



2 Peter

Steady on Course

Keep Growing to Keep Going

2 Peter 3:10-18

Message #7 of 7 – S702

Sermon given on August 28, 2016



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Keep Growing to Keep Going

2 Peter 3:10-18

Opening Comments

- Turn to **2 Peter 3**
- Today, we conclude our series through the second letter from Peter – **Steady on Course**
- If you had time to write one letter before you died, what would you write? Who would you write it to?
- That's what we have here in this second letter from the Apostle Peter
- He knows his time is short – soon to be martyred for the faith
- As far as we know, these are his last recorded words
- Peter is going to shift gears as he closes this letter – going to remind them about what is coming in the future
- And then he is going to suggest that this truth should affect the way they live
- All truth rightly understood will change us
- In fact, that is one of the ways we know we possess the truth, it changes us
- And as Christians, the change that takes place makes us more like Christ, it glorifies God, and blesses others
- Let's be open today to whatever truth God may have for us
- 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 3:10-18**
- **Pray**

Teaching

- **Keep Growing to Keep Going**
- In the first part of the chapter the scoffers were asking, 'Where is the promise of His coming?' – Where is Jesus? Why hasn't He come yet?
- These scoffers didn't believe that Jesus was coming back
- Peter opens our text today by reminding them about what it will be like when Jesus does come back
- **2 Peter 3:10**

- Peter uses the phrase ‘day of the Lord’
- The scoffers are mocking because Jesus hasn’t come back yet
- And I said that was because of God’s mercy, to see more saved, but that is not the only reason
- Listen to these verses that describe the ‘day of the Lord’ **Isaiah 2:12**
For the day of the LORD of hosts shall come upon everything proud and lofty, upon everything lifted up— and it shall be brought low...
- First occurrence – 700 years before Christ was born **Joel 2:11**
The LORD gives voice before His army, for His camp is very great; for strong is the One who executes His word. For the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; who can endure it?
- And one of the most terrifying **Isaiah 13:9**
Behold, the day of the LORD comes, cruel, with both wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and He will destroy its sinners from it.
- God’s delay in sending Jesus back is to be merciful to those who will be saved, but it is also showing mercy to the wicked
- Jesus is coming back on a specific day in the future, no one but God knows when that is
- The term ‘day of the Lord’ doesn’t speak only of the Second Coming, but also of the events surrounding His coming
- For seven years before Jesus comes back, God will pour out His holy wrath upon this wicked, God-hating, Christ-rejecting world
- And that will be a terrible time to be alive on this earth **Matthew 24:21-22**
For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.
- But even in this period of Tribulation God’s grace and mercy shine out of the darkness
- When God judged the world the last time, only eight people were saved
- Once the judgment began, there was no hope for the wicked
- Not so with the Tribulation period
- For seven years, people will have an opportunity to repent and be saved

- And I believe the greatest revival in human history will take place during those seven years and hundreds of millions will be saved
- But they will have to do that while enduring horrors that we cannot even imagine
- Fortunately for us as Christians today, Jesus is going to deliver us from that terrible time in an event that we call the Rapture, which will take place right before the Tribulation period begins
- Peter is pretty confident about this –will come – will pass away – will melt – will be burned up
- Peter is describing both the beginning ‘will come as a thief’ – unexpectedly, and the end
- Describing a great cataclysmic event in which both the heavens and the earth are burned up and pass away
- Most believe this is some kind of release of atomic energy
- There is tremendous power within every atom in the universe
- When released can be used for good, atomic energy, or for evil in nuclear weapons
- Paul says this about Jesus **Colossians 1:17 NASB**
He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.
- Jesus is holding the energy of the atoms from being released
- Peter is saying that someday Jesus is going to let go
- The Apostle John refers to that at the end of **Revelation 21:1**
Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea.
- We don’t worry about that because that marks the end of the ‘day of the Lord’ and Jesus will take us to be Him long before that happens
- We shouldn’t worry about it, but this truth should affect us
- **2 Peter 3:11-13**
- Because all of this is going to be burned up, Peter asks the question, ‘what manner of persons ought you to be?’
- How should this truth impact your life?
- Peter gives us four things this truth should impact
- First two go together, ‘holy conduct and godliness’
- Holy conduct speaks of moral purity – done in and through Word
- Godliness is often described as Christ-likeness

- While that is true, it doesn't help us to understand it
- A better way to define godliness is: a life devoted to pleasing God
- If that describes my life, I will be like Christ **John 8:29**
He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.
- The third thing is in verse 12 – ‘looking for...the coming of the day of God’
- Speaks of living in expectation, but also of faithfulness
- Jesus told several parables in Matthew 24 and 25 speaking of being ready and faithful – His return will be sudden and unexpected
- The fourth one is fascinating ‘hastening the coming of the day of God’
- It sounds like Peter is saying that we can cause this ‘day of God’ to come more quickly
- God is absolutely sovereign in the universe, in total control of everything
- Man was created to be in an intimate fellowship relationship with God
- But He did something very strange when He created man – He gave man freewill – the freedom to choose – to choose God or self – to obey or rebel – to love God or reject His love
- God has a plan for this universe, and because of His desire for relationship with man, he has invited us to play a part in His plan
- He doesn't need us, but He desires that we would walk with Him to fulfill His plan
- I believe what Peter is trying to say here is that we hasten the day of God by walking in humble, faithful, obedience to God and His Word
- God has a plan for each of our lives, a good plan, and we hasten the day of that plan by walking in humble, faithful, obedience to God and His Word – Choose to do the parts that God gave to you, and trust Him to do the rest
- **2 Peter 14**
- ‘be diligent’ – humble, faithful, obedience to God and His Word is not something that just happens
- ‘to be found by Him (when He comes) in peace, without spot and blameless’ is not going to magically become reality

- It will happen because you believe God and exercise your freewill through the working of the Holy Spirit to make it happen
- **2 Peter 15a**
- This points back to verse 9
- Jesus is putting up with all the sin and wickedness in this world so that many more will be saved
- This won't go on forever, because a day has been foreordained for God to keep His word and judge this wicked world
- But until then, we should praise Him for His longsuffering and the salvation it brings to those who believe
- **2 Peter 15b-16**
- Peter says some of the things that Paul wrote are hard to understand
- Many believe that he is referring to the letter to the Hebrews which they believe Paul wrote
- Some people twist the words of the Bible for their own purpose, maybe referring back to the false teachers
- Leading to their own destruction = damnation – death forever
- Peter also puts Paul's writings on the same level as the Scriptures = OT
- Peter concludes with a strong exhortation
- **2 Peter 3:17-18a**
- You already know these things – beware = constantly guarding yourself
- 'lest you fall' not from salvation – but from the best possible life
- This is warning to keep at a safe distance from error of the wicked **1 Corinthians 15:33**
- **Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."**
- In verse 18 'but grow in the grace and knowledge...'
- Grow = be constantly growing
- This is the theme of the letter
- Our focus should be on growing in Christ
- We don't need to focus on the false teachers and their error, but we need to be aware of it and wary of it
- Focus on knowing Jesus, growing grace and knowledge

- Five quick things about spiritual growth
- First – **We have the seeds of spiritual growth within us – 2 Peter 1:3**

...His divine power has given to us all things that *pertain* to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue...

- Second – **Those seeds are nourished by the Word of God – 1 Peter 2:1-3**

Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious.

- Third – **Spiritual growth requires exercise – 2 Peter 1:5-7**

But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

- Fourth – **The Holy Spirit will help you – John 14:26**

The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

- Fifth & finally – **Beware of false teachers and avoid their errors – 2 Peter 3:17**

- Peter closes this letter with a doxology – a statement of praise and worship

- **2 Peter 3:18b**

- We exist for the purpose of glorifying God both now and forever
- The best way for you to do that is to live the best possible life, walking in humble, faithful, obedience to God and His Word
- Being diligent to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
- Do that and your life will glorify God, others will be blessed, and your faith will grow stronger and deeper
- Every day choose to exercise your freewill to get to know Jesus better and better, and then watch what happens in your life
- Amen–**Pray**