



Bite Size Books of the NT: 2 Peter

Super Wednesday Bible Study: 11/28/18

1. Brain Starter

Saint Peter in Tears by El Greco

2. The Basics of 2 Peter

Who: Peter is listed as the sender, but this letter differs from 1 Peter in language, style, setting, and theology. It evidences some skill in Greco Roman argument and is likely written by a Greek-speaking person of Jewish background. As early as the third century Petrine authorship was in doubt.

What: It is a letter cast as a last testament by a dying man, and addresses a Church that is struggling with the transition of context (Jewish to pagan) and era (post-apostolic to apostolic). Peter writes as a present and future safeguard of the truth.

Where: Sender's and recipient's location unknown.

When: Depends on authorship; anywhere from 68-100.

3. Salutation (1:1-4)

- "Simeon Peter" curiously combines Hebrew and Greek.
- Apostolic authority is stressed at the very beginning.

4. Body (1:5-11) The Christian Life

- With a grounding of faith, Christians are able to proceed from goodness to knowledge to self-control to endurance to godliness to mutual affection and finally to love.
- How has this progression unfolded in your life? Can we better understand this teaching by applying it to a sport or other skill?

5. Body (1:12-15) Peter's Bequest and Farewell

- Peter stresses his credibility on account of his impending death and his special relationship with Jesus.
- Peter pledges spiritual oversight now and following his death.

6. Body (1:16-21) Peter's Reason for Writing

- Contrary to what the heretical teachers say, the Lord will have a second coming. As proof, in vv. 16-18 Peter cites his personal testimony of the transfiguration (Matt. 17:2, 5; Mark 9:2-3, 7; Luke 9:35)
- In vv. 19-21, Peter stresses the reliability of prophecy; it is not subject to any one person's interpretation. It is apostolic in nature.

7. Body (Chapter 2) Condemnation of False Prophets – use of Jude

2 Peter draws heavily from Jude, as follows:

2 Peter verse(s)	Jude verse(s)
2:1-2	4
2:4	6
2:6	7
2:10	8
2:11	9
2:12	10
2:13	12
2:15	11
2:17	12-13
2:18	16
3:1-2	17
3:3	18

8. Body (2:1-11) False Prophets Past and Present

- The motivation of the false prophets is greed, exploitation, and "the flesh."
- False prophets have been punished in the past (references are made to three stories from Genesis, as augmented by 1 Enoch).
- Verses 4-12 contain one big long "if...then" statement that provides assurance to the true believers and threats to the false prophets.

9. Body (2:12-22) Characteristics of False Prophets

- V. 12: "irrational animals" who act on instinct alone.
- V.13: To "revel in daytime" was considered reprehensible in antiquity.
- V. 13 "Dissipation" in v. 13 is a play on words in Greek: *ἀπάταις* (dissipation or deceit) vs. *ἀγάπαις* (love-feast, as used in v. 12 of Jude)
- VV. 15-16: More OT illustrations (Balaam, from Numbers 22)
- V. 19: When is "freedom" really "slavery"?
- V. 22: The first proverb comes from Prov. 26:11; the second one is an ancient oriental proverb.

10. Body (3:1-7): God's Power and Presence

- This is another prediction that false teachers will arise.
- When it comes to our faith, what is the power of remembering, and within the Church, how do we do it?
- Do you agree that creation manifests God's power and presence? Is being in creation enough "church" for us?

11. Body (3:8-13): Merciful Delay and Dedicated Discipleship

- The author characterizes the delay in the second coming as evidence of mercy, not abandonment. God's reckoning of time differs from ours too (see 2 Pet. 3:8; Psa. 90:4).
- Do you eagerly look forward to Jesus's second coming, or fear it? What would it look like to live like he is coming today?
- What would life be like in a place where "righteousness is at home" (v. 13)?
- From Luther: "Since you know that everything must pass away, both heaven and earth, consider how completely you must be prepared with a saintly and godly life and conduct to meet this Day." (AE 30:197)

12. Conclusion (3:14-18) Await Salvation in Holiness

- How can we best use the time God has allotted to us?
- V. 15: Notice how Paul's letters are already being treated like scripture.
- V. 16: Scripture can and often is misused...
- V. 17: What is the benefit of "stability"?

13. 2 Peter: Assessment of Importance

- In the RCL: 2 Pet. 1:16-21 (Year A Transfiguration Sunday) and 2 Pet. 3:8-15a (Year B 2nd Sunday of Advent)
- Describes an important conflict in the early church RE: the second coming.
- Emphasizes the importance of hopeful and patient waiting.
- Doubts about authorship have never been doubts about canonical status.

14. Next Week (12/5): 11 am class on Sunday Lectionary Texts

No 6:15 pm Bible Study

Instead, join us for Advent Worship at 6:30 pm!