

## 2 Peter Introduction

**Intro:** If anyone knew anything about overconfidence and falling to temptation, it was Peter. In his earlier life, he rushed when he should have waited and responded when he should have contemplated. As an older, more mature, spiritually formed believer, Peter now writes to Christians who are enduring their own hardships, both within the church and without.

### First: The Author 1:1a

**2 Peter 1:1a** – *Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ.*

a) *Servant = doulos = bond-servant* = devoted to the person and cause of another

This is important. Everything about Peter and his relationship to the people to whom he is writing is determined by his servanthood to Jesus.

Jesus's agenda is Peter's agenda.

It hasn't always been so.

### **Mark 8:27- 33 – T**

A servant's attitude did not come easily to Peter. Since we have the DNA of Adam and Eve, it does not come easily to use either.

Notice that Peter's position as a servant precedes his apostleship.

*Apostle = a delegate or messenger, one sent with orders*

Peter had to first settle the issue of servanthood before he could go into the world on Jesus's behalf. He couldn't carry his own message.

How does this affect our marriages, parenting, vocations, etc? Are we serving them with Jesus's message of life? After all, Jesus said,

**Luke 14:26** - *If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.*

Is this "hate speech?" Elsewhere in the Bible, Jesus tells me to love my parents (Ex 20:12), my wife (Eph 5:25) and children (Eph 6:4).

**Matthew 10:37** provides an interpretive key – *"Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."*

Loving God first is the only way to love others best. Otherwise, our love is off-balance and runs the risk of being self-love.

Think about Peter's denial of Jesus.

**Luke 22:54-62 – T**

Ask yourself these questions:

- 1 – What motivates Peter to deny Jesus?
- 2 – How does his response to the girl betray his first love?
- 3- Who is Peter trusting with his life?
- 4 – Who is Peter's Lord?
- 5 – Is Peter acting in his best self-interests?

No. Is it death Peter is afraid of? He's going to die at some point in life anyway. But how he lives, will determine his eternity?

Unless Jesus is first, we can't,

- a) love ourselves well or
- b) love others best.

So Peter had to get his servanthood and apostleship settled before he could write 1 & 2 Peter.

Have we settled these issues? Or do we need to resettle them?

## **Second: The Audience 1:1b**

**2 Peter 1:1b** - *To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:*

**2 Peter 3:1a** - *This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved.*

- Who are they? 2 Peter 1:1b says they are Christians.
- Where are they?

**1 Peter 1:1b** - *To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,*

- a) *To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours*

- 1 – We are all servants of Jesus Christ
- 2 – Peter’s apostleship doesn’t elevate him but constrains him

Those of us who claim Jesus as Savior are restrained by his commandments as demonstrated by Jesus.

**Luke 22:42** - *“Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.”*

*b) By the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ*

With his background, and his denial in particular, Peter knows his only hope is God’s righteousness and not his own.

This is a verse every Christian should memorize –

**2 Corinthians 5:21** - *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

### **Third: The Setting**

- a) Peter wrote this letter from Rome soon after he wrote 1 Peter, which was sometime around 64-66 AD.
- b) It appears Peter received reports of false teachers in the Asia Minor churches.

**2:1** - *But false prophets also arose among the people [OT Israel], just as there will be false teachers among you,*

Ill – One of our CG members mentioned a 7<sup>th</sup> Day Adventist neighbor who told them that if they didn't observe the Sabbath, they would go to Hell. That's false teaching.

*3:1-3 - This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, <sup>2</sup> that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, <sup>3</sup> knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires.*

This means the churches of Asia Minor endured external persecution and internal opposition.

ILL - This makes me think about one of the elder questions. Someone asked how the church should respond in a second wave of a COVID-like event when the government asks or tells the church not to meet on Sunday.

Situations like that, external persecution, and internal dissension, may be why Peter uses the word, 'knowledge' in one form or another at least thirteen times in these three short chapters. Biblical knowledge isn't simply mental assent, but experiential understanding.

*John 17:3 - And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.*

## Fourth: The Theme

Peter's theme in his second letter is a simple one: pursue spiritual maturity through the Word of God as a remedy for false teaching and a right response to heretics in light of Christ's promised second coming.

*1:3-4 - His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, <sup>4</sup> by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.*

*1:16-19 - For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. <sup>17</sup> For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," <sup>18</sup> we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. <sup>19</sup> And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts,*

Faith in Jesus, and the Jesus presented in the apostle's words will enable those suffering Christians to endure persecution and know and hold the truth.

This will enable Peter's readers to be effective and fruitful -

**1:8** - *For if these qualities<sup>ff</sup> are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

And live holy lives

**3:14** - *Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.*

### **Fifth: Our Application**

1 – We all endure suffering. Think about your life this year. And it can change the way we think and feel about God. We can begin to think that God is not in control or that he doesn't love us. It can alter our view of God.

**ILL**– Book on Hell is based on story of autistic child but with no reference to Scripture in the introduction.

This is why a thorough knowledge of God is the first line of defense during hardship or to combat false teaching.

**2 Peter 3:17-18** - *You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. <sup>18</sup> But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

### **Conclusion:**

Today's world has its own share of hardships and false teaching. This requires us to ask, "*What am I doing to grow my faith so that I don't drift from the truth?*"

- 1 – Preaching
- 2 – Bible studies
- 3 – Scripture memorization
- 4 – Fellowship