

Sunday, November 5, 2023 pm

STUDIES IN 2 PETER (6) Peter's Pending Departure 2 Peter 1:12-15

Tonight, as we continue our study through 2 Peter, we find giving a reason why he was writing this letter "now". Recall, that a primary theme of this letter was to warn them about false teachers. In the previous section, he had described how they could ground themselves so as to never "stumble". Now, he makes a personal appeal to heed his warnings – an appeal that certainly implied inspiration.

I. ***He will not be negligent to remind them – Concerning reminders:***

- a. *Negligent* – to not care or be concerned, to neglect or disregard a duty. When we have responsibilities, we need to carry them out. This is true spiritually as well. We cannot neglect our duties.
 - i. Hebrews 2:3 – How shall we escape if we neglect our salvation...
 - ii. 1 Timothy 4:14 – Paul challenged Timothy to not neglect the gift within him.
 - iii. 2 Corinthians 5:10-11 - Paul knew he needed to warn others. It was his life's mission. 1 Corinthians 9:16 he noted, "*Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!*"
 - iv. The gospel is about caring – and those blessed with the ability to share the word must care. James 3:1 warns that teachers will receive a stricter judgment – we will be held accountable.
- b. This was not some new teaching, but something they already knew and SHOULD HAVE understood. Thus, he seeks to remind them. In this context, the word "remind" is found 3x.
 - i. From time to time we need reminding. Sometimes we need to go back to the basics. (Which is one reason I try to present a 1st principle lesson the first Sunday morning of each month).
 - ii. John 14:26 – Jesus, as He was about to leave, promised the Holy Spirit who would remind them of what He had taught (among other things).
 - iii. 2 Timothy 2:14 – Paul was to "remind them of these things..." which would result in them acting properly toward one another.
 - iv. Reminders are especially true when we begin drift – Hebrews 2:1. Peter is concerned about false teachers. The primary remedy to spotting and rejecting such is knowledge of the truth.
 - v. At times preachers need to remind their audience when they observe weaknesses or dangers.
 - vi. NOTE: Also understand that while something may be a reminder to you, it might be the first time someone else has heard what is being taught, OR the first time they truly understand what is being said.
- c. It was the "*present truth*" that they had already been established in. The wording indicates a truth that they now possess. The NASB95 describes it as, "*the truth which is present with you*"; ESV, "*established in the truth you have.*" Peter, and likely others, had been teaching them (tying this back to the previous section), but also REMINDING them of what they had learned long before. Presently, they possessed the truth, but were they in danger? (cf. Galatians 1:6-7)
- d. "*I think it right...*" – Peter knows this is the right thing to do! In fact, the word implies a sense of obligation on his part. Recall how Paul told Timothy to "preach the word in season and out of season" (2 Timothy 4:2-3). Peter is an apostle whose job it was to execute the great commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

II. ***He knows his time of departure is near (13).***

- a. *As long as I am in this tent* – he notes the temporal nature of his presence. Recall how in 1 Peter he spoke of how we are "sojourners and pilgrims" (1 Peter 2:11, also 1 Pet. 1:1 – the pilgrims of the dispersion). Sojourners would be more likely to live in "tents", a temporary dwelling because they

knew they were in a foreign land. Peter of course, has reference to his temporal body – see 2 Corinthians 5:1, 4. Toward the end of this letter, he will appeal to the writings of Paul (2 Peter 3:15-16). Peter declares that shortly (soon or swiftly) he must put off this tent.

- b. Peter is declaring his belief that his time on earth is nearing its end.
 - i. Much like Paul in 2 Timothy,
 - ii. And Jesus preparing His disciples for His death (John 13-16)
 - iii. Thus, Peter now seeks to present a final admonition.
 - iv. *Just as the Lord showed me* – either he is referring back to the conversation of John 21:18-19 (likely not yet written), or an appearance in some form by the Lord telling him what was about to happen. The Lord did communicate more directly with the apostles from time to time (cf. Ephesians 3:3, Acts 22:15, Acts 11:7-8 – angel of the Lord speaks to Peter, etc.).
- c. Be reminded that as long as we have breath, we are not done.
 - i. We do not retire from our spiritual obligations until our last breath is taken. We see that attitude in Peter and in Paul.
 - ii. Also consider the admonition of Jesus – John 9:4 where Jesus noted He must work while it is day because the night comes when none can work.
 - iii. Philippians 1:19-26, Paul expresses this point by noting he desires depart and be with the Lord, but if he remains, he will keep working.
 - iv. Revelation 2:10 – be faithful until death...
- d. He desires to *stir them up*: The idea of “stirring them up” is to provoke them. How? By reminding them. I once heard a gospel preacher describe what preaching is: “To storm the will” meaning preachers not only impart information, but they also strive to motivate their audience to action. Good preaching provokes thought and pricks the heart (e.g., Acts 2:37).

III. ***I will be careful to ensure you ALWAYS have a reminder after my departure –***

- a. Peter knows his time is limited. But he is not done. He desires to ensure they have God’s message preserved. He keeps doing what he can.
- b. There is great benefit to oral teaching, but the written word is also beneficial. There are advantages to both forms of communication.
 - i. Oral – the message is conveyed immediately and directly in the hearer’s presence. Questions can be answered IF asked and messages clarified immediately. Non-verbal cues are factored in (is it sarcasm, emphasized, facial expressions, etc.) BUT it is easier to forget and to be misunderstood, ESPECIALLY when passed on.
 - ii. Written – you have a recorded record that can be referenced over and over. Well written communication is thought through to ensure as much clarity as possible. Written communication is often thought through and carefully recorded. Until it is sent, it can be revised or edited. Also, it can reach a wider audience. Challenges include the inability to quickly clarify what is not understood.
 - iii. Consider, the reason we have God’s word is because it was written down by faithful men like Peter, John and Paul. This was in God’s plan.
- c. We are reminded of the power of the written word in passages like 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12, Ephesians 6:17 – it is “the sword of the Spirit”, Romans 1:16, John 17:17, etc.
 - i. *After my decease (departure)* – the written word lives on. 1 Peter 1:24-25 – grass withers, flowers fade, “*but the word of the Lord endures forever.*”
 - ii. Of interest, the word for “departure” in the Greek is ἐξοδος *exodos*.
 - iii. This past week, on Facebook, I came across a post by Matthew W. Bassford. He was a gospel preacher, hymn writer (Exalted, A Foretaste of your Rest, Be Strong and Courageous, Servant’s Song, etc.) and publisher of articles, including monthly brotherhood periodicals. His writings were always insightful. Though I may not have agreed with everything he wrote, his teachings were well thought out. Matt had ALS for 2-3 years. It finally took him last

month. During his final years, Matt kept busy writing and doing whatever he could to further the gospel. Even when his body wore out, he found ways to keep writing. But this Facebook post was published AFTER his death. It was based one of his favorite verses, Hebrews 13:7, *Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.* The article was a challenge to 1) Remember those who have departed; 2) Observe one's conduct (godly); and 3) Imitate their faith (truth). Because of the quality of his writing, it will live on and as generations sing, some of his songs will continue on teaching and admonishing.

- iv. ***Having said that, think about the writings of an apostle of Jesus who lived with Him and had faithfully endured for decades following His return to heaven.***

Peter will follow this up by making the case for his apostleship – he was there – and an appeal to God's prophetic word. In our next lesson, we will address these points.

IV. Peter's validation (16-18)

- a. *We did not follow cunningly devised fables* – it is possible he had been accused of such, as often the apostles and inspired disciples were maligned.
 - i. As one who has devoted much time to apologetics, I have complete confidence in the integrity of the gospels and letters of inspired men, mostly apostles. And all with apostolic authority – those written by men not apostles had clear association with the apostles.
 - 1. Luke was associated with Paul and declared from the outset his “perfect understanding” having interviewed “eyewitnesses” [Luke 1:1-3].
 - 2. Mark is believed to have been associated with Peter – cf. Acts 12:12-14 & 1 Peter 5:13).
 - ii. The Bible often warns about being deceived by such. 2 Peter 2:1-3 warns of this and we will address it at that time.
- b. *We were eyewitnesses* – this was a continued point of emphasis as the apostles took the gospel message to the world – “we were there”. Consider Acts 2:32, 3:14-15, 5:30-32, 10:39-42, etc.
- c. *Jesus received honor and glory from God* – Peter references the Mount of Transfiguration. Peter, James and John were there. They HEARD the voice of God, “*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*” (Mark 9:2-8).
- d. NOTE: HE also said on that occasion, “Hear Him!” Interestingly that is not mentioned in our text, but it is certainly a point of emphasis in dealing with false teachers.

V. We have the prophetic word confirmed (19-21)

- a. Peter now appeals to “the prophetic word confirmed” – one of the proofs of accepting God of the Bible is prophecy. Here we have one of the more direct verses related to this subject. Considering the text, it is concerning Jesus.
- b. You do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place
- c. Until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts
- d. Prophecy is of no private interpretation – it is men who spoke being moved by the Holy Spirit.