

2 Peter

Different Letter. Different Topic.	Paul wrote 2 letters to the Corinthians and 2 to the Thessalonians. In those letters, you can see the connections within the sets of letters (ex: End Times in both Thessalonian books). Both of Peter's General Epistles, however, are nothing alike. 1 Peter largely deals with the general topic of suffering for being a Christian, particularly the Gentile Christians new to the faith. On the other hand, 2 Peter deals with a different topic applicable to Christians then and now. It was apostasy.
Definition of Apostasy	Textbook: "Defiance of established authority; a rebellion; an abandonment or breach of the faith." Practical: Failing away from the faith through rebellion, rejection, and/or redefinition and teaching others to do the same.
Was It Really Peter?	2 Peter was one of the most hotly debated books in the early church. Eusebius of Caesarea tells us that many in the church had questions about whether Peter wrote it: (a) because many issues the book addresses seemed more fitting to the context of the great apostasies of the 2 nd century than the problems and issues the church faced in the 1 st century. But the early church found no compelling evidence to reject Peter as the author in light of his personal address in chapter 3: "this is now my second letter to you." Thus, it was written towards the end of his life while in Rome in 67/68 AD after 1 Peter.
Why Peter Wrote	Peter was bothered that false teachers were infiltrating the churches and teaching in a way that was in opposition to what the apostles taught. As a result, he calls on Christians to become strong in their faith and their understanding of it <u>so that</u> they could detect and combat apostasy. To do this, he stresses two very important themes: (a) The Word of God and (b) The sure return of the Lord Jesus.
The Type of Apostasy	We don't know the particulars of the apostasy and the apostates that Peter had in mind, only that both were "false." Peter, however, traces these "falsities" to one thing. He calls it <i>heone</i> . That's the Greek word where we get "hedonism" (living for pleasure, self-indulgence, regardless of if it's wicked).
Key Verse	<i>The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance (2 Pet 3:9)</i>
Outline	Peter begins with exhorting Christians to spiritual maturity in chapter 1. That's the best way to circumvent apostasy. Then he denounces false teachers in chapter 2 and concludes in chapter 3 with a topic the false teachers denied: the anticipation of Christ's return.

Exhortation to Spiritual Maturity (ch. 1)	
Answer The Question	How can I grow in grace and knowledge in the midst of great apostasy and false teaching? <i>² Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. ³ His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. (1:2-3)</i>
Contains a Warning	<i>⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins. (1:4-9)</i>
Contains a Promise	<i>¹⁰ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, ¹¹ and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (1:10-11)</i>
Contains a Reminder on How Maturity Works	<i>So, I will always remind you of these things. . . ¹⁶ For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. . . ²⁰ Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. ²¹ For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (1:12, 16, 20-21)</i>

How to Do It	Look Within
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Denunciation of False Teachers (ch 2)	
Answers the Question	What should I expect from false prophets?
Contains a Warning	<i>But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. ² Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. ³ In their greed these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories. (2:1-3)</i>
Contains a Promise	<i>The Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment. ¹⁰ This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire (hedon) of the flesh and despise authority. (2:9-10)</i>
Contains a Reminder About How God Will Deal with Them	<i>²⁰ If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and are overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. ²¹ It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. ²² Of them the proverbs are true: "A dog returns to its vomit," and, "A sow that is washed returns to her wallowing in the mud." (2:20-22)</i>
How to Do It	Looking Critically (but not with a critical spirit. Big difference between the two.)

The Anticipation of Christ's Return (ch 3)	
Answers the Question	What kind of people should we be? <i>¹¹ Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? (3:11)</i>
Contains a Warning	<i>¹⁷ Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position. ¹⁸ But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (3:17-18)</i>
Contains a Promise	<i>¹³ But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. (3:13)</i>
Contains a Reminder	<i>³ Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing, and following their own evil desires. ⁴ They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised?... ⁸ But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. (3:3-4, 8-10)</i>
How to Do It	Look Presently Forward <i>You ought to live holy and godly lives (present) ¹² as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming (forward). (3:11-12)</i>