



“Do Not Forget”
2 Peter 3:1-10
Sermon Date: May 1st, 2016

Reflections on Sunday’s Sermon

Prayer

As you begin your study this week, pray that the Lord would help you to always remember His great promises, His immense power, and His immeasurable patience toward you as one of His children. Spend a few minutes prayerfully considering all that the Lord has done for you in order that you might forget not all of His benefits (Psalm 103:2). As you pray, consider the following words of this prayer taken from Prone to Wander: Prayers of Confession and Celebration by Barbara Duguid and Wayne Houk.

“Ransoming Lord,

We confess that we are quick to forget that you stretched out the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth with a word. You created us and everyone around us, and you alone are from everlasting to everlasting. You are the one who judges all men in righteousness and truth...

Father, we desperately need your help to know your righteousness in all its fullness, and to love your law well. Cause us to see the glory of your Son, Jesus Christ, so that we remember your grace as well as your justice. Dissolve our hearts in thankfulness by reminding us of the cross many times each day and drawing our hearts to be amazed by your outrageous love for us. Amen.”

Scripture

2 Peter 3:1–10 – (English Standard Version)

1 This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, 2 that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, 3 knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. 4 They will say, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.” 5 For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, 6 and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. 7 But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

8 But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

Handling the Word

1. Verses 1 and 2 of chapter 3 have been described as a summary statement of Peter’s purpose for writing this second letter. Make a list of the ways he has accomplished the purpose of “stirring up a sincere mind” (or encouraging clear and right thinking) thus far in the book.
2. Even though there is a clear change of thought beginning in chapter 3, Peter is still continuing to build on the points he made in the previous section. How would you summarize the main theme of chapter 2? How would you summarize our text this week? What is the connection between the two?

Understanding and Applying

1. Peter opens our passage this week by stating that his desire was to provide believers with reminders that would promote right, pure, and biblical thinking (v. 1-2). Why is it necessary and important for us to be reminded of truths that stimulate biblical thinking in our lives? Describe one or more truths that you feel you need to be reminded of regularly in order to help you to think with a sincere and renewed mind (Romans 12:2).

2. The most effective means Peter pointed to in order to combat the false thinking and teaching of his day, was to direct people back to God's Word (v. 2, and 2 Peter 1:19-21). What role do the words of Scripture play in our ability to think and live as God has called us to? What are practical ways we can keep the Word at the forefront of our minds?

3. According to verse 3, we know that scoffers will do their scoffing because they are "following their own sinful desires." How would you describe the relationship between people's willingness to mock the things of God and their choice to follow after "their own sinful desires" (v. 3)?

4. One of the promises found in God's Word that was being mocked in the early church was the "promise of [Jesus'] coming" (v. 3-4). Is this still a promise that continues to be mocked by people in our day and age? If so, in what ways?

5. One reason people were scoffing at the idea of Jesus' return is they were unable to see anything in the physical world that pointed to it (v. 4). From their perspective, things seemed to be carrying along quite normally, which did not allow for the possibility of Jesus' return and a cataclysmic ending to the world. What does Peter remind believers of in verses 5-10 in order to combat this line of thinking? How do the historical accounts of God's role in creation and in the flood help us to think rightly about Jesus' return and His judgment?

6. In order to combat what the scoffers were saying regarding the delay of Jesus' return, Peter wanted to remind believers to not overlook the fact that "with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (v. 8, see Psalm 90:1-4 as well). His point wasn't that one human day is exactly one thousand years for God. His point was to say that there is a vast difference between the way God views time and the way we view time as humans. What seems so long from our vantage point is actually quite short in God's eyes. Why is this a critical point that Peter does not want believers to forget? How does remembering God's view of time help us to think differently about all of His promises in His Word?

7. We are told in verse 9 that God's patience with people stems from His desire "that all should reach repentance." In other words, God patiently delays His final judgment in order that He might display His grace and mercy toward sinful man (Romans 2:4). What is the significance of this truth in your own life as a follower of Jesus Christ? What is the significance of this truth in the lives of unbelievers who are currently mocking God in their lives?

8. Although God is patient with us, we also see in this passage that His patience will not last forever (v. 10). There will come a day when God's judgment will come and all that has been done will be exposed. As Mark Johnston noted, that day "will come with devastating consequences: everything will be laid bare under the scrutiny of God's all-seeing eye." Does knowing that God's patience will come to an end at some point change the way we think about and use the time we have remaining? If so, in what ways?

9. In verse 10, Peter likens Jesus' return to the coming of a thief, meaning it will come when it is least expected and without warning (also refer to Matthew 24:42-44 and 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3). As a thief does not alert his victims as to the timing of his actions, neither will Jesus give us the exact date and time of His return. Despite the reality that we do not know the specifics, why are many people today so fascinated by the discussion of the "end times" and all that will transpire? Is it more valuable for us as believers to focus on the absolute guarantee of Christ's return rather than the uncertain details surrounding His return? Why or why not?

10. How do the words of verses 8-10 serve to comfort and encourage believers as we think about end times and await the return of our Savior?

11. What do you feel that the Lord has been teaching you through His Word this week? What in your life needs to be prayed for, confessed, or altered as a result of what you have learned?

"Peter says that he has written this epistle, not in order to lay the foundation of faith, which he had done before, but to awaken, remind, restrain, and urge them not to forget the same, and to abide in the clear sense and understanding which they have of a true Christian life."

Martin Luther