

Sunday Morning Message

February 21, 2021

2 Peter 1:12 – A Stroll Down Memory Lane

Series - Experiencing God's Grace in the Midst of Suffering

Text – 2 Peter 1:12 - 21

Congregational Reading – 2 Peter 1:12 - 15

Introduction to the Series

The writer of this letter is identified as Peter. Peter was an apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was not only one of the twelve, but also a member of the inner circle of the Lord, which also include James and John. Peter knew a little something about growing in the Lord. Early on in his apostleship, Peter would often try to do things His way. He was a bit impulsive, and somewhat outspoken. Peter's famous failure in the flesh came when he denied knowing the Lord, and this immediately following his self-confident boasting that he would never do it.

Peter, however, didn't stay defeated. He got back up, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, was greatly used of the Lord. His message at Pentecost yielded the fruit of 3000 souls trusting the Lord Jesus. Peter was also used of the Lord to lead Cornelius, a Gentile man, to faith in Christ.

Here in this second general epistle or letter from Peter, he is writing near the end of his life. We estimate that the date of this writing was around 66 AD. He will be martyred at the hands of Nero shortly after this epistle was written, probably around 67 AD. It was most likely written from Rome. Tradition tells us that Peter was crucified upside-down, having requested this form of crucifixion because he felt unworthy to be put to death in the same manner as the Lord.

The theme of this letter is much the same as Peter's first epistle. He is encouraging believers to remain faithful to the Lord even under incredibly difficult circumstances. Additional emphasis in 2 Peter is given to the exposure of false teachers as well as to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Another significant difference that should be pointed out is that the scope of this letter seems to have been intended for a much broader audience than 1 Peter. That first epistle was written to a specific region in Asia Minor (present day Turkey) and is referred to in this letter as being previously written to these same recipients, but this letter is addressed to all believers, presumably beyond the geographical boundaries of the first letter. Of course, the Holy Spirit intended that both letters be included within the Canon of Scripture and would thus be written for the benefit of all believers.

Introduction

In the first part of chapter one, we learned that there are seven things that God states that we should diligently add to our faith: these things are virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity. The passage promises us that if we add these things, we will be fruitful, secure, and rewarded.

Now, as we conclude the first chapter, Peter will take a trip down memory lane where he will remind us of some things. Peter is at the end of his life. He knows that the Lord was going to bring him home soon. Did you ever notice that the older we get, the more we want to remember things, and the more we want to remind the people that we love about things? Peter wanted to remind these struggling first-century believers about some things that they needed to remember. We need to be reminded often of Biblical truth. We tend to easily forget what God has told us in the past. This is why we shouldn't just read His Word once and put the Book back on the shelf. We re-read it often. Why? Because, there is always new truth that we missed (or maybe didn't need yet); and there are old truths that we need to be reminded of.

The word, "remember," is found 148 times in the Bible, and "remembrance" is found 48 times, three of which are in our text today. God teaches us things, and he expects us to remember what He taught us. We tend to forget:

"Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?" (2 Thessalonians 2:5)

"I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not." (Jude 1:5)

Illustrate – We set reminders on our phones to keep us from forgetting things. My wife writes a lot of notes. She puts notes on the front door so we don't forget to put out the garbage. She writes note on my calendar on my desk to remind us about things.

Remembering things can be a source of encouragement. Of course, the memory of some bad things that we try to forget can be discouraging. What we are discussing here from our passage today are not memories that come into our mind naturally. What Peter is telling us here is that we need to be reminded of things that we might have forgotten. This is an intentional process that we go through. We must choose to remember, and we must choose to be reminded of things that will be helpful to us.

I. Peter's Final Reminders for Christ's Church (vs. 12 – 15)

There are two things that stand out in these verses (12 – 15).

1. The word, "remembrance," appears three times in four verses.

2. Peter three times (vs. 13, 14, & 15) refers to the fact that he is near the time of his death. (Note – “tabernacle” is a reference to Peter’s body)

When people are getting close to death, there are things that they want to remind their loved ones about.

When Jacob was about to die:

"And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days." (Genesis 49:1)

When Joshua was about to die, he gathered the elders of Israel:

"Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." (Joshua 24:14-15)

When David was about to die:

"And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD." (1 Chronicles 28:20)

The question that I had as I studied this is what were the things that Peter wanted to remind them of. The context seems to demand that “these things” is a reference to the seven things that were discussed in the beginning of the chapter. The same phrase (“these things”) is found three times in vs. 8, 9, & 10. Consider also the fact that Peter told these believers (and us) that they needed to give “all diligence” to add these things to their faith. So, we have a tremendous amount of emphasis placed on the seven attributes or godly character traits that need to be added to our lives. Not only do we have the admonition to diligently add, he also emphasizes that these things need to be remembered. We spent seven weeks going through those seven things, and we mentioned them again in our introduction to this message, but I feel like I almost should go through them again; but I won’t.

Peter was concerned enough about instilling these truths that he said that he would continue to remind them of these things as long as he was with them. And, he penned them, so they could be reminded of them *after his decease* (v. 15).

Notice in v. 14, "as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me."

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me." (John 21:18 - 19)

Tradition tells us that Peter was crucified upside-down at the orders of Nero.

Notice that Peter wanted to "stir" them (v. 13) by reminding them. We need to get stirred up every once in a while.

"This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance:" (2 Peter 3:1)

Paul said something similar:

"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also. Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands." (2 Timothy 1:5-6)

II. Peter's Famous Remembrance of Christ's Glory (vs. 16 – 18)

Peter was saying that he wasn't just repeating to them fairy tales that he had heard somewhere, but that he witnessed himself the things that he was telling them. The event that Peter refers to here was when he was with the Lord on the Mt. of Transfiguration, where the Lord was transfigured before him and His glory was revealed (Matthew 17:1 – 8; **Mark 9:1 – 8**; Luke 9:27 – 36).

The Transfiguration was a picture of the glorified Lord. It is what the Lord will look like when you see Him. Revelation 1 gives us another looked at Jesus in all of His glory:

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; And his feet like unto fine

brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." (Revelation 1:10-18)

Peter taught them about the glorious coming Lord in His previous letter:

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;" (1 Peter 1:13)

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1 Peter 4:12-13)

The focus of chapter three of this letter will also be on the future coming of the Lord:

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." (2 Peter 3:3-4)

III. Peter's Firm Reassurance of Christ's Word (vs. 19 – 21)

This is a very important passage of Scripture. It teaches us some things about the Bible. This verse helps us understand the doctrine of Inspiration:

Inspiration (θεόπνευστος – *theopneustos*) literally has the idea of "God breathed," meaning the breath or Spirit of God is on the Scriptures. Hebrews 4:12 teaches that the Bible is "quick," or alive, because it has the breath of God on it. Inspiration is the process by which God gave the Bible. God revealed the Word to the writers and then inspired the words as they were recorded in written form. *"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."* (2 Peter 1:20 – 21). This verse speaks of both the human penmanship ("*men...spake*") and divine authorship ("*moved by the Holy Ghost*"). As God gave the words, the men wrote them down or dictated them through an amanuensis, such as Paul's penman for the Letter to the Romans, Tertius (Romans 16:22). The inspiration of the Bible is a supernatural miracle. God used approximately forty different authors with varied occupations and educational levels, over a period of 1,600 years, to give a Book with amazing unity and clarity.

There is both internal and external evidence for the inspiration of the Bible. Internal evidence is evidence within the Bible itself which gives witness to the inspiration and authority of the Bible. Internal evidences for the New Testament include the promise that Christ made regarding the instruction of truth by the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 16:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13). There are also direct statements made within the New Testament that point to its inspiration and authority, such as Peter's reference to Paul's words being "scriptures" (2 Peter 3:15 – 16). The New Testament also claims to be inspired and authoritative (Luke 1:1 – 4; Romans 16:26; Galatians 1:12; Ephesians 2:20; 3:3 – 5; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 14:37; 1 Timothy 4:11, 13; Revelation 1:1)

External evidences for the inspiration and authority of the Bible would include fulfilled prophecy. Over two-thirds of the Bible was prophetic at the time of its writing, and much of this prophecy has been fulfilled. Also, the Bible's credibility is testimony to its inspiration. Historical and archaeological facts recorded in the Bible have never been disproven. Perhaps the greatest evidence of inspiration is the result of the Bible's transforming power in the lives of believers. The other side of that proof is the evidence of the consequences for people who reject the truths contained within it. In other words, our increasingly godless world testifies every day that people who do not believe and obey God and His word suffer the consequences that the Bible warns them about.

There are several terms that are associated with inspiration that should be defined here. *Confluent* inspiration means that the Scriptures are the product of a dual agency, the Holy Spirit and the human writer. Thus the Scripture are divine, but they are also human. The literary styles of the individual writers are very apparent in their writing. The Scripture itself affirms that God speaks authoritatively through men, as was stated regarding David in Acts 4:25 & 13:35.

Verbal inspiration means that the very words of the Scripture are God's words. The Bible does not just record God's thoughts, it records every individual word of God (Proverbs 30:5; Matthew 4:4; Luke 4:4). God repeatedly emphasizes the importance of His "words," not just His word. "*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.*" (Matt 24:35) Inspiration even extends to the "jots" and "tittles" of the Bible (Matthew 5:18).

Plenary inspiration means that the Bible is inspired throughout. All of the Bible is inspired equally in every part. This is why it is unwise to pass over portions of the Scripture that seem to be unimportant or even tedious. It is all God's Word. "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*" (2 Tim 3:16)

Inerrant inspiration means that the Bible was written down correctly in every detail. God cannot lie, and neither can His word be incorrect (Numbers 23:19; Hebrews 6:18; Titus 1:2; John 10:35). This is not to say that every statement made in the Bible is a true statement, but the Bible accurately and correctly records the lies of Satan and men. In passages such as these, God has inspired the accurate recording of what others have said, even if what they said was false. The Scripture records precisely what the Lord said or what the Lord states that others have said. In Romans 9:17, the Bible says, "*the scripture saith,*" and in Exodus 9:16, it is the Lord saying the same thing. The Scripture speaking is the same as God speaking. (Compare also Galatians 3:8 with Genesis 12: 1 - 3).

Infallible inspiration speaks of the accuracy of the teaching of the Bible, whereas inerrancy had more to do with the correctness of the recording. Often infallibility and inerrancy are used interchangeably, but there is a significant difference. The Bible is both inerrant in its recording and infallible as well as authoritative in its teaching. However, not every statement made in the Bible is authoritative. For example, the Book of Job not only records the words of God, but also accurately records the words of Satan, Job's wife, Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, and Elihu. Some of the statements in the book are consequently ungodly or in direct contradiction to other statements of Scripture. They are inspired but not authoritative.

Of course, without the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the inspired word will have little impact on men. Though God has been revealed and the Bible has been inspired, the Holy Spirit needs to give understanding of the revealed and inspired truth. The "*natural (unsaved) man,*" does not understand the Scriptures because they are "*spiritually discerned,*" and he does not have the indwelling Holy Spirit to help him understand (1 Corinthians 2:14). However, the Holy Spirit will illuminate His word to a lost person, oftentimes through the guidance of a believer (Acts 8:31), in order to save him.

The conclusion is:

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:" (2 Timothy 3:16)

Conclusion

1. We have the Word of God.
2. We need to trust that it is God's word, and that it contains God's plan for us.
3. We need to be reminded continuously of the Word of God.
4. We need to let the Word of God stir us up to do the will of God.
5. Why? Because Christ is coming back.