

2 Peter Series

Lesson #025

December 5, 2019

Dean Bible Ministries

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Knowledge; Full Knowledge
Gnosis and Epignosis



2 Peter 1:8

2nd PETER

Guard Against False Teachers

2 Pet. 1:5, “But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,

2 Pet. 1:6, “to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,

2 Pet. 1:7, “to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

2 Pet. 1:8, “For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither unproductive nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Pet. 1:9, “For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.”

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καθίστημι *kathistemi*

**3 sing pres act indic
make, cause someone to
experience something**

ἄκαρπος *akarpōs*

**masc plur acc
unfruitful, not
bearing fruit**

ἄργός *argos*

**masc plur acc
idle, lazy;
useless;
unproductive**

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ἐπίγνωσις *epignosis* fem

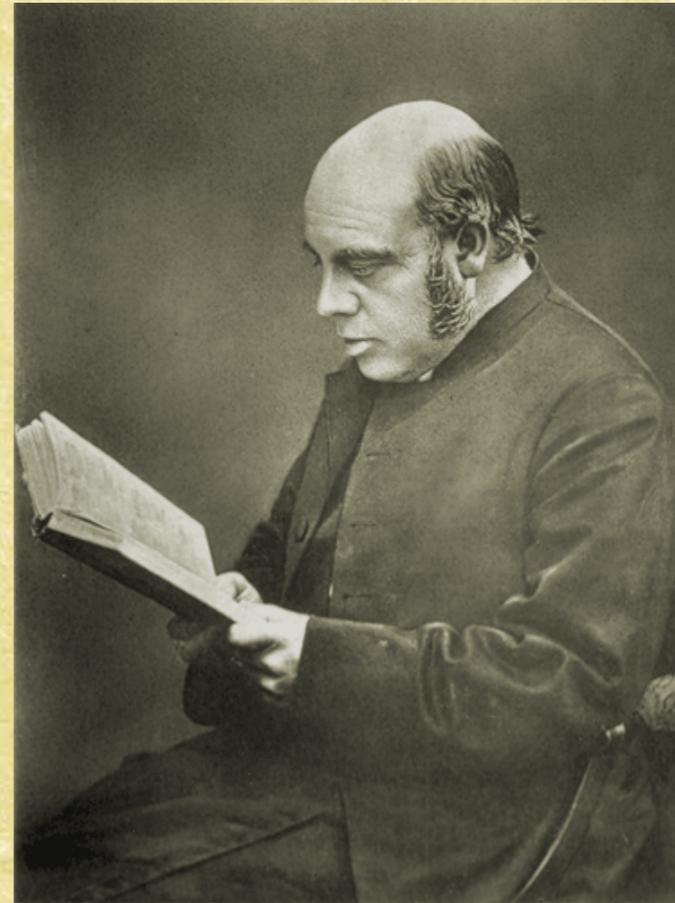
sing acc knowledge

**“as you advance with
respect to your knowledge
of the Lord Jesus Christ”**

Epignosis

Lightfoot:

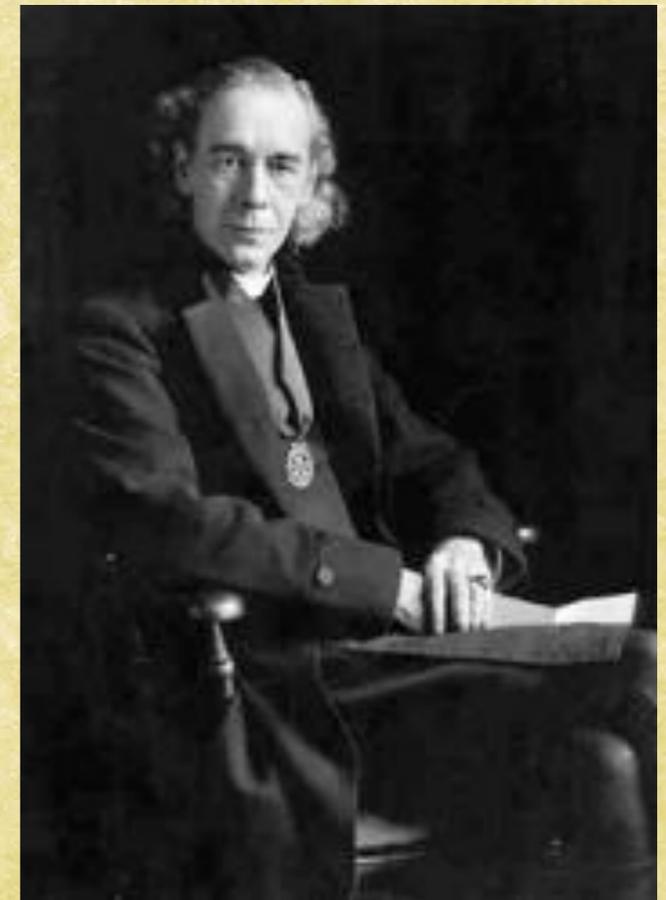
“The compound *epignosis* is an advance upon *gnosis*, denoting a larger, more thorough knowledge ... Hence also *epignosis* is used especially of the knowledge of God and of Christ, as being the perfection of knowledge.”



Joseph Barber Lightfoot (13 April 1828 – 21 December 1889), known as J. B. Lightfoot, was an English theologian and Bishop of Durham

Epignosis

“knowledge directed towards a particular object, perceiving, discerning, recognizing.”



**“An erudite
Dean”
As depicted by
“Spy” (Leslie
Ward) in *Vanity
Fair*, December
1905**

Epignosis

“The preposition is not intensive, but directive (if the word may be allowed): It prepares us to expect the limitation of the verb to a particular object. Thus *ginoskein* means ‘to know’ in the fullest sense that can be given to the word knowledge.”



“An erudite Dean”
As depicted by
“Spy” (Leslie Ward) in *Vanity Fair*, December 1905

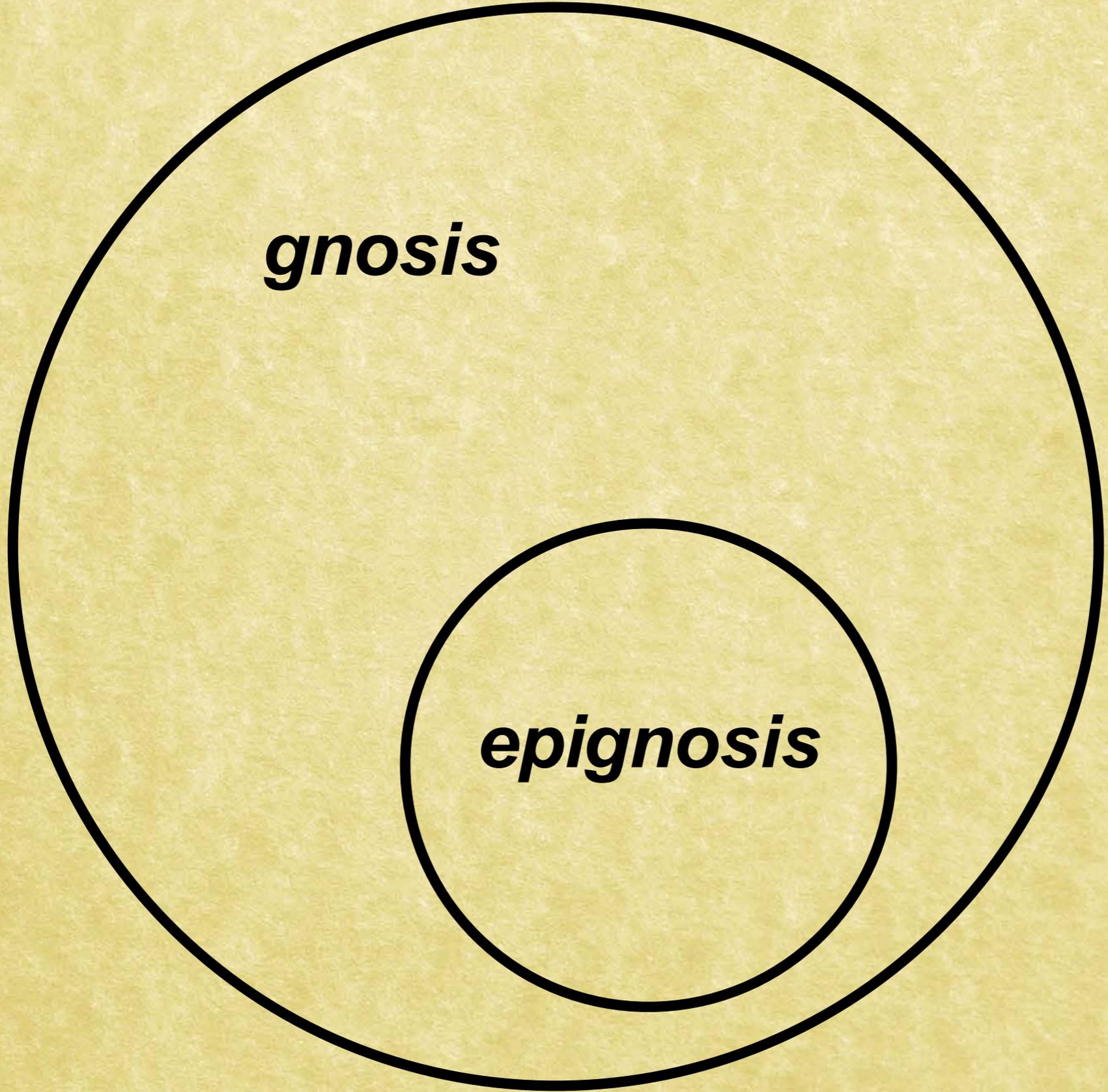
Epignosis

***epiginoskein* directs attention to some particular point in regard to which “knowledge” is affirmed.**

So far then as we are able to distinguish between *gnosis* and *epignosis*, we may say that *gnosis* is the wider word and expresses “knowledge” in the fullest sense: *epignosis* is knowledge directed towards a particular object, perceiving, discerning, recognizing: but it is not knowledge in the abstract: that is *gnosis*.

In its use in Eph. 1:17 Hoehner states:

“It is to know God intimately. This corresponds very closely with Col. 1:9–10 where Paul prays that they will be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding and further that they will increase in the knowledge of God.”



gnosis

epignosis

Rom. 1:28, “And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;”

Rom. 3:20, “Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”

Rom. 10:2, “For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.”

Col. 1:9, “For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

Col. 1:10, “that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;”

Eph. 1:17, “that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,”

Eph. 4:13, “till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;”

Phil. 1:9, “And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment,”

Philem. 6, “that the sharing of your faith may become effective by the acknowledgment [knowledge] of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.”

1 Tim. 2:4, “who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

2 Tim. 2:25, “in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,”

2 Tim. 3:7, “always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Titus 1:1, “Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect and the knowledge of the truth which accords with godliness,”

Conclusions

***Epignosis* is much more specific than *gnosis*, at least in many of its occurrences.**