Guard and Grow

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[0:00] If you would, please take out your Bibles and open with me to 2 Peter. This will be our last time studying 2 Peter together.

! We'll finish this great letter tonight. I've had a joy studying it with you. I hope it's been helpful to you and hope it's fed your soul this semester. I have a very close friend by the name of Garrett.
You guys know him. He goes to Falls Creek. He teaches Sunday school, Oklahoma City police officer. Our friendship goes way back. We actually played basketball together in high school.
It's when we first met. He was a year older than me. I had heard about him. He was a great player, a lot better than me. We got to play together one summer for the high school.
We were driving all over the state for Mustang, playing basketball pretty much all day during a couple of weeks of the summer. He and I got to talking and we were going back.
[1:01] It was probably about 7 o'clock at night getting back to the high school. I said, do you have any plans tonight? He said, I'm going to go to the Transformers premiere. If you've seen Transformers, I actually have not.

When the movies would come out, there would be a midnight premiere. He was like, I'm going tonight. The movies are like three hours long or something. He was not going to get out of the movie until 3 a.m.
He was going to wake up the next day and go and play more basketball. Very little sleep to play basketball. He said, I'm so ready to see this movie. He was ready.
He was excited. He arranged his day around it. He arranged his life around it. Sacrificed sleep to go see it. He was ready to see it. The next morning, he was incredibly tired and almost missed the bus. But he made it. He made it. And so we were a better team for it. But the question is, if we're ready for something, we plan for it. We make arrangements for it.
[1:58] We arrange our life around it. And so Peter's been asking us the question implicitly, are you ready for the return of Jesus?

Are you ready for him to come back again? Are you prepared for him to appear? Are you ready for him to come back? And I think all of us, especially us who claim to be Christians, would say we're ready for him to show up.
We're ready for him to be back. And I think we'd also say, if we're honest, like, I want him to come back. I'm looking forward to that moment. I just don't want it to happen quite yet.
Like, I would like to graduate high school before he returns. I'd like to get married before he returns. I would like to go to college or figure out what my life's going to look like here before he comes back. And it's the end of all things.
But when I say, are you ready for him to return, I'm not just talking about chronologically, meaning regarding time. I'm not just asking, do you want him to come back right now? I'm thinking more of how are you living?
[2:58] Are you living in a way that shows you're ready for Jesus to show up? Are you living in such a way that you're prepared for him to make an appearance?

And if you are, that should be reflected in the way you live your life. That'll show up in the way that you prioritize things like Bible study and showing up to church.
Our lives should be oriented around the day that Christ will appear. And if you remember from our study last time, at the end of verses 12 and 13, Peter describes Christians as waiting.
He uses that word two times. We are waiting for his appearance. We are waiting for that day. We're waiting for the new heavens and the new earth. And he describes this again in verse 14 as waiting. Waiting. And waiting can seem like a very passive thing. We sit in the waiting room and we do nothing. We scroll on our phone while we wait for our appointment. But waiting for the return of

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Christ isn't, don't think waiting room, think planning for summer.
[4:03] You are waiting for summer. You are so ready for summer and you've only got less than nine weeks until it happens now. You're almost there. But as you're waiting for summer, as you're preparing for it, you're making plans. Like this is when the pool opens.

We're going to swim here. We're going to go to this camp. My family's going on vacation here. You're making plans. You're getting ready for it. You're prepared for it to happen. And so Peter's telling us to be ready for that day, but he's also instructing us how to live while we wait.
And so that's our first point for tonight. How to live while you wait. How to live while you wait. We'll see this in verses 14 through 16.
Verse 14. He says, Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these. Well, what are the these that we're waiting for?
We'll go back to the end of verse 13. Waiting for a new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. This is what we're waiting for.
[5:04] Waiting for a new heavens and a new earth. We're waiting for Christ to appear and make everything new. We're waiting for a new world where there is no sin in it. Waiting for a world that has not been touched by sin.

We're waiting for a place where we'll be and we will never have a sinful thought again. We're waiting for a world that is perfect and will never be corrupted. Since we're waiting for these things. Peter says, be diligent. Be diligent. And he's used this word a few times already. Chapter 1 verse 5. He says, make every effort.
Same word. Also verse 10. Be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election. And here for the third time, be diligent.
Work hard for this. Strive after this. Be aggressive in this. And so once again, for the final time, I would remind you, our future hope is the fuel that drives our present obedience.
[6:12] Our future hope drives how we live this life. And so if you have a hope that's as strong as Christ returning, that will fuel you to be obedient in this life.

That will fuel you to be faithful here and now. This life is difficult. This life has trials. How do you get through them? You need a hope that will sustain you and fuel you through this life's difficulties. And if you don't have hope, you won't be able to live well. If you have no hope, you won't be able to live well. And I think it would be difficult to find an atheist who lives life well.
There might be things about certain atheists that are commendable. They may be brilliant. They may be really smart or gifted or talented or successful in their field or in their industry or at school. But they won't live a life that's pleasing to God. They won't live a life that is moral. Because they don't have hope. They don't have anything that's drawing them toward righteousness.
[7:22] So he says, be diligent for what? To be found by him without spot or blemish and at peace. This phrase of being found is common when it talks about Christ's return.

And so if you look back at verse 10, that when Christ appears, the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. When Jesus returns, everything's going to be made known. Everything's going to be revealed. Your thought life is going to be made public. But that word he uses for exposed is actually the word found. Everything we do is going to be found out. Everything the wicked do will be revealed. And so Peter is saying, when Jesus returns, make sure he finds you living well.
Make sure he finds you living a life that's pleasing to him. And he describes what this life is. It's without spot or blemish. Christ wants us to be pure.
[8:25] Christ wants us to be holy. Christ wants us to live a righteous and godly life. And this is how the false teachers are not living.

In fact, Peter calls them blots and blemishes in chapter 2. So we are to be without spot or blemish. But these false teachers, their entire lives are marked by blemishes and imperfections and impurities.
But Jesus wants us to be pure. He wants us to be holy. That means to be set apart from this world. And are you different from the world?
As a Christian, you should be. What is it that makes you different from the world? Are you different from the world? What is it that should set Christians apart?
A motivation to please Christ. A motivation to glorify Christ in every area of your life. So what is it that motivates you to live your life?

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[9:33] What is it that causes you to live the way that you do? And I think it would be easy to say, well, it's Christ. Christ motivates me. But if we're not careful, we can be motivated by the exact same things that the world wants.

Money, fame, attention, sex, popularity, attention. We can be motivated by the same things that the world wants. And those things in and of themselves aren't bad and in the right context and used the right way are not bad.
But what is it that motivates you? What is it that you're striving after? Why do you live the way that you do? As a Christian, we should strive to make Christ known, to honor him with everything that we do.
And so I think a helpful clarifying question for us, in terms of how we're living our life, is would I want to be doing this when Jesus comes back? Would I want him to come back and find me living this way?
Or participating in this activity? Or talking about this with my friends? When Jesus returns, how would I want him to find me? Would I be doing this if I knew that Christ was coming right now?
[10:47] This is how we're to live while we wait. To be diligent so that we're found by him without spot or blemish. And then he says a third thing, and at peace.

Now what does he mean by at peace? Does he mean at peace with God, at peace within ourselves, at peace with each other? I don't think he means at peace with God, because as Christians, we have that in Christ.
We have peace with God because of his death. Romans 5.1 says that. I don't think he's talking about just peace within ourselves, like this inner sense of peace. I think what he's referring to is peace with each other.
Jesus wants to find his church pure and peaceful when he returns. And so there shouldn't be drama among Christians.
There shouldn't be sharp divisions between Christians. Paul says in Romans 12.18 that if possible, so far as it depends on you, live at peace with all.
[11:51] And so Paul recognizes that there are some people who will just refuse to live at peace with you. There are some people that either because they're not Christians or just because they're not acting the way a Christian should, they will make life difficult and just refuse to get along with you.

And you can't control what other people do. You can't control how other people respond to you. And so Paul says, if possible, so far as it depends on you, live at peace with all.
It takes two for a fight to happen. It takes two for drama to explode. And so if someone's talking bad about you, if someone's having issues with you, if you just don't respond, you're not adding fuel to that fire.
Christ wants his church to be at peace when he returns. And so how are you doing? How are we doing with this? Our student ministry is only as strong as the individual students who are here.
If all of us here are weak, then our student ministry is going to be weak. If all of us here are strong, our student ministry is going to be really strong. But how are you doing? Are you helping us accomplish our goals of living a pure life and living at peace with each other?
[13:12] In verse 15, Peter says another thing. And count the patience of our Lord as salvation. If you remember back to chapter 3, Peter says that the Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise like some people count slowness.

So we need to count. We need to consider his delay as salvation, as providing opportunity for people to repent and be saved. And so this means two things for us.
Two things. One, we need to be faithful in sharing the gospel. We need to be faithful in sharing the gospel. The Lord's delay is allowing people time to repent.
It's allowing people time to hear the gospel and respond to it before it's too late. And so we, as the church, as God's people, need to be faithful to share the gospel with people who need to hear it.
And depending on what phase of life you're in or what you do for school, you may be around less lost people than other people who are here. If you go to public school, you have a lot of lost friends.
[14:21] If you're homeschooled, you might have less. But there are people you go to homeschool with, people in your home who are not saved. We need to take advantage of the opportunities the Lord has given us.

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And so know the gospel. Be ready to share it. Be ready to explain it to someone. So it means we need to be faithful in sharing the gospel. A second thing this means is we need to be aggressive in sanctification.
Aggressive in sanctification. Aggressive in becoming like Christ. And so sanctification is just this step-by-step process of becoming more like Christ.
Of becoming more like Jesus day by day, moment by moment, trying to be more like Him. And so we need to be competitive in this.
We need to have a competitive spirit when it comes to sanctification. And I don't mean you're trying to cut other people down so that you can prop yourself up. But I mean the kind of mentality that's like, if there's going to be someone in our student ministry who's the holiest, I want to strive to be that person.
[15:25] I want to be as holy as I possibly can. I want to be as pleasing to the Lord as I can. One of my favorite people from church history is Jonathan Edwards. He was an American, so that's why I like him.

When he was 17 or 18, he wrote 70 resolutions to live his life by. You can go read them. They're fantastic. But one of them was he said, if there's going to be a theologian or a pastor who's the best theologian in the world, I want to strive for that to be me.
And he wasn't saying that in a prideful way. He wasn't saying that in a way that he wants to make other people look stupid or dumb. He's just saying, if there's going to be someone in this world who's the best theologian in our time, I want to do what I can to make sure it's me.
That's the kind of mentality we want to have as a church. If there's going to be someone here who's known for holiness, known for righteousness, I want to strive to make sure it's me.
I want to do what I can to be found pure and blameless in that day when Christ comes back. And he says, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you, according to the wisdom given to him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters.
[16:44] And so Peter is referring to letters that Paul has written, which is super rare. Like, most New Testament letters don't even mention another apostle by name. And here Peter is mentioning Paul by name and specifically mentioning letters that he's written.

And so why is Peter bringing him up? And he says that he's written to you. We don't know if these were letters written directly to these churches or if these churches had just read letters that Paul had wrote.
These believers were living in Asia Minor, which is modern day Turkey. And Paul wrote several letters to churches in that area. Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians. And so it's possible they were direct recipients of some of his letters or at least had read the letters that he had written to other churches.
And Peter says when Paul talks about these matters, he's writing according to the wisdom given to him. And so when he says these matters, I think Peter's thinking the end of the world when Christ comes back, waiting for his return, living well while we wait and understanding what God has said in his word.
But why does Peter bring Paul up here? He says in verse 16, there are some things in them that are hard to understand.
[18:02] I'm so glad Peter said this. When I read Paul sometimes, I'm confused. It takes a lot of study for me to understand what Paul has written sometimes. And Peter himself is saying there are some difficult things that Paul has written about.

There are some challenging things that he writes about in his letters. And look at what he says. Why does Peter bring Paul up?
He says that the ignorant and unstable twist his words to their own destruction. And so the best we can tell, it seems like these false teachers are taking what Paul taught and twisting it to make it look like Paul taught what they're trying to teach.
They can live however they wanted and that Christ won't actually come back like he said he would. And so the reason Peter brings him up is because they're twisting his words. They're taking them out of context.
And that word twist is actually used to describe the torture rack in the ancient world. If you're not familiar with that, it's like this table they strap their hands and their feet to and they just spread the table apart until everything's out of socket and they pull people apart.

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[19:22] Pretty disgusting. But that's the kind of word, this twisting, this wrenching of joints. Peter's saying they're yanking his words out of context. They're not properly understanding them.

They're distorting what he said to make it fit their own purposes. And so a couple of words I want to give you in how we read scripture. Number one is eisegesis.
You can look up how to spell that later to try to get close. Eisegesis. This is a bad way to read scripture. This means to read into the scriptures something that's not there.
You're putting your own thoughts, your own desires, what you want it to say into the Bible. So we can use an example if you want to write down Psalm 37 verse 4.
It says, delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart. If you're reading this bad way with eisegesis, you're reading something into the text, you're like, the Lord's going to give me the desires of my heart.
[20:24] What is it that I want? I would like more money. I would like an easier life. I would like my family to get along. Just this list of things you desire. Think, okay, so if I come to the Lord, he's going to give me what I want.

That's a bad way to read the scriptures. The opposite way is called exegesis. Exegesis. This is reading out of the Bible what is there.
Reading the Bible on its own terms. Understanding what the author was saying. Understanding what scripture means in its own words.
And so same verse, Psalm 37 verse 4. Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart. As you read that, if you're reading it exegetically, you're going to ask, what does it mean to delight myself in the Lord?
If I truly delighted myself in the Lord, what would that look like? It would look like I tried to live my life for his glory. I would try to please him in everything I did and everything I thought and everything I said.
[21:27] And if I delight myself in him like that, he will give me the desires of my heart. But if my highest delight is the Lord, what are the things I'm going to want?

It's the things that align with who God is. And so we want to read scripture on its own terms. We want to understand what it was intended to communicate rather than making up our own thoughts that aren't there.
These false teachers were twisting the scriptures. They weren't seeking to understand what Paul meant. They were twisting them for their own advantage and to teach whatever they wanted to teach.
False teachers today still twist scripture, especially when it comes to prophecy. So there's a book that even is older than me. It was published in 1988.
It's called 88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Happen in 1988. The guy was wrong, obviously. But he decided there are all these reasons listed in scripture as to why Jesus is going to come back this year.
[22:33] And he used scripture to try to back up his argument. But he got it wrong. And so he released another book in 1989 called 89 Reasons Why Jesus is Coming Back in 1989.

He was like, I was off on my calculation. That was all. But he missed verses like Jesus himself saying, no one knows the day or the hour. When the Son of Man will return. Not even the Son.
He missed verses like that. He was twisting scripture to try to make it say what he wanted to say.
And it damages people when you do stuff like that. Look at the consequences of this.
They twist it to their own destruction. Twisting the scriptures is a lightning pass to death.
It's the quick lane to hell. This is not a small offense. Messing with the word of God is messing with the God of the word. It's attacking his character.
[23:30] It's defaming his name. And it will land you in hell. Hell. I wonder, do you think about hell? Do you think about that as a real place?

Do you think about that as a reality? People who die in their sins apart from Christ spend eternity in hell. Suffering the consequences of their sin.
And if you're here and you're not a Christian, do you care about your soul? Do you care about where you'll spend eternity?
I don't want you to just shrug off what the Bible teaches. There are eternal consequences to how you respond to the word and how you handle the Bible. I want you to think about this reality.

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And for believers, this was our destiny. And Christ saved us. And the people around us who are lost are headed for hell. We need to let this fear, let this disgust even, lead us to pity them.
[24:33] To share the gospel with them. To point them to Christ. And look at what he says. They twist it to their own destruction. End of verse 16. As they do the other scriptures.

As they do the other scriptures. Or the rest of the scriptures. Pay attention to what Peter does here. He is equating what Paul wrote with scripture.
He's recognizing that what the apostle Paul was writing was on par with the Old Testament scriptures. And so critics and scoffers will say, no, the early church didn't think what the apostles were writing was actually Bible.
They didn't think it was actually scripture. That's a later development that the church developed later on in its history. Here's a first century account of how the church viewed the apostles' writings. They treated them as the word of God. And we should do the same. So be careful how you handle scripture. Read it well. Because there are eternal consequences to what we do with the Bible.
[25:41] So that's number one. How we should live while we wait. Number two. How to stay safe from the strays. How to stay safe from the strays.

Verses 17 and 18. Peter has compared false teachers to dogs. In chapter 2 verse 22. Stray dogs were a danger in the ancient world.
They are a danger now. So if you're on a walk, carry something with you to deal with that. Stray dogs can be a danger. Peter's compared these false teachers to these roaming dogs who attack people and lead people astray.
One of Peter's goals in this letter is to teach us how to avoid being deceived. How do we be on the lookout for false teachers? How do we stay safe in our walk with Christ?
Peter says, you therefore, beloved. I think here he's concluding this entire letter. Knowing this beforehand. Knowing that false teachers are going to twist scripture. Knowing that they're going to not pay attention to scripture and use it to suit their own sinful desires.
[26:48] Take care. Or be on guard that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. Be alert to what false teachers are trying to do.

And Lord willing, I don't think any false teachers are going to come in here and be successful leading people astray and thinking that the return of Christ won't happen or that we can live sinful lifestyles.
But pay attention to other subtle forms of false teaching. I'm sure you will encounter someone either in our church or elsewhere that will say, you know, you don't really need to take the Bible so seriously.
You know, you don't really need to study the Bible that carefully. You don't really need to be so careful in how you live your life.
Like, Christ is gracious. You can, you can, you're free to do this. That's kind of one of the things the false teachers were saying. And so even if we encounter people who aren't saying the exact same things as these false teachers were, there will still be temptations that come to drift away from God's Word, to drift away from obedience to it.
[28:02] So we need to know what the enemy is going to do. Know how he works. Know what he's going to try to get us to do. So we need to be alert. We need to resist false teaching when it appears.

But it's not just enough to play defense. We also need to play offense. We need to aim at something. So Peter says in verse 18, But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We need to grow in two things. Grace and knowledge. But first, thinking of that word for growth.
We think of trees or grass that grows and is healthy. And Psalm 1 provides us a good picture of that. This blessed man who studies God's Word, who pays attention to God's Word.
It says, He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season. His leaf does not wither, and all that he does, he prospers.
[29:07] We're called to continually grow. This is called progressive sanctification. We're in a step-by-step way becoming more holy, becoming more like Christ every day that we live.

And this is how we get better at a number of things in life. If you play sports, this is how you get better at sports. It's little by little, day by day, step by step, you slowly get better. If you know how to

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play an instrument, when you were learning to play that instrument, you were not an expert overnight.
It takes time. It takes effort. It takes diligence over and over and over again to practice and become better. That's how sanctification works in the Christian life. It's not quick.
It doesn't happen overnight. But there is consistent growth. And I want you to make verse 18 the aim of your life.
To grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ. Because statistically speaking, there's usually in here about 160 to 180, somewhere in there, people.
[30:15] Statistically speaking, by the time you guys are seniors in college, there will only be about 15 to 20 of you still in church.

I hope we beat the statistics. I hope we have more than that, who are committed to Christ and committed to being involved in the church. But statistically speaking, only about 10% of youth students in churches are still in church by the time they graduate college.
Why does that happen? And I think everyone in here would say, well, that won't happen to me. But why does that happen? People lose sight of their task in following Christ.
They stop growing. They stop pursuing growth. They stop trying to follow Christ. And it may be easier for you to be involved in church now because your parents support you.
Your parents want and expect you to be here. You've got friends here who make it a fun place to be. But if you move off and go to college or start working, your parents won't be there to expect you to be in church anymore.
[31:21] You may have new friends, but your friends that you were in the habit of going to church with won't be with you. What will you do then? Are you committed to growing in Christ?

College and whatever's after high school for you is a great proving ground to expose where your heart is at. What will you do? Who will you be?
Will you take your faith seriously? Will you commit to growing in these things? And he says two things to grow in. Grace and knowledge.
The grace of Christ and the knowledge of Christ. We need to understand what grace is. Grace is God's forgiveness of sins through Christ.
Grace is God saying you are a sinner who deserves wrath, who deserves hell. All of it is forgiven. Not because of what you've done or what you can do or what you will do in the future, but because God has sent his son to pay the price for our sins.
[32:31] And his grace will wash away your sins. His grace is powerful over sin. And so you need to recognize that you are a sinner. I am a sinner. And Christ died for sinners like us.

Romans 5.8 says, God shows us his love and that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. He laid his life down for rebels, for his enemies, for those who were sinners.
sinners. And it's so easy, being involved in church and reading scripture and studying the Bible, to think, to lose sight of the fact that you're a sinner.
To forget the fact that sin has corrupted you from the inside. We need to keep this in front of our hearts and in front of our minds because if we view ourselves as sinners, we will recognize the grace and mercy that Christ has had on us.
And it will soften our hearts toward those who haven't yet heard of Christ or don't believe in Christ and need to hear his gospel. View yourself as a sinner. But is grace something we just need once?
[33:37] Is grace something we just need to kind of get us started in the Christian life? I think the most accurate way to view grace, as the Bible teaches it, is Christ's power over sin.

Christ's power over sin. And as we think about that, it's Christ's power to forgive us our sin, his power over sin, and canceling the debt that we owe.
But grace is not something passive in the New Testament. Grace is not something we receive just once and then don't need again. Titus 2.11 says that grace trains us to renounce ungodliness.
Ephesians 2 says, by grace you have been saved. And so grace saves us and grace sanctifies us. It helps us grow in Christ. It continues to give us power over sin.
Why can you fight sin? Because of God's grace. Why can you become more like Christ throughout this life? Because of God's grace continuing to mold you and shape you.
[34:40] to grow in grace and also grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We need to know Jesus.

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You need to know Christ. You need to know Him. How do you accomplish this? How is He known? Through the Bible. Read your Bible. Study your Bible by yourself and with friends.
Understand the Bible. This is why so much of our church on Wednesday nights and on Sunday mornings is centered around the Bible because the Bible is where Christ reveals Himself. The Bible is fundamentally about Christ.
It's where He's known. And so if you rightly understand the Bible, you will know who Christ is and what He has done. So a question for you.
Do you know Jesus? Or do you know about Jesus? Do you truly know Him or do you just know about Him? And there's not a ton of distinction there because in order to know Him, you've got to know things about Him.
[35:41] But do you truly know Him or do you just know stuff about Him? If you only know stuff about Him, you'll be able to tell me some stories from the Bible that He did, some miracles He performed, some things He said, some things He taught.

But you won't love Him. You won't worship Him. You won't give your life to Him. You'll just know Him as a historical figure.
But if you know Christ, you'll certainly be able to tell me a lot about Him. You'll be able to tell me what He did and what He's accomplished. And you'll love Him. You'll worship Him.
You'll submit to Him. You will obey Him. And so it would be like the difference of recognizing LeBron James versus LeBron James recognizing you.
Okay, so if you're in the Oklahoma City airport, I don't know why LeBron would be there, but just bear with me. If you're in the Oklahoma City airport and you see LeBron, you would need to know some things about him to recognize him, like about how tall he is, he plays basketball, who he is.
[36:45] But you wouldn't need to know him just to recognize him. You just need to know about him. Now compare that to if you see LeBron James in the Oklahoma City airport and he comes up and he's like, are you Mike Christie?

Are you Garen Purcell? Like immediately, aura just keeps rising, right? Like LeBron knows this guy. He knows LeBron. Certainly you're going to know stuff about LeBron, but it goes further than that. Like there's a personal relationship here. That's kind of what I'm talking about. Do you just know about Jesus or do you know Jesus? The scriptures are for us to know Christ. The scriptures are not an end in themselves.
So we don't just study the Bible just so we can know it or just so we can have more information or just so we can be smarter. We study the Bible so that we can know Christ. We study the Bible so that we can worship him and be in heaven with him.
We study the Bible so that we can know who Christ is. And Peter ends his letter, but grow, or excuse me, I just read that, to him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity.
[37:54] Amen. This is really strange for the New Testament. He ends with what's called the doxology, just a word of praise. So there are doxologies all throughout scripture that usually don't end a letter.

These are the final words that Peter writes. To him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. And it's also rare because usually these words of praise are spoken to God the Father, but this one is to Christ.
To Christ be the glory. To Christ be the glory now and forever. Peter is calling us to work hard. Peter is calling us to make it to the end. He's calling us to endure. But he's not calling us to save ourselves. Salvation is from Christ and so Christ gets the glory for it.
Sanctification is from Christ and so he gets the glory for it. So you don't get to be proud of yourself because you're like, hey, I've been in church my whole life. Hey, I've read the Bible consistently.
[38:52] That's more than my friends have done. Hey, I stayed in church past my senior year of college. That's more than statistically most people do. You don't get to be proud for that because that's Christ's grace in your life.

He gets the glory for any work in your life that he has accomplished. And we need to be careful because we can so easily slip into pride. We can so easily start to think like, yeah, I'm a Christian because I just am smarter than some people I know.
I've stayed in church. I'm kind of proud of myself because a lot of my friends didn't choose to use their life that way. Nothing will kill our church or our student ministry more quickly than if all of us become prideful.

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If we forget the grace of Christ and we just start to be proud of ourselves, nothing will kill us more quickly. And the glory should go to Jesus both now and forever.
So what is your life about? If you're not living for the glory of Christ, you're living for something that's too small. And we read from the beginning of 2 Peter earlier, but Peter is ending exactly where he began.
[40:07] He began this letter by talking about grace and peace being multiplied to us in the knowledge of Jesus our Lord and the glory that's his and this is where he ends. He's told us to be at peace.

He talks about now grace and knowledge of Christ and the glory of Christ that we will give to him both now and forever. One thing I want you to take away from our study of this letter, Jesus will come back again.
Everyone in this room will see him. Everyone in this room will recognize him. We will all see him in his glory. Jesus came once as a newborn baby.
He's going to come back again as a king whose glory is older than time itself. He came the first time as a suffering servant. He'll come back as the reigning Lord of everything.
He came the first time in utter humility. He will come again in infinite glory. He came the first time and was killed by his enemies. He'll come again and eternally crush his enemies.
[41:13] He came the first time and very few people recognized who he actually was. But he will come again and every knee will bow. Every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

He's the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Are you ready? And according to what God says to us through Peter, the way we stay ready while we wait is by guarding our minds in the truth of Christ and growing in the knowledge of him.
Are you ready to see him? We will soon. Are you ready? Let's pray. Our Father, we praise you for the grace that you've given to us through Christ.
Christ. I pray for students here who haven't believed that, who haven't placed their faith in Christ, that you would open their hearts even this evening, that you would open their eyes and their minds to see the beauty of Christ, to see his glory, to understand his death for them.
I pray for those who are Christians that we would continue to grow for the rest of our lives, that we would understand our mission as Christians to grow in the grace and knowledge of your Son, Jesus Christ.
[42:30] I pray we do that now. I pray our church will be a help to them in accomplishing that task. It's in Christ's name we pray. Amen. Amen.

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