

Warning: Don't Stop Growing (2 Peter 3:17-18)

- Peter ends his letter with one more call about caring for and protecting our unshakable faith, so Peter's final words focus on three ways the church can keep your faith stabilized
- Peter wants the church to stand strong and not "*fall from your own steadfastness*" (a word for being stabilized or resolute, established, or strengthened)
- Peter's final words focus on **three ways** you and I (the church) can keep our faith stabilized.

1. **Keep your faith stable by guarding it from false teaching** (3:17)

- Peter keeps warning us to stay spiritually protected by keeping our guard up and Peter knew this lesson well when he failed to stay steadfast and denied Christ (Luke 22:32)
- Satan's emissaries (false teachers) are in "*error*" by their lifestyle and teaching ("*unprincipled men*"). So:
 - Keep an eye in their **content**: "they exploit you with false words" (2:3) and "*they speak arrogant words of vanity*" (2:12) and promise freedom as slaves of corruption (2:19)
 - Keep an eye on their **character**: they are "unprincipled" (lawless) in many ways (2:2-3, 10, 14, 18-19; 3:7)
 - Keep an eye on their **conduct** (2:10, 18)

2. **Keep your faith stable by growing in the Lord's grace and knowledge** (3:18a)

- Growth is **commanded** by Peter: this assumes that we have saving faith and we are doing our part (Phil. 2:12; 1 Cor. 15:10)

- Growth is **continual** (it's progressive): It's not instantaneous, but gradual (it can feel like a roller coaster ride-Rom 7:15, 19, 21-22). As you grow in Christ (Col. 2:6-7), do some weeding out of your sins (Prov. 28:13) and feeding your faith (1 Pet. 2:2)
- Growth is **calibrated** by "*the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*"
 - Grow in **grace**: In Titus 2:11-14, you can see five aspects of grace: saving grace (v. 11); schooling grace (v. 12: "*instructs us..to deny...to live...*"); second coming grace (v. 13 – gives hope); segregating grace (v. 14a: "*to purify for Himself...*", not us); serving grace (v. 14b: *zealous for good deeds*")
 - Grow in "*the **knowledge** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*" (personifies "grace and truth" -Jn. 1:17). Commit to two things: 1: Know about Christ (seek to learn about His identity and attributes); 2: Know Christ (John 17:3; Phil. 3:8, 10)

3. **Keep your faith stable by glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ (3:18b)**

- Our aim to grow in grace is not to feel happier or more fulfilled or to be more productive (all by-products of grace), but to exalt the worth that is His due. Our objective to grow in knowledge is not to be more theologically sound or better able to defend the faith (all true), but to ascribe to the Lord the credit He alone deserves.
- **Why** give Him the glory? He deserves it (Rev. 5:11-14) and won't share it with others (Isa. 42:8; 48:11)
- **When** should we glorify the Lord? "both now and to the day of eternity" (Do it personally and corporately with your church and do it eternally (Rom. 11:36).