. Everyone who denies the Son (glc…Jesus) does not have a relationship with the Father. The person who communicates belief in the Son has a relationship with the Father also. John instructed the readers to keep their belief in what they had first heard about the gospel. If they remain committed to what they heard at first they would keep their relationship to the Son and the Father. Jesus promised eternal life to those who believed. John wrote to them to instruct them about the people who were trying to deceive Christians. John wrote that the readers did not need anyone to teach them because the indwelling Holy Spirit was teaching them all things; the Holy Spirit is truth and is not a lie. John wrote that the readers should remain committed to the Holy Spirit, just as the Holy Spirit had instructed. John instructed the Christians to maintain their faith in Jesus, so that when he appears to the world again they would have confidence and not hide from him in shame when he returns. Those who know Jesus is righteous also know that everyone who lives righteously has been brought to life by him.

1 John 3:1 - 10 Think about and understand the great love God the Father has extended to us: that Christians should be named as God’s children - and in fact we are! The world does not understand us because the world did not understand Jesus. John wrote to his dear friends that Christians were God’s children now, and what believers in Jesus will be in the future has not been fully revealed. but we know that when it is revealed we will be like Jesus because we will see him just as he is. Everyone who has this firm hope regarding the future seeks to live a purified lifestyle now, just as Jesus is pure.) All who engage in sin also engage in lawlessness; for sin is lawlessness. Christians know that Jesus came to Earth to take away sins (John 1:29), and Jesus did not sin. Everyone who maintains their faith in Jesus does not make sin a regular part of their life (1 John 1:6- 2:2); everyone who makes sin a regular part of their life has not encountered Jesus and has not understood Jesus. John warned his dear readers not to let anyone deceive them; the person who has a lifestyle of righteousness is righteous, just as Jesus is righteous. The person who has a lifestyle of sin is giving allegiance to the devil because the devil has been sinning from the time before the universe was created. The Son of God came to Earth to destroy and end the control of the devil. Everyone who has become a child of God (glc…accepted Jesus’ sacrifice for sin) does not make sin a regular part of their life because God’s character is in them, and so they are not able to have a lifestyle of sin because they are children of God. Here is how the children of God and the children of the devil are revealed: Everyone who does not have a righteous lifestyle - the person who does not love other Christians - does not belong to God.

1 John 3:11 - 24 Christians have heard the gospel message from shortly after the time they accepted Jesus; you should love others, not like Cain who followed the devil and violently killed his brother. He murdered him because his actions were evil but his brother’s actions were righteous. Therefore, John tenderly instructs Christian men and women that they should not be surprised if they receive hate from the world (John 15:18). Christians should know that they have moved out of the spiritual realm of death and into the spiritual realm of life because they love their fellow Christians. The person who does not love is still in spiritual death (Jesus' message in John 13:35). Everyone who hates their fellow Christian is a spiritual murderer (John 8:44), and the readers should know that no murderer has eternal life residing in them. Christians have come to know and understand love by Jesus’ decision and action to voluntarily giving up his human life for us (John 10:11, 15, 17, 18; 13:37,38; 15:13) ; so we should lay down our human lives for our fellow Christians. And, whoever has material goods and sees their fellow Christian in need and decides not to have compassion for them does not have God’s love active inside them. John writes to the growing Christians that they should not just love with words but should love with action and true attitudes. These righteous deeds will cause us to know that we are following the truth and will convince our conscience when we are in God’s presence, and if our conscience has self-condemnation be assured that God is greater than our conscience and he knows the whole situation. John wrote to his dear friends that when our conscience does not have self-condemnation, we have confidence in the presence of God, and then whatever we ask we receive from him, because we have a lifestyle of keeping his commandments and doing the things that he approves of. This is God’s commandment: that we believe in his son Jesus Christ and we love one another, just as God the Father gave us the commandment. The person who follows and does his commandments has a lasting relationship with God, and God with them. The Spirit that God gave us makes us know that God has a relationship with us.

1 John 4:1 - 6 John wrote to his dear friends that they should not believe every message that they hear but should determine the genuineness (Deuteronomy 13:2-6, 18:15-22) to determine if the message is from God, because there were many false teachers and “prophets” in the world. Every spirit that testifies and acknowledges that Jesus is the Christ and has come in the flesh to Earth is a spirit from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus, that spirit is not from God and is aligned with the spirit of the antichrist, which the readers had been warned is coming and is now active in the world. John confirmed to the growing Christians that they were from God, and have conquered evil spirits because Jesus who was in them is greater than the evil one that is in the world. These spirits of the antichrist are aligned with the world; so they speak from the world’s viewpoint and those in the world listen to them. John and his companions were from God; the person who has a relationship with God listens to John and his companions, but whoever does not have a relationship with God does not listen to John and his companions. These observations reveal the Spirit of truth and the spirit of deception.

1 John 4:7 - 21 John wrote to his dear friends that they should love each other, because God gives love, and all who love have been given life by God and have a relationship with God. The person who does not love others does not have a relationship with God because God has the quality of love. God has shown his love to us by sending his one and unique Son into the world so that we may have life through him. Love is fully revealed, not because we show love to God, but because God loved us and sent his Son to be the acceptable and worthy sacrifice to pay for our sins. John wrote to his dear friends to consider that since God loved us so much, Christians should love each other. No one has seen God. (John 1:18) If we show love to each other, God has a place in our life and his love is extended to the world. We can know and be assured that we have a relationship with God and he with us because God has given his Spirit to us. In addition, John and his companions have seen and testified that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world. God has a relationship with the person - and the person with God - who acknowledges and believes that Jesus is the Son of God. And Christians have grown in their understanding of, and faith in, the love that God has for us. God is love, and the person who has love as a characteristic has a relationship with God and God has a relationship with them. Love grows and is effective in us so that we may have confidence during the day of judgment, because just as Jesus showed God’s love, so also we should show God’s love in the world. There is no fear in love, but confident love pushes out fear because fear is looking ahead to punishment. The person who fears punishment has not been perfected in love. We show love to others because God loved us first. If someone says “I love God” but has an attitude, and actions, of hate towards Christians, they are a liar because the person who does not love - in attitude, and actions - their fellow Christians, whom they can see cannot have true love for God whom they cannot see. And the commandment we have from God is that the person who loves God should love his fellow Christian.

1 John 5:1 - 4a Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Messiah (Christ) is a child of God, and everyone who loves God the Father loves other Christians. When we show our love for God in our attitudes and actions and obey his commandments we show that we love Christians. God’s love expects that Christians will follow and obey his commandments. These commandments are not a burden to us because everyone who has truly believed, and has faith in, God overcomes the world.

1 John 5:4b - 12 The faith of a Christian is the conquering power that has victory over the world. The person who believes and has faith that Jesus is the Son of God has victory over the world. Jesus Christ came to us by water and blood (glc…water - baptized by John; blood - Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross) - not by water only, but by the water and the blood (glc…Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, death, resurrection provide more proof and authority than his baptism alone). The Holy Spirit brings witness to this (John 15:26 , 16:13) and the Spirit is truth. Consider that there are three that testify, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and they all agree with their testimony. If we rely on the testimony of people, realize that the testimony of God is greater because God has testified about his Son. (The person who believes and has faith in the Son of God has the testimony in their inner being; the one who does not believe and does not have faith in God has made a decision that God is a liar because this person has not believed or had faith in the testimony that God gave concerning his Son.) This is God’s testimony: God has provided eternal life to us, and this life is given by his Son. The person who has the Son has eternal life from God; the person who does not have (glc…by faith) the Son of God does not have eternal life from God.

1 John 5:13 - 21 John wrote this letter to those who believed and had faith in the Son of God so that they would know fully that they had eternal life. This is the full confidence that we have before God: that when we ask anything that aligns with his will, then he hears us. And if we have confidence that he hears our requests, then we know and have confidence that we will have the requests for which we asked from God. If anyone sees a Christian committing a sin that does not result in death that person should ask God to grant life to the person who commits a sin that does not result in death. There is a sin that results in death (QUEST…perhaps persistent rebellion to the truth – ESV…unrepented sin, firm rejection of Jesus – glc…perhaps not putting their faith in Jesus). John did not instruct the readers to pray about that. All unrighteousness is sin, but there is sin that does not result in death. We know that those who have a relationship with God do not sin (glc…persistently), but God is the protector for his child (glc…Christian) and the evil one cannot control him. We know that we receive life from God and we belong to God, and the evil one has power throughout the Earth. We know that the Son of God has come to Earth and has revealed God, who is true, to us, and we have a relationship with him who is true, through his Son Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ (NET translation) is the true God and is eternal life. John encouraged the growing Christians to not let idols become a part of their life. (NET…don’t let false teachers lead you to worship a false god)

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2 John

(QUEST – The apostle John wrote this letter shortly after writing 1st John, probably in the 80s A.D.)

(ESV – The apostle John wrote this letter from the vicinity of Ephesus near the end of the first century A.D.)

2 John 1:1 - 4 John was a leader of the early Christian church. He wrote to a local church that was not near where John was living (NET conclusion on the recipient of the letter). John expressed his love for them and alluded to the long-held Christian doctrines as truth, in contrast with the teachings of opponents (1 John 3:19). John includes true Christians who maintain faith in the teachings about Christ given by the apostles (NET in contrast with the opponents described in 1 John). Truth resides in believers (John 14:16,17 where Jesus promised the Spirit would be with the disciples) and will be with Christians forever. John is confident that grace, mercy, and peace, in truth and love, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Son of the Father, will be with Christians. John had great joy because he learned that some Christians were living with godly conduct and lifestyle (NET…he had knowledge about some of the Christians but does not know for certain that they all are living godly lives …perhaps John is alluding to the indwelling Spirit of Truth) in accordance with the command of God the Father given to John and the readers of the letter(NET).

2 John 1:5 - 11 Because of the threat of false teachers John wrote to the church that they love one another (this was not a new commandment but was a teaching the apostles had given from the beginning of their ministry). To show love one must live according to God’s commandments. Loving others is a commandment that they have heard from the beginning of their instruction in Christianity so the result should be that they live in obedience to it. Many false teachers were out in the world and they do not give testimony that Jesus Christ (NET…Messiah) came to Earth in the flesh. The false teacher is a deceiver and is opposed to Jesus. Be on your guard so that you do not lose the progress of your Christian ministry, and thus receive a heavenly reward (Revelation 112:18; 22:12). All those who create their own teaching and do not keep to the teaching of Christ (NET…as delivered by the apostles) does not have a genuine relationship with God as a believer in Christ. The person who keeps to the apostles’ teachings has a genuine relationship with God the Father and the Son. If a person comes to you and does not follow John’s instruction you should not welcome the person into your house or give them a Christian greeting because the person who welcomes him publicly strengthens the false teacher’s influence with other Christians.

2 John 12:12 - 13 John had much more to write to the readers but he did not want to just deliver his message with a written letter. He hoped to come to them and speak to them face to face so their mutual joy would be full. John let the readers know that the Christians with him sent their greetings.

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3 John

(QUEST – The apostle John wrote this letter shortly after writing 1st John, probably in the 80s A.D.)

(ESV – The apostle John wrote this letter from the vicinity of Ephesus near the end of the first century A.D.)

3 John 1:1 - 4 John was a leader in the early Christian church. John wrote to Gaius (NET…a common Roman name …. not much info on Gaius other than the contents of this letter) who was a dear Christian brother whom John is affirming as an orthodox believer. (NET…in contrast to false teachers) John prayed that all was well with Gaius in his life, in his physical health, and in his spiritual health. John had great joy when other Christians told him of Gaius’s adherence to the truth and his faithful living. John had no greater joy than to hear that his spiritual children were living faithfully to the truth.

3 John 1:5 - 8 John again uses a very friendly term as he commends Gaius for showing faithfulness when he helps Christians in their ministry even though they are strangers. These Christians have reported on Gaius’s love for Christian workers in the church John attends. John writes that it is a good action when he helps them along in their travels with the help God approves of. These traveling Christians are traveling to do ministry for God and don’t accept help from unbelieving Gentiles. Therefore, it is right to give help to the travelers so we can join in the work that aligns with the Spirit of God.

3 John 1:9 - 11 John had sent a letter to a church, but Diotrephes who seeks to put himself as the final authority (NET…perhaps a person who is arrogant..he had local authority) did not accept John’s authority regarding traveling missionaries. John wrote that if he came to that church he would expose Diotrephes’ behavior of voicing unjustified charges against John and his companions and using evil words. Even beyond not welcoming Christian missionaries, Diotrephes stands against people who want to help the traveling missionaries and expels them out of the church! John encourages Gaius to pattern his life after what is good, not after what is bad. The person who does good has a relationship with God; the person who does what is bad does not have a relationship with God.

3 John 1:12 - 14 John wrote that Demetrius had a good character and behavior that was spoken about by many Christians and even confirmed by the Spirit. John and his companions also spoke well of him and Gaius should know that their testimony is true. John had many other things to write about but he wanted to speak to him in person rather than just put them in a letter. John hoped to see him soon so they could speak face to face. John prayed for peace for Gaius. The Christians with John sent their greetings. John asked Gaius to greet Christians with him.

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Jude

(QUEST – Jude was the half-brother of Jesus and the full brother of James. The letter was written around 65 A.D.)

(ESV – Jude was the brother of James and Jesus – Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3 “Judas” …glc…not Judas Iscariot…is the same as “Jude” in Jude 1. This letter was probably written around the same time as 2nd Peter, mid-60s A.D.)

Jude 1 - 2 Jude, a bondservant (NET…voluntarily) of Jesus Christ and brother to the apostle James wrote to people who were called and enveloped in the love of God the Father and kept by and kept for Jesus Christ. Jude prayed for mercy, peace, and love to be theirs in abundance.

Jude 3 - 7 Jude wrote affectionately to the readers and explained that he had been looking forward to writing to them about the salvation they shared as Christians, but now he thought it was necessary to write to them to encourage them to struggle and contend vigorously on behalf of the doctrine given to believers that had been entrusted to prior Christians (NET…Paul had delivered a gospel to Gentiles that was the same as the gospel given to Jewish Christians by other apostles …cling to the authority of scripture rather than to the messages of those who falsely claimed to be prophets). Jude writes that men had infiltrated the church (Acts 20:29-30; 2 Peter 2:1) - men who many years ago were written about for the condemnation Jude will now describe - men with no relationship to God who have misused the grace from God as permission to do evil and who deny our Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. Jude reminded the readers (who Jude knew were familiar with the Old Testament facts) that Jesus, even though he rescued the Israelites out of Egypt, consigned those who did not believe to die. Jude also reminded the readers that the angels who went outside the bounds set up by God, and gave up their assigned place, were locked up by God in another place, a dark place, until the day of judgment. Even Sodom and Gomorrah and nearby towns were made to suffer the punishment of eternal fire because of their choosing sexual immorality and following human, ungodly, desires in the same way as those angels.

Jude 8 - 16 The false teachers are misled by their dreams and misuse their bodies, deny Jesus’ authority, and insult angelic beings. In contrast, the archangel Michael did not presume to speak a slanderous judgment about the devil while he was debating with him about the body of Moses, but only said, “May the Lord rebuke you!” The false teachers do not fully understand the things they slander, and they are spiritually cut off from God by the things that unthinking animals do by instinct. Woe to them!. They have behaved like Cain (Genesis chapter 4), and for the sake of money have followed Balaam’s mistake (Numbers chapter 22). As a consequence, they will certainly face judgment as people did in Korah’s rebellion. (against Moses…Numbers 16) The false teachers are like rocks in the sea that destroy ships while they join in the group Christian meal with the Lord’s supper and teaching. They eat without reverence at the gathering and nurture themselves instead of the congregation. They are like clouds that don’t produce rain, moved along by the winds; they are like unproductive fruit trees - they will die physically and spiritually and have no place in heaven. They are like turbulent seas that toss up their shameful actions like dirty foam. They are like the wandering stars (glc…planets that move across the sky and are less useful for navigation) for whom the utter darkness has been assigned for eternity. Enoch, a part of the 6th generation after Adam, prophesied about these people by saying, “Look! The Lord is coming with thousands and thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment on all, and to convict every person of all their thoroughly ungodly deeds that they have committed, and of all the harsh words that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” (NET…perhaps a quote from an oral tradition) These people are complainers and fault-finders who do whatever their human desires lead them to do. They give impressive speeches and impress people for their own profit.

Jude 17 - 23 Jude encouraged his dear friends to remember the prophecies spoken by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. The apostles spoke the message that “At the end of time people will come who ridicule and disrespect the gospel; these false teachers will follow their ungodly desires.” These people cause divisions, live by worldy rather than spiritual guidelines, and don’t have the Holy Spirit in them. Jude saw a different path for the readers. He encouraged his dear friends to keep in the love of God while waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life through building themselves up in their holy faith and by praying in the Holy Spirit. Jude encouraged the readers to extend mercy to those who don’t have a solid faith in Jesus, to rescue others by pulling them out of the fire (glc…witness to them and explain the gospel), to extend mercy, keeping your reverence for God, to others don’t get closely associated and don’t get involved with their activities as they sin.

Jude 24 - 25 Jude closed the letter with praise to God who has provided the means to keep you from a life of sin (glc…by accepting Jesus’ sacrifice for sins on the cross) and has provided the means for you to stand in a good relationship with God, and rejoice when you are in the presence of his glory. To the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power, and authority, for times before the universe was created, now, and for the eternal future. Amen.

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I don’t plan to write a report/contents for the book of Revelation. My next task (December 2024) is to create another version of these content documents by reading the Amplified version of the Bible and rewording what I have typed after reading the NET online Bible.