

# Together on the Journey

HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH

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2 PETER 2:1-3 - part 2  
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## *The Keeper of the Spring*

*The old gentle man had been hired many years earlier by a young town council to clear away the debris from the pools of water that fed the lovely spring flowing through their town. With faithful, silent regularity he patrolled the hills, removed the leaves and branches, and wiped away the silt from the fresh flow of water. By and by, the village became a popular attraction for vacationers. Graceful swans floated along the crystal clear spring, farmlands were naturally irrigated, and the view from restaurants was picturesque.*

*Years passed. One evening the town council met for its semiannual meeting. As they reviewed the budget, one man's eye caught the salary figure being paid the obscure keeper of the spring. Said the keeper of the purse, "Who is the old man? Why do we keep him on year after year?"*

*For all we know he is doing us no good. He isn't necessary any longer!" By a unanimous vote, they dispensed with the old man's services.*

*For several weeks nothing changed. By early autumn the trees began to shed their leaves. Small branches snapped off and fell into the pools, hindering the rushing flow of water. One afternoon someone noticed a slight yellowish-brown tint in the spring. A couple days later the water was much darker. Within another week, a slimy film covered sections of the water along the banks and a foul odor was detected. The millwheels moved slower, some finally ground to a halt. Swans left as did the tourists. Clammy fingers of disease and sickness reached deeply into the village.*

*Embarrassed, the council called a special meeting. Realizing their gross error in judgment, they hired back the old keeper of the spring . . . and within a few weeks, the river began to clear up.*

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ Church
2. The Seeker \_\_\_\_\_ Church
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ Church
4. The \_\_\_\_\_ Church

*"Each generation of Christians must look to its beliefs. While truth itself is unchanging, the minds of men are porous vessels out of which truth can leak and into which error may seep to dilute the truth they contain. The human heart is heretical by nature and runs to error as naturally as a garden to weeds...the heart that fails to cultivate truth and root our error will shortly be a theological wilderness..." A.W. Tozer*

1. What are some examples of division in the church today? How does this usually play out?
2. How do we differentiate between false doctrine/methods and simply issues of preference or taste? What are today's greatest heresies?
3. What are the nonnegotiable of the Christian faith?
4. How can religion become a tool for exploiting weak people? In what ways are false teachers merchandisers rather than ministers?
5. What are some ways even good churches become tempted by greed? What are some practical ways to avoid falling for that temptation?

A RESOURCE FOR INDIVIDUALS,  
FAMILIES, AND SMALL GROUPS

**Digging  
Deeper**