

9.19.21 ~ 2Peter 1:12-15, Peter's Legacy

Read 2Peter 1:12-15... Peter repeatedly makes known the truths of God to his listeners, in order that even after he is dead and gone they will be able to call to mind the important teachings and doctrines of God's Word.

See **2Peter 1:12...** "Therefore" applies to the previous teachings Peter has given to the recipients of his letter: that we have been given the great and marvelous gift of salvation; but also that we have received the assurance of salvation.

Peter then says he will forever be reminding them [us] of all we have received from God, in Christ, and even though we have been established in the truth which is present in each and every true believer and follower of Christ.

We have received (**2Peter 1:1-4**) saving faith through the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ, bringing us grace and peace in our knowledge of (through intimate relationship with) God. Everything we need for mortal life on earth and eternal life in heaven, we have been given.

And we experience our salvation (**2Peter 1:5-11**), when we apply God's Word to our life, because it changes us (how we live, what we do, what we say); it sovereignly and eternally changes us into a new creation, for we are born-again (**John 1:13**), "not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God," and we become God's own personal possession (**Ephesians 1:13-14**), "In [Christ] you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God's own* possession, to the praise of His glory."

See **2Corinthians 5:17-21; Romans 12:1-2.**

If God's Spirit is in you, you will become more and more like Christ. Is God's Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, in you? Not sure? Take the test! **2Corinthians 13:5**, "Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?"

As we grow in our knowledge of God's Word, in our relationship to God the Father through God the Son, made effectual by the Holy Spirit, we become more fruitful in living out our faith and belief; for we have become "partakers of the divine nature," and we are, therefore, able to live in a manner that brings glory, honor, and praise to God.

See **1Peter 1:3-9...** Peter began his first letter by reminding believers of all they have in Christ, and also that we may very well suffer on Christ's behalf, but in the end our faith will bring us into the inheritance that is reserved in heaven for us.

All of this is absolutely true and we are sovereignly secure, and yet Peter says (**2Peter 1:12**), "I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you."

I find that above statement very interesting! Peter writing in A.D. 67-68, is reminding the believers and followers of Christ (throughout the Roman Empire) of the precious and magnificent promises they have received from God.

And yet, here it is A.D. 2021, and Peter's words of exhortation are just as relevant and powerful as they were when Peter first wrote this letter almost 2,000 years ago. How many millions, even billions, of Christians have read these words throughout the centuries, receiving encouragement and instruction, in order not to grow weary or give up; but instead, as Paul writes (**1Corinthians 15:58**) to remain "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord."

Repetition is a very important element in the learning process. Paul also, like Peter, knew and applied repetition in his letters (**2Thessalonians 2:5**), "Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?"

In **2Peter 1:12** we are reminded of the sacred and eternal truths that are contained in the Scriptures. There are no new revelations from God, only a better understanding of what has already been spoken, written, passed down, and revealed (**Jude 3**), "Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for *the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.*" **Hebrews 1:1-3**, "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

Revelation 22:18-19, "I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book."

See **2Peter 1:13...** Peter was a shepherd in the flock of God and he considered it his responsibility to stimulate believers toward righteousness, for he served the

Chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ, and in so doing (**1Peter 5:3-4**) was to be an example to the flock of God.

As long as Peter lived in his earthly *dwelling* [*tent, temporary house*, i.e., physical body] as a faithful servant of God, he would consistently, repeatedly, and tirelessly continue teaching and expounding the major doctrines and precepts of Scripture; *stirring up* [*thoroughly awakening and exhorting*] the believers to remain sober minded, spiritually alert, so as not to succumb to apathy or deception (cf. **1Peter 5:8**), "Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."

2Timothy 2:15, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth."

2Timothy 3:16-17, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

See **2Peter 1:14**. Peter now expresses the reason for his urgency and diligence in reminding the believers of the sacred truths that all Christians hold dear; for he knows that his earthly life is coming to an end, "knowing that the laying aside of my earthly *dwelling* [*tent, temporary house*] is *imminent* [*soon, swift*], as also our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me."

Peter had the hope of heaven, just as Paul wrote:

2Corinthians 5:1-2, "For we know that if the earthly tent which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven," **6-8**, "Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord—for we walk by faith, not by sight—we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord."

Peter was in his 70's when he wrote his two letters; some 40 years earlier Jesus had told him how he would die (**John 21:18-19**), "'Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will *stretch out your hands* [*symbolic of crucifixion*] and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go.' Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, 'Follow Me!'"

Peter would be *martyred for his faith*, just as Jesus was. Eusebius of Caesarea, lived during the 4th century A.D. He was a bishop, exegete, polemicist, and historian whose account of the first centuries of Christianity is a landmark in

Christian historiography. Eusebius wrote [Ecclesiastical History 3:1, 30] that tradition tells us Peter was crucified upside down (at his own request), for he felt unworthy to be put to death in the very same manner as Christ.

See **2Peter 1:15...** Peter knew his life on earth was coming to an end, and therefore he is diligent to remind his readers that all he has taught them when with them and through his two letters to them, should be continually called to mind after his *departure* [*exodus*] from his temporary life on earth to his eternal life in heaven.

1Corinthians 15:50-57, "Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

God's Word is eternal (See **1Peter 1:22-25**), and therefore, because God's Word is in us, we have inherited eternal life and we are protected by the power of God through our faith in Christ.

Peter's priority and purpose was that the Word of God be made manifest through his own life and in the lives of all of God's people (See **1Peter 2:12-16; 3:10-16**).

Peter's Legacy is the life he lived as a witness for Jesus Christ, God's Son, Lord and Savior. Peter served God by living out and proclaiming the truth of God, while loving others on God's behalf, trusting God completely.

Paul writes (**Philippians 4:12-13**), "I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." **19-20**, "God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen."

May we all seek to leave a legacy like that of Peter, who's example was Jesus Christ: Crucified, resurrected, and coming again to take us to be with Him forever.

