



Second Peter - 3 chapters

Title:

The Second Epistle of Peter – because it is the second of two epistles written by Peter

Author:

The author of this epistle was Peter, one of Jesus's original twelve disciples. Peter was often thought of as the leader and spokesmen of the apostles. And Peter's ministry was described in the first part of the Book of Acts. He proclaimed Christ primarily among the Jews, but also had ministry to Gentiles (as in this letter).

Occasion and Purpose:

This book was written to combat false teachers and false teaching that had harmed the churches to whom Peter was writing. Peter spoke against false teaching in general terms for part of this letter, but there are also two specific topics that he addresses specifically, which were most likely distorted by the false teachers: First Peter corrected their view of Christ's second coming. Some were arguing that Jesus would not return, and Peter needed to protect and correct his readers from that view. And secondly, Peter warned and corrected his readers from lawless, immoral living that typically accompanies all kinds of false teaching. They were to live upright lives in light of Christ's certain return.

Themes:

1. **True & False Knowledge** – Peter made a strong distinction between true knowledge, which is actual knowledge of true things – primarily about Christ, and verified by trustworthy witnesses – and falsehoods, which are taught and believed as if they were true knowledge, but which in fact are not. Only one of these categories is really knowledge, though both claim to be. Both truth and falsehood (claiming to be truth) exist, so that we need to be careful to find the truth and reject the falsehood.
2. **Discerning Between Them** – Related to the previous theme, Peter gave some principles to help his readers discern between truth and falsehood. One way to tell is by the character of the teachers, observed over time. False teachers lack virtue, and their lifestyle will eventually show that they are false. Another way is to notice the difference between historical, eyewitness accounts and made up stories. If something has historical verification, it is much more trustworthy than something that is based only on the claims of the teachers. And the most important tool for discerning between truth and falsehood is to check their accuracy against the Scriptures. If it agrees with the Bible, it is true. If not, it is false.
3. **Promise of the Parousia** – The word “Parousia” refers to the promised return of Christ. Peter emphasized that this prediction will certainly come true. We don't know when it will happen, but we know for certain that it will, because God's promises are sure.
4. **Living for the Parousia** – Because the Parousia will certainly happen, we need to live with an eternal perspective, and to be ready at any time for eternity. We need to have a God-centered worldview and cultivate Christian virtues in all areas of our life. Jesus will return and so, we should live in an appropriate manner, preparing and looking forward to His presence.

Summary:

Peter wrote to warn his readers of false teachers and their false teaching. He gave ways to recognize false teaching, such as their immoral lifestyle, their made up stories, and the fact that they don't agree with Scripture. Peter highlighted one particular falsehood, the claim that Jesus would not return, as He had promised. Peter stressed the certainty of Christ's second coming, but also taught that his delay was because of God's mercy, to allow people an opportunity to repent. Peter also stressed that his readers should live a Christian lifestyle with Christian virtues as they anticipate the return of Christ.

Organization:

1:1-2 Introduction	
1:3-21 True Knowledge	
	1:3-11 Make Your Calling and Election Sure
	1:12-15 Reminding You in Limited Time
	1:16-21 Transfiguration and Scripture
2:1-22 False Teachers	
	2:1-3 There are False Teachers
	2:4-9 God Protects the Godly and Punishes the Wicked
	2:10-16 Characteristics of False Teachers
	2:17-22 The Wicked Fall for False Teachers
3:1-18 Parousia (2nd Coming of Christ)	
	3:1-2 Rely on Prior Revelation
	3:3-7 Some Mock the Promise of His Coming
	3:8-10 God Keeps His Promises in His Timing
	3:11-13 Live as Prepared for His Coming
	3:14-16 Use the Time to Pursue Salvation
	3:17-18 Guard Against Falling Away

Key Verses:

1:3-4, 1:8-11, 1:16-21, 2:1-3, 13, 3:3-10, 3:11-14, 3:17-18