

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JULY 31ST, 2022 // BOOK OF 2 PETER

GREETINGS (2 PETER 1:1-2)

SIMON PETER

In the typical fashion of a letter written at this time, the author identifies himself. Interestingly, Peter decides to use both his birth name (Simon) and the name given by Jesus (Peter).

- He may have done this to connect with both Jews and Greeks or as a touch of humility to remember how far he has come.

WHO IS SIMON PETER?

Peter attached the moniker of **a servant and an apostle** to himself. The order of these two titles is of importance as it shows he viewed himself as a servant above all.

- As an apostle, Peter recognizes his role as **“one sent” to lay the foundation of the Church**. As a servant, **he has chosen submission to Jesus**.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Peter says that this letter is written to **“those who have received faith equal to ours.”**

- The saving faith Peter talks about here is not achieved; **it is revealed and received**. It should not be thought that our faith itself is equal to Peter's. Instead, **the result of saving faith is the same for us as it was for the early disciples**.

COMPARING THE LETTERS

The **first letter** was written to encourage believers to persevere despite violent persecution. This first letter mentioned **“suffering” 16 times**.

- This **second letter** was written to warn believers of the danger of false teachers and harmful influences, using the word **“know” 16 times**.

PETER'S GREETING

To end the section of his greeting, Peter lists three **“spiritual commodities”** that can only be found with a **“knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.”**

- **Through a personal knowledge of God and Jesus, we receive His righteousness and experience an abundance of grace and mercy.**

GROWTH (2 PETER 1:3-11)

GOD PROVIDES

God, in his divine nature, gives us, who have a saving **“knowledge of Him,” everything we need to live a godly life.**

- There are false teachers that will claim to have **“special knowledge”** that will add to the life of the Believer, but we are to know **there is nothing that God has withheld from us**.

GOD GAVE US ALL

Why would the God who gave it all withhold something from us? He wouldn't!

- He gave us **His Son**; offering salvation to us. He gave us **His Spirit** so that we could discern the truth from a lie. He gave us His **“precious promises,”** the things contained in **His Word** so that we would know the truth.

WE ARE NOT ALONE AND UNARMED

The H.S. was promised to us to help move us closer to God and away from the **“corruption that is in the world,”** and the Word is the weapon we use to fight the battle against sin.

- Greek soldiers would go into battle in pairs and, when attacked, would place their backs together, protecting each other's blind spots. Their helper was called a **“paraclete.”**

“FOR THIS VERY REASON...”

Since we **“share in [His] divine nature,”** we should **“make every effort”** to grow in our walk with the Lord. We start with faith and grow in goodness, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, brotherly affection, and love.

- **We cannot be satisfied with an incomplete Christian life.**

GROWTH THROUGH INTIMACY WITH THE LORD

To **“possess these qualities in increasing measure”** means that spiritual growth is a continuing process.

- If we are growing in these characteristics, Peter says, **“they will keep you from being useless or unfruitful.”** **The feeling of having arrived at something leads to complacency and ineffectiveness.**

VIEW OF THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

In comparison, not growing in these characteristics means that a person is **blind, shortsighted, and has forgotten the cleansing from past sins.**

- If we are blind, then we cannot see anything that is happening right in front of us. Shortsighted means we don't see God because we can't see past ourselves. Being unable to see clearly leads us to forget the grace shown to us in our past.

EVIDENCE OF OUR PURSUIT OF CHRIST

If we are being conformed to the image of His Son and we display these characteristics as evidence, then we can be confident in our calling and that we are God's elect.

- **“Kept from stumbling”** does not communicate perfection. Instead, if we focus on growing our relationship with Christ, we will not stumble off the path toward our eternal reward.

WALK IN THE LIGHT (2 PETER 1:12-21)

WARNING AND REMINDER

Peter wrote to warn the Church against false teaching and remind his readers of the spiritual truths they possessed.

- Peter reminded them because he knew that **Christians who know what they believe and why they believe it will rarely fall for false teaching and their deceiving doctrines.**

SENSE OF URGENCY

Peter had an urgency to remind the people of God of the truth because Jesus made it clear to him that his days on the earth were limited.

- Here, **Peter referred to his earthly body as a tent**. Like a tent, **he knew his earthly body was only a temporary dwelling that would soon be laid aside for a permanent dwelling.**

SUBSTANTIATED CLAIMS OF MAJESTY

This truth that Peter wanted to remind the Church of did not originate from a **“cleverly contrived myth”**; they were not manufactured stories with no basis in fact.

- Peter says, **“we were eyewitnesses of His majesty,”** and **“we ourselves heard this voice when it came from Heaven while we were with Him on the holy mountain.”**

HOLY MOUNTAIN

The event Peter describes firsthand is recorded in Matthew 17b, Mark 9, and Luke 9, where Jesus took Peter, James, and John on a mountain and gave them a glimpse of His majesty.

- Peter wants his audience to have the same confidence he had after the transfiguration, the confidence that carried the disciples to be martyred for their faith.

RELIABILITY OF THE SCRIPTURES

As if the firsthand account of three disciples was not enough, Peter then points to the confidence we have in the fulfillment of the OT prophecies.

- We too can have the same confidence in the scriptures, knowing there is no other book that has been more validated than the Bible.

A LAMPLIGHT UNTO OUR FEET

Until the day dawns when Jesus, the morning star, returns, **we have the source of spiritual truth to expose the lies.**

- God has graciously given us a lamp to illuminate our path in a very dark world, but **if we do not walk according to the scriptures, we will be engulfed by the darkness.**
- Our confidence is in the source of the scriptures and not the men who penned them.
- The OT writers did not create or fabricate the message of their writings. Like a sailboat being carried by the wind, **the Holy Spirit moved the writers through their own unique qualities to communicate His truth.**

THE TRUTH VERSUS A LIE

- The best way to combat heresy is with **“true knowledge”** of God.
- The only way we will be able to spot a fake is to have spent enough time with the real thing.
- If we are to detect falsehood, we must understand the characteristics of the truth.

MAKING AN EFFORT

- Peter said, **“make every effort”** to grow in your faith, progressing to become more and more Christ-like.
- He also said, **“make every effort to confirm your calling and election.”**
- **Though we are not saved by good works, we are also not saved from good works** (James 2:14-26).