

# Peter's Second Letter

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**Introduction:** “Just as First Peter had a central theme which oriented the letter around persecution, so also Second Peter has a singular but very different theme. In this letter Peter is concerned that believers pursue knowing Jesus Christ. Along with the knowledge of Jesus – not intellectual but experiential – Peter addresses three issues that are still relevant today and frequently asked.” (D. R. Helm, author, *The Bible Speaks Today; 1 & 2 Peter and Jude*. R. Kent Hughes, NT Editor)

## I. Knowing Jesus

- A. Paul expresses his life ambition as: *To know Jesus* (Philippians 3: 8 & 10)
- B. Peter stresses that knowing Jesus is both the means and the objective of a spiritual life
- C. We need a fundamental understanding of the kind of knowledge we need to gain of Jesus our Lord
  - 1. Three concepts: orao, gnosis, epignosis
  - 2. Of the 8 times some form of gnosis is used, Peter uses epignosis four times and simple gnosis twice, and the other two only once each. Epignosis is by far his favorite term and deepest expression
  - 3. He never uses orao
- D. What do these terms mean?
  - 1. Orao is essentially intellectual, factual knowledge; the kind even demons have
  - 2. Gnosis combines factual understanding along with experience
  - 3. Epignosis is focused on the experience, in this case, of coming into the rich fullness of daily experiencing Jesus Christ

## II. The Risks of Not Believing and Following Jesus

- A. Is it possible to come to know God and have eternal life without knowing Jesus as God's Son?
- B. Is it possible to know God and experience fellowship with Jesus if we abandon a life of holiness and godliness?
- C. Is it possible to know God while rejecting the notion that Jesus will return bodily to this earth someday?

**Conclusion:** Are you well grounded in the fundamentals of the faith? Is your deepest desire to know Jesus personally in your daily experience – and to grow in that intimate knowledge? If not, what is keeping you from it? Is it some cherished sin? Is it a worldly indifference, seeking comfort and pleasure? What is holding you back from the pursuit of God?

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