

61– 2 Peter : Live Faithfully, Even in Hard times, Until the End

- Peter is apparently **writing to the same group he wrote before**, which would have been the scattered Jewish and Gentile believers in Roman provinces of Asia Minor (now Turkey). He was acting in a pastoral role, concerned about those in his “church.” Peter knew his time was short, and that these people were in imminent danger. He used a number of reminders to get them thinking about the truth of the teachings they had heard about Jesus, and to protect them from false teachings.
- The focus of 2 Peter is about **living a faithful and holy life, in the midst of difficult and immoral times, until the end.** There will be problems all around, including false teachers, fallen angels, rampant immorality, scoffers and persecution. Peter reminds his readers of Jesus’ gift, and His coming again for us. He charges us all to remain faithful.
- Peter exposed the dangers of false teachings and false teachers by exposing their characteristics. His message tells us that the **only way to combat these false teachers and their false teachings is to first know Jesus, and then to know the Word.** Christianity is not just being born again, but it is also growing up, maturing in the relationship with God and the knowledge of the Word.
- **Peter identifies himself as one who witnessed Jesus’ Transfiguration**, and knows who He really is. He uses this event to validate the prophets about Jesus, and his own testimony.
- There is a striking **similarity between 2 Peter and Jude.** Some think 2 Peter was written first, and Jude later copied from it. Neither book provides enough evidence for a certain date. It doesn’t really matter which was first. They are both included as divinely inspired parts of God’s Word.
- It is thought **Peter was martyred around 67-68 AD.** Peter knew the time of his death was near at the time of this writing. This letter is a sort of farewell, along with warnings, to those who knew him.



Highlights

1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Peter a bondservant, to those with the same faith given us by His righteousness;▪ call to get “knowledge” of Jesus, be partners with Him, escaping the worldly corruption;▪ with diligence add virtue to faith, knowledge to virtue, self-control to knowledge, perseverance to self-control, godliness to self-control, brotherly kindness to godliness, love to brotherly kindness. If these abound you won’t be barren or unfruitful in knowledge of Jesus. If anyone lacks these, they are blind, forgetting they are cleansed from sin.▪ Ensure your call/election, and you won’t stumble, will gain entrance into kingdom of our Lord. They already know this, but Peter reminds. As long as he is alive, he will “stir them up.”▪ He is aware of his coming death. He will ensure they have reminders after his death as well.▪ He and others didn’t teach fables, they were eyewitnesses to Jesus’ majesty. Peter references the Transfiguration, so prophecy was confirmed, with eye witnesses; tells them to let this shine in a dark place, until the “morning star” rises in their hearts.▪ Prophecy is not subject to “private interpretation,” this is not man’s will but God’s, and the prophets spoke what God said.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Warning about false prophets and teachers who secretly bring in “destructive heresies” and many will follow them, truth is blasphemed. They are covetous, exploit you, but will be judged.▪ God didn’t spare fallen angels who are awaiting judgment, He didn’t spare ancient world (flood) or Sodom and Gomorrah, God knows how to deliver us from temptations, and to judge others, especially those who walk by the flesh (presumptuous and self-willed).▪ False teachers like beasts to be caught and destroyed, speak evil about what they don’t understand, are corrupt, will perish, unrighteous, like those who follow lusts. They are blemishes, reveling in own deceptions. They continue sinning, enticing others unstable. Their hearts are covetous, they are accursed, have gone astray (like Balaam, who would have cursed Israel for money, but was rebuked by talking donkey). Like wells without water, clouds whipped by wind (no rain), darkest darkness reserved for them.

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- Peter writes again to them to remind of what they heard from the prophets and apostles of Jesus.
 - Scoffers will come in last days, walking by their lusts, sarcastically asking “where is His coming?” Old world perished in a flood, but current world reserved for fire. Judgment and perdition of the ungodly is coming.
 - Remember that with the Lord, “one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.” God is longsuffering, doesn’t want anyone to perish.
 - Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night, heavens will pass away, elements will melt, earth and its works will be burned up.
 - In light of all this, Peter asks “what manner of persons ought you to be?” With holy behavior, godliness, watching for the coming day of God, looking for new heavens and new earth where there is righteousness. Be diligent, be at peace, with no sin, with longsuffering like that of Jesus.
 - Paul also wrote to you about these things, some are hard to understand, and some unsaved twist them and rest of scriptures, to own destruction. Peter tells them so they know beforehand, and be warned not to fall from steadfastness, led away by wicked. Grow in grace and knowledge of Jesus. He gets the glory.

- In the first chapter Peter lists a **number of characteristics the believer is to ADD to his or her faith**. We can get a deeper understanding of these by looking at the original Greek words (from KJV):

<p>"virtue" ("arete" = "moral excellence")</p> <p>"knowledge" (of the Word of God)</p> <p>"temperance" ("egkrateia" = "self control")</p> <p>"patience" ("hupomone" = "to continue to bear up under difficult circumstances")</p>	<p>"godliness" ("eusebeia" = "behavior that reflects correct beliefs and attitudes")</p> <p>"brotherly kindness" ("philadelphia" = "brotherly love")</p> <p>"charity" ("agape" = "sacrificial love")</p>
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- Peter reminds them that the **apostles were eye witnesses to Jesus’ glory** both at His baptism and at His transfiguration. But prophecy is an even more “sure” word: “And so we have the prophetic word confirmed,...” (1:19a) (which can also be translated, **“We also have the more sure prophetic word.”** His point is that the prophetic Word of God is compelling enough, even without eyewitnesses, for us to believe and accept it as truth.
- Peter spends a great deal of time **discussing false teachers, and describing them**. It is clear from the passage that these teachers are headed to destruction. Yet some are confused by the verse: **“...even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.”** (2:1b) If Jesus “bought” them how can they not be saved? Much has been speculated/written about this, but the best answer is simply that Jesus’ blood purchased (bought) everyone, but not everyone comes to the saving knowledge and acceptance of Him. All people are purchased, but not all are saved, by their own choice.
- In chapter 3 Peter addresses a common thought then that is echoed today. The Messiah isn’t coming. Scoffers mock the Word that promises He will come. It is interesting that Peter addressed this just a short time after Jesus came the first time, and today we deal with the same issue. Peter reminds us that **“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”** (3:9) God has a plan, has made promises about that plan, and will stick to that plan because He does not want anyone to perish. He is waiting the maximum amount of time to bring all that will come into His Kingdom.
- **“...with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”** (3:8b) These few words have elicited a huge amount of speculation, and some like to reference this to explain the creation, and to forecast the end. This is not stated concretely here, but is a reference to Psalm 90:4 **“For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night.”** The only clear statement made here is that God’s timing is not our timing. A long time to us is not a long time to God.
- Peter makes a **number of statements about the end times**. Jesus will come as a thief in the night (unexpected), the earth and heavens will be melted with fire, etc. These cannot be tied to specific events (i.e., removal of Church, Tribulation, final judgment, etc.) but they all align with the events specified in Revelation, especially the beginning of chapter 21. **His point here is not so much on the events, but on the question about what kind of people we should be in light of these things.** He indicates our behavior must be righteous, we are to be at peace, we are to be watchful of His coming, and longsuffering.
- His last command, his final words to these people, is **to grow in knowledge of Jesus**. This growing knowledge will also bring us closer in relationship with Him, and will strengthen us to walk steadfastly with Him until the end. That is the **ONLY** thing that will enable our faithful walk.