



2 Peter

Steady on Course

Stay in the Light!

2 Peter 1:12-21

Message #3 of 7 – S698

Sermon given on JULY 31, 2016



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Stay in the Light!

2 Peter 1:12-21

Opening Comments

- Turn to **2 Peter 1**
- Today, we continue our series through the second letter from Peter – **Steady on Course**
- As a younger man, I was an avid scuba diver
- One of the things you are taught while scuba diving is the effect of water on light
- Sunlight or white light is made up of a spectrum of colors
- That's what you are seeing when you see a rainbow – white light broken up into its different wavelengths
- The farther light travels through water, the more of the colors that are filtered out
- Red is the first color to go
- And if you go deep enough, everything is shades of gray – all color is filtered out
- And if you go deeper still, all the light is filtered – it is dark
- To counter that effect scuba divers carry flashlights to re-introduce white light
- And if you turn on a dive light at depth, everything that was shades of gray suddenly bursts into a rainbow of colors
- This same concept is true in the spiritual realm
- There is spiritual light and darkness
- Peter is going to talk to us this morning about the reality that some people are living in darkness
- And then he is going to tell us about the light we have been given to help us to be steady on course
- If you are able and willing to do so, please stand as we read today's text as a sign of reverence for God's Word
- Read **2 Peter 1:12-21**
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Stay in the Light!**

- God is love – that means everything He does is motivated by love
- God is good – that means everything He does is inherently good
- God is all-knowing = He knows both the past and the future perfectly
- God is sovereign – in control of everything
- If you are a Christian here today – you are one of God’s children
- And all of God’s love, goodness, knowledge, and control is being used to bring good into your life **Jeremiah 29:11**

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

- The best possible life that we can possibly live is lived by faith
- Believing and obeying God and His Word, especially as He reveals Jesus to us
- But, it is my guess that some of you here are not living the best possible life
- Let’s get into our text
- **2 Peter 1:12**
- ‘not be negligent to remind’ – to remind implies that they already know these things
- I don’t know about you but I regularly need to be reminded of things
- We use a term that applies here – accountability
- The basis of accountability is we know something and we are called to account for what we know
- This is what you know – what are you doing?
- What are the ‘these things’ in the middle of the verse – verses 1-11
- Verses 3 & 4 – given to us all things for life and godliness
- Everything you need to live the best possible life and be like Christ at the same time
- And exceedingly great and precious promises to bless you
- Verses 5 to 7 – 7 things we add to our faith to build a chain of faith that God uses to lead us to the best possible life
- And the two promises in verses 10 & 11
- ‘you will never stumble’ sin is not going to catch you off guard and entrap you

- And the promise of a grand welcome when we get to heaven
- Peter says he is going to keep reminding them of those things – just like I just did for you
- And Peter tells them why there is a sense of urgency for him

- **2 Peter 1:13-14**

- Peter uses the idiom ‘tent’ to describe his body
- Peter knows that his time on this earth is short
- Within a relatively short time after writing this Nero had Peter executed

- Jesus had told Peter about this **John 21:18-19**

“Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish.” This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, “Follow Me.”

- There is no sense of panic or regret in Peter’s last letter
- Peter knew and believed ‘these things’ he was reminding them of, and the result was **Isaiah 26:3-4**

You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the LORD forever, for in YAH, the LORD, is everlasting strength.

- Believe and keep reminding yourself of these things, and perfect peace can be yours, whether your time is short or long on this earth

- **2 Peter 1:15**

- Peter’s focus is not on himself – but on making sure they are taken care of after he is gone
- ‘decease’ = departure – it is the Greek word that we get the English word ‘exodus’ from
- Peter viewed his death, not as an end, but as a deliverance – from this life to the better life – eternal life in heaven with Jesus
- It was that attitude that allowed Peter to face his death with courage and conviction and a concern for those he would leave behind
- Peter goes on to explain where his conviction comes from

- **2 Peter 1:16-18**

- Turn to **Mark 9** - Peter is referring to the Transfiguration

- The things Peter and the other apostles taught, were not something they made up in their minds
- The gospel is not a construct of human imagination
- They were eyewitnesses – not just one of them, but three men witnessed this event
- **Mark 9:1-8**
- Turn back to **2 Peter**
- Peter is saying we know what we are talking about – we were there
- The false teachers were coming in, teaching a different way to relate to God
- Who you going to believe – an eyewitness who was there with others witnesses or someone telling you a story they can't prove?
- And Peter says, that is not all we have
- **2 Peter 1:19**
- Peter is giving another witness of the validity of his message
- He was an eyewitness of the things he said, and the things that Peter witnessed Jesus do and say confirmed the prophecies in the Old Testament
- What we call the Old Testament, the first 39 books of your Bible point to Jesus
- There are hundreds of predictions about a Messiah, a Savior coming
- Only Jesus filled all those prophecies concerning the first coming of the Messiah
- And the Transfiguration was a preview of His Second Coming, proving that those prophecies will come to pass as well
- Peter was absolutely confident in his message because he was an eyewitness and saw the fulfillment of prophecy
- We'll come back to the second half of verse 19
- **2 Peter 1:20**
- This is very important, and it is one of the reasons why we teach the way we do
- Saying, you cannot interpret prophecy or any Scripture for that matter all by itself
- All Scripture is a God-breathed whole **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

- The false teachers pull a verse out of its context and interpret it all by itself – almost always leads to a false interpretation
- A false interpretation of Scripture leads to false doctrine
- False doctrines lead to wrong behaviors that lead people away from the best possible life that God promises them
- There is a saying: “Doctrine divides” – it does, it divides the true from the false – and that is a good thing
- The better you know God’s Word, the easier you will spot it when someone uses a Scripture out of context
- Peter closes this chapter pointing to the inspiration of Scripture
- **2 Peter 1:21**
- One of the objections that some people will raise regarding Christianity is that the Bible is written by man
- Well, they are half-right
- Men were responsible for writing down the words of the Bible, but they weren’t their words
- The Holy Spirit moved them to write
- You have heard people say they were inspired to write a poem or a song
- Or that they were inspired to draw or paint something
- It is a similar thing with the Scriptures
- The Spirit gave inspiration to write these words, but they all come from God the Holy Spirit = God’s Words
- Personally this is one of the joys of my faith in Jesus
- The Spirit still inspires people today
- Often as I am teaching I sense the Spirit inspiring me to say something that I hadn’t thought about, studied, read, and sometimes that I didn’t even know
- And usually those are the things that people will come up to me after and tell me that it impacted them the most
- Wasn’t from me – from the Holy Spirit – love when that happens
- As we get ready to close want to draw your attention back to verse 19

- **2 Peter 1:19**

- ‘you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place’
- Light and darkness are used regularly in Scripture to teach us things about God and His kingdom
- In 1 Timothy 6 says God dwells in unapproachable light – referring to absolute holiness and perfection **1 John 1:5**

This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

- Darkness is not the same as light – in reality darkness does not really exist – you can’t measure it – darkness is the absence of light
- To go back to my illustration at the beginning – when it is dark under water = all the light has been filtered out
- We live in a world where much of the light of God has been filtered out
- As a diver one of my favorite times to dive was at night
- On occasion I would turn off my dive light – pitch black
- Couldn’t tell how deep I was – couldn’t tell what direction I was headed – and in recognition of Shark Week – couldn’t tell what was around me
- This is how all non-Christians are living their lives – in spiritual darkness – and most of them either don’t realize or don’t care
- More tragic than that is the reality that many Christians live in the same darkness as non-Christians
- As a diver when the darkness starts to creep me out, which it would, what could I do? Turn on my dive light!
- Peter is basically telling us that we have a spiritual flashlight to help us to stay on course living the best possible life
- ‘which you do well to heed’ = the prophetic word’ = the Word of God, the Scriptures, the Bible **Psalm 119:105**

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

- The Bible is a spiritual flashlight which allows me to see my way in this ‘dark place’ – this world that wants nothing to do with God
- With my dive light I could spot danger and avoid it – God’s Word teaches me how to avoid spiritual pits, snares, and traps

- With my dive light, I could see where I was going – The Bible helps me to see the path God has for my life better
- Because water filters out color, with my light I could what color things actually were – The Bible helps me to see this world as it actually is – not filtered by the darkness
- God has given you everything you need to live the best possible life, a life that resembles the life of Jesus
- It is by faith in God that we live that life
- And it is by the Word of God that our faith is able to grow **Romans 10:17**

So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

- The best possible life that I can live is lived by faith
- And like I said last week, not just faith, but growing faith
- To grow in faith, I must turn on the spiritual flashlight God gave me – His Word, the Bible
- Peter says in verse 19, ‘you do well to heed’
- Everyone with a mobile device has access to every translation of the Bible that has ever been written, and in almost every language spoken – no excuse
- Open it, read it, understand it, and heed it – or do it
- Do that and you will be steady on course and you will do well
- Amen–**Pray**