

2 Peter 1

There are some differences between 1-2 Peter

1 Peter – Peter was writing for Christians who were being persecuted - they were encouraged to remain faithful and keep up their hope in heaven

2 Peter – Peter was more warning against false teachers and saying that the only defense against false teachers is knowledge of the Word of God (so “knowledge” is used a lot in this book)

Does this theme still apply to us today?

Some false doctrines Peter was fighting:

- Denial of the deity of Christ (2.1)
- Sinning in the name of the Christian faith (2.1-11)
- Doubting the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (3.1-10)

We have no details from the book about the place where it was written or the date of the writing

2 Peter 1.1-4

V 1 – How does the author identify himself? Simon Peter, bond-servant, apostle of Jesus Christ

-**To whom was the letter written?** Those who had the same kind of faith that Peter had (by resurrection of our God and Savior Jesus)

-Notice that Jesus is referred to as God

V 2 – Grace and Peace (Greek and Hebrew greeting)

-**How will grace and peace be multiplied?** In knowledge

-That is the theme of this letter: emphasis on knowing the truth

V 3 – What has God’s power granted to us? Everything pertaining to life and godliness

-**What does this say about other “inspired” books (example: Book of Mormon, etc.)?** They are not necessary

2 Timothy 3.16-17 – All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

-**How do we obtain this life and godliness?** Through a knowledge of him (and his Word)

-**What attracted us to Jesus Christ?** His glory and excellence (his behavior)

V 4 – By these? By the glory and excellence of Jesus Christ

-**What have we been given?** His precious and magnificent promises

-Example: love of God, eternal life, providence of God in this life

-**What happens to us when we believe in the promises of God?** We become partakers of the divine nature

-**When did mankind lose the divine nature?** When the fall came and sin entered the human race

-**So what is the significance of our conversion to Jesus Christ?** These divine characteristics are restored, and we once again become formed in the image of God

-Peter is laying the foundation for the eight Christian graces

-When we are converted, we are to change and begin growing toward God

-**What have we escaped when we are converted?** The corruption of the world (which comes in the form of lust)

2 Peter 1.5-11 – The Christian graces

V 5– **What should be our basic attitude toward those eight qualities?** Diligence, hard work, effort

-**What is the first quality on the road to Christian maturity? 1. Faith**

-We place our faith in Jesus Christ, and we hand our lives over to him

-We trust him with our souls

-We believe what the Bible says, even though we were not there in person, but because of the evidence that we have seen

-Our goal in life is to please Jesus as our Savior

-**How was Christ a man of faith?** He perfectly obeyed the Father

-To have seen Him was to have seen the Father in heaven

-So we enter into the body of Christ by means of faith, and faith therefore is the foundation of growth as a Christian

-**What is the second quality of a mature Christian?** New American Standard Bible: **2. Moral excellence (other translations: virtue)**

-Virtue is the determination to do what is right

-We must make that promise that whatever it takes we will do what is right

-**The third quality? 3. Knowledge**

-**How was Jesus great in the area of knowledge?** He quoted the Old Testament in *Matthew 4* when he faced the temptations of Satan

-He was handed the Isaiah scroll in *Luke 4.16-17*, when he spoke at the temple at Nazareth

-He was able to quote freely from the Old Testament

-Without knowledge of the Word of God, we develop zeal without knowledge

Romans 10.1-3 – Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. For not knowing about God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

Review: We enter into the Kingdom of God by means of faith - then we determine to do what is right - then we study the Scriptures and gain knowledge

V 6– **What is the fourth quality of a mature Christian? 4. Self-control**

-Greek word means: To hold one's-self in discipline of self, self-government, the ability to control one's own life

-**How did Jesus Christ show us this quality?** He never lost his temper, but did get angry on several occasions

-He never went to excess in terms of eating, hobbies, etc.

-**What is the fifth quality of a mature Christian? 5. Perseverance**

-Other translations: endurance, not giving up in spite of difficulties – Example: Job

Job 1.21-22 – And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God.

-**The sixth virtue? 6. Godliness** – Becoming more like God each day

V 7 – **What is the seventh quality on the list? 7. Brotherly kindness** - Loving our brothers and

sisters in Christ

-What does the Bible say about helping others in need?

Galatians 6.10 – So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

1 John 3.16-17 – We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

-What had Paul referred to in 1-2 Corinthians that showed brotherly kindness? Taking up collections for poor Christians in Jerusalem

-How did Jesus show us the way to brotherly kindness? Went first with the gospel to the Jews

-What is eighth quality on the list? 8. Christian love (toward all people)

-Guy N. Woods has pointed out that #1 through 5 apply to the Christian himself and #6 through 8 apply to our relationship with others

-If that is so, what is the significance of that order? We start with ourselves first, and then work out from there

V 8 – Do we reach a plateau on those eight things and then level off? No, we should all be increasing in those eight areas all the time (we cannot sit still)

-If those graces are increasing, then what is our value to Jesus Christ? We are useful and fruitful

-What is the ultimate goal? Knowledge of Jesus Christ

V 9 – Do Christians ever fall back from those eight things? Yes, it can happen

-Why does it sometimes happen? Because some Christians have allowed themselves to become blind, short-sighted, cannot see far away

-They have forgotten their purification by Jesus Christ

V 10 – What should each Christian be concerned about? Making sure he or she is saved (not worrying about others, but about himself or herself first)

-How will we be saved? By practicing those things

-What good does practicing do? We get better at whatever we practice (piano, baseball, etc.)

-What does this passage teach about Once Saved Always Saved? False Doctrine - we can stumble and fall away

V 11 – Explain “for in this way” in practicing these eight things?

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2 Peter 2

2 Peter 2.1-11

V1 – The word “*but*” is in contrast to the words of the Old Testament prophets

- When is Peter referring to here?** Old Testament days when there were many false prophets
- In the same way, there would be false prophets in the New Testament church
- What specific false doctrine did Peter have in mind?** Denying the deity of Jesus
- What false doctrine did John write against in 1 John?** Gnosticism
- What doctrine did the Gnostics hold to?** They denied the humanity of Christ
- What was the result of the false doctrine in v 1?** Swift destruction
- Who was responsible for this destruction?** False teachers

V2 – **What kind of lives did the false teachers live themselves?** Very wicked - there is a relationship between denying the deity of Christ and the sin of sensuality

- The result of their wickedness?** The way of truth was spoken evil of
- In other words, it gave the whole church a bad reputation

V3 – **How did they deceive people?** With false words

- The results for their lives?** Eternal destruction

V4 – A logical argument: – if – **What was the first “if”?** God punished the angels

- Was this true about the angels?** Yes (*Rev. 12*)
- Note: *Tartarus* – Greek word for the place of the dead who are lost (as with rich man in *Luke 16*)
- Tartarus is the name for the part of Hades for the lost people waiting for eternal punishment
- Paradise is the name of the place for the saved people waiting for heaven

V5 – **The second “if”?** God spared Noah and seven others and punished the rest of the world

- True?** Yes

V6 – **The third “if”?** God punished Sodom and Gomorrah

- True?** Yes

V7-8 – Very interesting – **What did God do for Lot?** Rescued him from Sodom and Gomorrah

- What was Lot's attitude toward Sodom and Gomorrah?** Tormented day and night
- Has Peter's argument held together so far?** Yes, every point is valid

V9 – **What are Peter's two conclusions?** God can rescue the godly from temptations, and he can punish the wicked

V10 – **Those to be punished?** Those who indulge in fleshly desires, daring and self-willed, those who revile angelic majesties

V11 – **Do angels revile satanic majesties?** No

Zechariah 3.2 – *And the Lord said to Satan, “The Lord rebuke you, Satan! Indeed, the Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?”*

Jude 9 – But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him railing judgment, but said, “The Lord rebuke you.”

2 Peter 2.12-16

V 12 – What a powerful verse!

-**What will be the result for those false teachers?** They will be destroyed, along with those whom they have misled

V 13 – Usually the wicked do their wicked deeds at night, but these false teachers did their deeds in the daytime

Jude 12 – These men are those who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted....

V 14 – **What constantly filled the hearts of those false teachers?** Lust and greed

V 15 – **Had they ever been faithful Christians?** Yes: “forsaking” – a person cannot “forsake” a way of life he has never been in

-In other words, they had fallen away from the faith

-**Who was Balaam?** *Numbers 22-24* – he wanted to accept a bribe, but couldn’t get the words out

-God kept defeating him

V 16 – **How did God speak to Balaam?** Through a donkey

-What an insult to Balaam! - not in lightning, or a storm, or a whirlwind, but through a donkey

Numbers 22.28 – And the Lord opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, “What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?”

2 Peter 2.17-22

V 17 – **Those false teachers gave the appearance of being impressive, but what would be their result?** Black darkness

Jude 13 – Wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.

V 18 – **Who were the most likely victims of those false teachers?** The new converts and weaker Christians

-The ones who had just escaped the world

-Many times, false teachers prey on weaker members of the congregation

Romans 16.17-18 – Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

V 19 – **What did the false teachers promise?** Freedom

- What did they deliver?** Slavery
- What is “slavery”?** Being overcome by something

V 20 – **Had those false teachers been faithful Christians?** Yes, they had known Jesus Christ

- What happened?** They became entangled and trapped in a net, like a fly in a spider web
- Final state?** Worse than first

V 21– **Why would it have been better if they had never become Christians?** Because they also led others astray and hurt the reputation of the church

V 22– **How did the Jews look on dogs and pigs?** The lowest of all animals

- They had been washed, but had returned to their former lifestyle
- In other words, the dog had vomited up what was not good in his life

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2 Peter 3

2 Peter 3.1-7

V1 – How was Peter teaching them? Constantly reminding them of the truth

-Old saying: Three laws of learning: Repetition, repetition, repetition

V2 – What were they supposed to remember? Words of Old Testament prophets and commandments of Jesus spoken by the apostles

-Remember that at the time Peter wrote this, the New Testament still had not been completed

-Christians had to rely on the apostles

-Today, we all have to be constantly reminded of the truth

V 3-4 – What would mockers say? "What happened to the Second Coming?"

-**What would be their line of reason?** It has always been this way

V 5 – What had those false teachers forgotten? That there had been radical changes in the history of the universe

-Specifically, God had created the heavens and the earth (a radical change)

V 6 – What other event? The world-wide flood

-**How was this world destroyed?** Flood – note the use of the word “*world*,” not earth

V 7 – What is waiting for the present heavens and earth? Destruction

-Tremendous logic in these seven verses

-This destroys idea that the world continues on with very minor changes over a long period of time (evolution)

-But the Bible teaches that there have been violent changes in world history: the universal flood and the separation of the continents (*Gen. 10.25*), earthquakes, volcanoes, etc.

2 Peter 3.8-9

V 8 – Peter’s second answer to the skeptics? God has intentionally put off the Second Coming

-**Why?** Time doesn’t mean the same time to him as it does to us

V 9 – Why else? To give people more time to repent and be saved

-The passing of time does not affect God’s promises

-God will do what he has promised

Joshua 6.26 – Then Joshua made them take an oath at that time, saying, “Cursed before the Lord is the man who rises up and builds this city Jericho; with the loss of his first-born he shall lay its foundation, and with the loss of his youngest son he shall set up its gates.”

1 Kings 16.34 – In his days Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho; he laid its foundations with the loss of Abiram his first-born, and set up its gates with the loss of his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which He spoke by Joshua the son of Nun.

-About 700 years later (during the life of Elijah the prophet)

2 Peter 3.10-13

V 10 – How will the Second Coming take place? Like a thief in the night

- What will take place?** Heavens will pass away
- The heavens = visible portions of the universe
- The elements will be destroyed with intense heat
- The earth (not just the "world") will be burned up
- Works on earth?** All that mankind has accomplished (dams, monuments, works of art/, skyscrapers)
- How will God carry out this destruction?** Peter does not say
- Several years ago this writer visited the Hoover Dam near Las Vegas, Nevada, and the tour guide was asked the question about how long this dam was designed to operate
- The tour guide said, "Forever"
- But Peter tells us that that is not the case

V 11 – Based on what is coming, how should we live our lives? With holy conduct and godliness

- How should we view our possessions (based on the coming destruction)?** Very temporary

V 12 – How should faithful Christians view the Second Coming? Should pray for its coming

- Remember the First Century prayer for the Second Coming?** Maranatha (Come, Lord Jesus)
- Can we pray that prayer today?**

V 13 – Notice: new heavens and a new earth

- This phrase must stand for our home in heaven

2 Peter 3.14-18

V 14 – Our lives ought to be righteous, considering the Second Coming

V 15 – The significance of God’s patience? Salvation (more people have the opportunity to be saved)

- Notice: “*our beloved brother Paul*” – brother is not a title, but a description

V 16 – Interesting: Peter was familiar with the writings of Paul, and his letters were already in circulation

- What comment did Peter make about the writings of Paul?** Some things were hard to understand (remember *Romans 1-8* – the book of *Revelation* is easy compared to that)
- Please notice: Peter did not say that we could not understand Paul, but that it just takes extra effort
- What did false teachers do?** Distorted Paul’s writings
- Result?** Their own destruction

V 17 – Final warning of Peter? Don’t fall from your steadfastness (refutes "Once Saved Always Saved")

V 18 – Final emphasis? Knowledge

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