

New Testament Survey—2 Peter

"I will always **remind** you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you have." Those are the words Peter wrote in 2 Peter 1:12. He then said in verse 13, "I think it is right to refresh your **memory** as long as I live in the tent of this body." And then in verse 15, "I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to **remember** these things."

Discuss: Peter said that reminding people of familiar truth was essential. Why? Why is it important that the church give special attention to the teaching ministry of *reminding people of truth they already know*?

Let's take a survey look at Peter's second epistle...

To do: 2 Peter deals with false teachers. Scan the book and write down all the characteristics of apostates you can find.

- **Who wrote the book?**

--Peter

Gromacki (357), "The canonicity and the authorship of Second Peter have been attacked more than that of any other New Testament book." Why is that?

1. Second century church fathers did not comment on the book in their writings [but silence must be looked on as neutral; in addition, no third century writing denied Petrine authorship; Gromacki].

2. The style of 2 Peter seems different from 1 Peter [but there can be a variety of reasons for this: Silas helped Peter write 1 Peter acc. to 5:12; the different subject matter would influence style].

Note: The author calls himself "Simon Peter" in 1:1.

- **When was the book written?**

--Between 65-68 A.D.

Peter wrote 2 Peter towards the end of his life. He was executed by Nero around 68. We do not know where Peter was when he wrote this letter. Tradition says he was in Rome when he died, so he may have written this letter from there (Gromacki).

- **Why was the book written?**

--Peter wrote this letter to address the attack of apostasy.

Discuss: What is apostasy? An apostate is not merely someone who differs from you in his beliefs. An apostate is a person who abandons the gospel and teaches something in opposition to or in addition to the gospel as explained in the Bible.

Discuss: What was true of the heresy that Peter wrote about?

--from 2:1, they denied the deity and the atonement of Christ

--from 3:4, they denied the second coming of Christ

Q: What's the best safeguard against heresy/apostasy?

A: A devotion to learn and know the truth.

Various cognates of the verb "to know" occur 16 times in this letter...

1:2 Through the knowledge of God

1:3 Through our knowledge of Him

1:5 Add to your faith...knowledge...

1:8 For if you possess these in increasing measure they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord...

Discuss: What happens when we stop growing and learning?

1:12 Why does Peter remind his readers of things they already know?

3:17-18 Again, why does Peter want his readers to go over truth they already know?

Note: There is no such thing as a "meat doctrine" and a "milk doctrine" acc. to MacArthur. I agree. There is just doctrine. But there is a milk understanding of that doctrine and a meat understanding of it. We must constantly strive to go deeper in our understanding of truth.

Q: How/where do we get this knowledge?

A: ***3:1-2

Q: Peter said he had written two letters to these Christians. For what reasons?

Q: What is our source of knowledge? That spoken by the prophets (the OT), and that received from the Lord and the apostles (the NT).

- **What is the outline of the book?**

(adapted from Gromacki, 363)

- I. Safeguards against the Apostasy (ch. 1)
- II. Description of the Apostates (ch. 2)
- III. Refutation of the Apostates (ch. 3)

What is the message of the book in one sentence?

--2 Peter warns the church how to deal with false teachers.

• What contribution does the book make to biblical theology (that is, how does this book relate to the rest of the Bible)?

1. *2 Peter helps us understand the doctrine of inspiration of Scripture.*

See: 1:19-21

Q: We have something "more certain" than what? Than experience, See v 18

Q: Where did Scripture not originate? V 20

Q: Where did it originate? V 21

Note: The verb "carried along" ("moved") is a word used of sailing ships being driven or borne along by a wind.

Discuss: Why can we trust Scripture?

2. *2 Peter informs us how to respond to false teachers.*

See: Ch 2

Q: What is true of a false teacher? V 10 Corrupt, despise authority, bold...

Who were the heretics? Probably forerunners of the 2nd century Gnostics

Q: What will happen to them? V 13

Q: Who is an example of a false teacher? V 15 Balaam

What other book addresses apostasy? Jude

Discuss: How much truth must a teacher deny to be considered apostate? What should be our attitude towards teachers that we hear on the radio, or see on tv, or read in books, who call themselves Christian yet deny the fundamental truths of the Bible?

3. *2 Peter 3 teaches us about the Day of the Lord.*

See: Ch. 3

Q: What will be true of the last days? V 3

Q: What will false teachers question in the last days? V 4

Q: What is true of the Day of the Lord? Vv 10ff.

Q: What effect should this have on us? V 14

