

The book of Numbers contains within it two accounts of Moses taking a census of the people. The first is at the start of their journey to the Promise Land (Numbers ch1), when God's promises filled their vision and directed their steps, The second is taken 40 years later, (Numbers ch26). The people of Israel are still in the wilderness and their inheritance is still ahead. But something has changed. Out of over 600,000 men who started this journey only 2 will claim the prize. The rest were laid low in the wilderness.(see 1 Cor 10:5) How can we as Christians in the 21st century learn from their story and be those who run the race well? What does resilience in our walk with God look like and how can we persevere? Peter knew that his life was soon to be over when he wrote his second letter and he has much to teach us that will help us on our journey. He was writing to believers who were about to suffer severe persecution.

2 Peter 1: 1-2

Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ,

To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ:

² May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

"Our lifeline to sustain us in this fallen world is the love of Christ and our heart knowledge of it." Dane Ortlund, "Deeper"

2 Peter 1:3-4

³ His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,⁴ by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

Twice Peter uses the word "granted" - it means to "bestow generously". Reflect on what God has freely given us, and how these things equip us to stand. How key is our knowledge of God and His promises?

READ 2 Peter 1: 1-2 Mark "Jesus" with a and mark "knowledge" with a

V1 How does Peter identify himself? Considering his past as one of the lead disciples, what does this tell us about what really matters to him?

How does he describe those he is writing to?

Why can he say their faith is of equal standing? What does it ultimately depend on?

How is Jesus described?

V2 In what way will grace and peace be multiplied?

Read 2 Peter 1:3-4 Mark the word "knowledge" with a and underline "so that".

V3 What does His divine power grant to us?

How is this appropriated to us according to v3?

V4 What else has He given to us? How are they described?

What do we receive through these promises?

From what are we delivered?

2 Peter 1:5-7

⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, ⁶ and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, ⁷ and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

Notice that Peter tells us that we make every effort to supplement our faith, not to replace it. God's work in us is foundational.

"External conformity to rules without an internal reality fueling it is akin to watering every part of a tree except its roots and expecting it to grow." Edward Fisher (Puritan)

VIRTUE —moral goodness, modesty, purity

KNOWLEDGE—intelligence , understanding

SELF CONTROL—one who can master his desires

STEADFASTNESS—constancy, endurance

GODLINESS— reverence, respect

BROTHERLY AFFECTION—love of other believers

LOVE—agape love reflects the love of God for us.

2 Peter 1:8-11

⁸ For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ For whoever lacks these qualities is so near-sighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. ¹⁰ Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. ¹¹ For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Peter has shared all that God has generously given to us to equip us for life and godliness. Now he deals with the believers responsibility.

Read 2 Peter 1:5-7 Mark knowledge with a  and number each quality mentioned.

V5 What is Peter's exhortation to believers?

"make every effort" - how would this look lived out?



List the qualities we must nurture and develop?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

Stop and reflect on each one. (definitions below)

Agape love is the goal—who does this reflect?

What Peter is describing is the process to lead us to Christlikeness.

Read 2 Peter 1: 8-11 Mark "knowledge" with a  Mark "qualities" incl. pronouns with a 

V8 How do these qualities benefit us?

From all you saw in v1-4, how important is the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ?

V9 *if we lack these qualities, what is the outcome?*

V10 *What is Peter's repeated call to action?*

How does practicing these qualities keep us?

V11 *Ultimately what will be the outcome?*

The children of Israel fell in the wilderness and did not enter into the promised inheritance of God. What key lessons have you learned that will keep you and lead you safely into God's rest. What is God's part? What is our part?

Hebrews 12:1-3

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

³Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

2 Peter 3:14,17-18

¹⁴Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

¹⁷You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. ¹⁸But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

Peter is not the only Bible author to teach us how to persevere. The writer of the book of Hebrews teaches us the same lessons with a different focus.

READ Hebrews 12:1-3 Mark Jesus including pronouns with a and underline any instructions in the text.

V1 List the two instructions you underlined.

What are we to lay aside?

How are to we run?

How do these instructions tie in with 2 Peter 1:5-10?

V2 Where is our focus to be as we run?

How is he described?

Note the details in v2-3 we are to reflect on?

How will this knowledge of the Lord Jesus help us?

In what way does this tie in with 2.Peter 1:1-4?

Lets go back to Peter and his final words.

Read 2 Peter 3:14,17-18 Underline the phrase “be diligent” and mark “knowledge” with a

V14 What were the believers to be diligent about?

V17 –18 In what way would they be protected from losing their own stability?

How do these closing verses reinforce all we have seen about God’s role and our role in running with endurance, and not being laid low in the wilderness?

How can you deepen your knowledge of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ?

What will it mean for you to “make every effort”?

Ask God to help you to live out your life for Him, resting in His strength and power as you deepen your knowledge of Him, and diligently seeking to develop the qualities that will make your life fruitful and effective in your knowledge of God.

About this study...

This resource has been designed to allow you to jump into God's Word and study it closely. It requires no preparation, and provides you with a structure to study a passage, with questions to help you think and reflect on it.

This study gives you a small insight into the world of inductive Bible study through three key parts:

Observe - *What does the text say?*

Understand - *What does the text mean?*

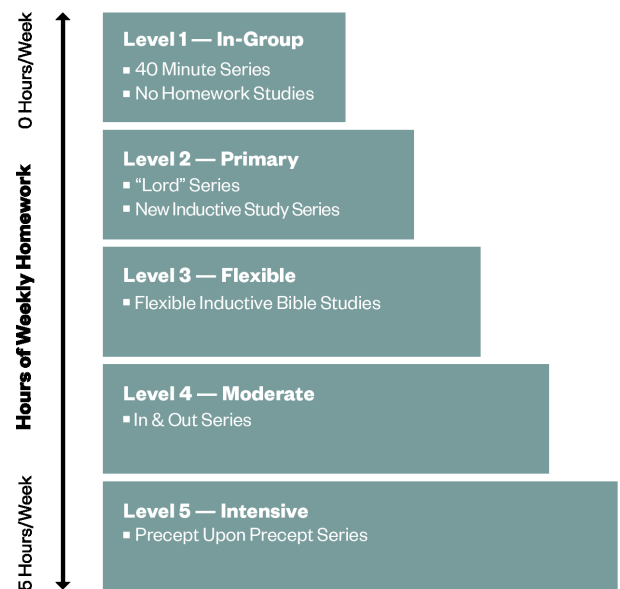
Apply - *What does this mean for me?*

By using this approach, we can study the Bible in a way that allows us to know God deeply, and to live differently.

About Precept Ireland...

Precept was founded in 1970 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and now works in 160 countries, and has Bible study material translated in over 70 languages. In 2001 Precept was established in Ireland, and has grown through it's mission to engage people in relationship with God through knowing His Word. Precept Ireland seeks to resource and train Bible study leaders to help students like you discover God's truth for yourself and be transformed by it. With more than 250 unique titles ranging from zero to five hours of weekly homework, Precept has a Bible study that meets you where you are.

Visit our online shop to see all our available resources.



Events, Training & more...

Would you love to find out how to study the Bible for yourself, or run an event in your church? Precept Ireland hosts events and inductive Bible study workshops to help individuals and groups. These can be delivered online or we can come to you!

Do you wish others were learning to study God's Word with you? We also provide Leader Training sessions to equip people with the skills needed to lead a Precept Bible study.

Get in touch with us to see how we can help you or your church.

PARTNER WITH US

Precept Ireland seeks to equip Christians across Ireland with the skills to study the Bible for themselves. If you would like to donate to Precept to help us fulfil this mission, please get in touch.

PRECEPT IRELAND

www.preceptireland.org
+44 (028) 9074 6082
info@preceptireland.org
Unit 9A, NCM House, 218 York Street,
Belfast, NI, BT15 1GY