

Don't Forget • 2 Peter 3:1-9

INTRODUCTION • Read vs. 8-9

Vs. 1-2

- <sup>1</sup> Beloved,
1. Only 1 word & already I have to pause to comment.
2. If you have an NIV, note that v. 1 begins, “Dear **friends**.”
  - a. That’s too weak a translation of the word Peter uses for his readers
  - b. It’s **agapetoi** and comes from the word agape – the highest kind of love; God’s kind!
3. Before we go on, it serves us well to pause & realize what Peter’s use of this word for his readers means.
  - a. It means The Spirit of God had done an amazing work in him in the years since Jesus ascended back to heaven.
  - b. He went from being a sword-wielding would-be murderer the night Jesus was betrayed,
  - c. To a humble shepherd of God’s flock, willing to lay down his life for them.
  - d. As he wrote this letter, his martyrdom was pending.
4. Yes. Peter’s come a long way & we see it in the first word of v. 1 when he calls them “Beloved.”
5. There are specific signs parents look for in their children to know that they’re healthy & growing as they ought.
  - a. They get taller. Their hands & feet grow. You expect them to outgrow baby clothes & start wearing larger sizes.
  - b. You look for teeth to come in, then as more years pass for those teeth to be replaced by permanent teeth.
  - c. As a child hits puberty, we expect the marks of feminine or masculine to surface & grow.
  - d. We’d be **surprised**, then **disturbed** if such traits **didn’t** manifest.
6. But the maturing of a person isn’t just physical. WE expect their character to mature as well.
  - a. We expect children to develop some discipline & self-control.
  - b. We want to see some emotional stability & a growing sense of responsibility as the years pass & they approach adulthood.
7. Just as there are marks of normal physical & social maturity, there are traits of **spiritual** maturity expected in the followers of Jesus.
  - a. The NT has several lists of such traits.
  - b. We saw one of them a few weeks ago in Ch. 1:5-7
  - c. Another list in in Gal 5 where Paul gives the fruit of the Spirit.
  - d. But the crowning mark of spiritual maturity is Love = Agape.
8. Agape is the **highest** kind of love.
  - a. To agape is to seek the highest good for another without regard for what you get out of it.
  - b. It’s a selfless, others-focused concern & care.
9. While Agape **goes beyond** mere emotions, **it isn’t emotionless**.
  - a. Agape cares!
  - b. It’s **invested** in the well-being of others.
10. So here’s a simple test we all ought apply to ourselves: How spiritually mature are you?
  - a. A good, quick test is to ask how well you care about and for others.
  - b. And not just a select, little group of close friends – but people
    - 1) In general
    - 2) & the Body of Christ in particular.
  - c. is your baseline attitude toward other people one of love or annoyance?
11. I can’t recommend this test to you unless I take it myself.
  - a. So let me share how I did as I pondered this.
  - b. I can honestly say I’ve come to the place in my walk with Jesus that I love His people, the Church.
  - c. I echo Peter here as I speak to you all: “Beloved.” Not just “Friends”
  - d. But as it relates to others, I’m not doing so well.
  - e. God may love the world, but I’m not there yet.
    - 1) Specifically, when I’m driving, I find loving people a real challenge.
      - a) People frustrate & annoy me when I’m driving.

- b) Love is not how I would describe my attitude when behind the wheel.
- 2) When listening to the news or certain politicians . . . >
  - a) Yeah; Love's not really the right word to describe what I'm thinking & feeling.
  - b) Anger & Disgust are better adjectives.
- 12. As justifiable as those thoughts & feelings may **seem**, they're **not** how Jesus wants me to regard others; as annoying & disgusting.

- a. He loves them & **wants** to love them THRU ME.

- b. I don't know; maybe you already have this wired & I'm the only 1 here who needs to grow in love.

<sup>1</sup> Beloved, I now write to you this 2<sup>nd</sup> epistle (in *both of* which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder),

13. Way back in v. 12 of ch. 1 Peter said this ltr was a reminder of things he'd already taught them.

<sup>2</sup> that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior,

14. Take careful note how Peter **links the ministry** of the OT prophets to that of the Apostles of Jesus.

- a. They bear equal spiritual authority.
- b. And since the message of the prophets was recognized as the Word of God,
- c. Peter's saying the teaching of the Apostles carries the same authority.
- c. No wonder his readers are to be **mindful** of their message.

Vs. 3-4

<sup>3</sup> knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, <sup>4</sup> and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation."

- 1. Peter speaks prophetically & says that the end times will see people whose lifestyle is **both**
  - a. Hideously immoral &
  - b. Cynical of the idea they'll ever face judgment.
- 2. When Bible-believing followers of Jesus speak of the last days & end times, saying Jesus is coming soon, these scoffers mock such talk.
- 3. They say things will roll on just as they always have.
  - a. There's no Final judgment; no grand climax to history.
  - b. Things will go on just as they've always gone on –
    - 1) Unless some fool hits a button & starts WWII,
    - 2) There's a global pandemic that turns us all into zombies,
    - 3) Or an asteroid hits.
- 4. But Peter identifies 3 things scoffers have to ignore if things will roll on as they always have.

**First:** There at the end of v. 4 they say,

Since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation."

- 1) They ignore the obvious truth that creation is just that – **created!**
- 2) And if it was **created**, it needs a **Creator**.
- 3) There **will be** an **END** because there was a **beginning**.
- 4) You see, this is the great dilemma posed by the **existence of the universe**.
  - a) Everything **IN** the universe owes its existence to a prior cause.
  - b) But an infinite regression is a logical absurdity.
  - c) Logic demands a starting point; something must exist outside the physical universe that has no beginning. It owns its own existence. That's precisely what we mean by **God**.
  - d) And that's why the question, "Who made God?" makes no sense. No one could make God because He always was, is and shall be.
  - e) The question, "Who made God?" is like asking, "Is red, quick?"
    - i) As a **color**, the adjective "quick" makes no sense.
    - ii) In the same way, since God is **eternal**, questions that ignore His eternity make no sense.
- 5) As you're probably aware, the majority view in the origin of the universe is the Big Bang.
  - a) That's how most atheists & agnostics say things began.
  - b) But that doesn't solve the problem of origins.
  - c) Where'd the singularity that banged-big come from?
- 6) Creation requires a Creator.

5. The **second thing** scoffers ignore is found in v. 5

Vs. 5-6

<sup>5</sup> For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, <sup>6</sup> by which the world *that* then existed perished, being flooded with water.

1. In clinging to the hope history will go on w/o change, scoffers have to ignore that God **HAS** intervened in history.

1) He certainly did that by getting the whole shebang going in the first place.

2) But He also did it in the Flood of Noah's day.

3) As some of you know, my original major in college was **geology**.

4) The very first semester we learned what's known as **Lyell's Law**; AKA the **Law of Uniformitarianism**.

a) We were told **gradualism** is the rule for understanding the universe.

b) The key to knowing what happened in the past is to look at what's happening now.

c) The processes that govern today, governed the past & will govern the future.

d) Why, it's captured **perfectly** there in v. 4 where Peter says the scoffers chant

"Since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation."

5) Well, a whole crop of scientists convinced of Biblical creationism have gone out to discover massive evidence of a global flood.

6) Indeed, even naturalistic, secular geologists no longer hold to strict Uniformitarianism.

a) They give a grudging nod to **catastrophism** as a major cause of the creation of Earth forms.

b) The evidence is just too clear to ignore.

7) It's interesting to me this movie about the Flood has come out in light of what Peter says about the end times & the scoffers who'll come; **ignoring the Biblical Flood**.

a) The director Darren Aronofsky said that this was the **least** Biblical, Biblical movie ever made.

b) Millions of people who see this movie will be **spiritually inoculated** to the **lesson** the Flood teaches – God judges the wickedness of man.

2. And that leads us to the **third thing** scoffers ignore.

a. Conveniently expunging the judgment of the Flood **from the past**,

b. They **assume** there'll be no **future** judgment

V. 7

<sup>7</sup> But the heavens and the earth *which* are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

1. The Flood was a judgment by water, which God promised never to do again.

2. The final judgment will be by fire.

3. And it's coming whether people believe it or not.

Vs. 8-9

1. Now Peter writes encouragement to his readers who maybe have been distressed by those who mock the Return of Christ & a Future, Final judgment.

<sup>8</sup> But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord 1 day *is* as a thousand yrs, and a thousand yrs as 1 day.

2. God stands outside of time. He is timeless. It's all the eternal NOW for God.

3. You see, when God makes a promise to you, He's already standing in your future fulfilling the promise.

a. That's why when you've prayed **in** the **promises of** God,

b. You can go ahead & pray **out praises & thanksgiving to** God.

4. For God, in terms of what **He's able to accomplish**, 1 day is like a thousands years.

a. Ever wish you had more time?

b. God never runs out of time.

c. Everything He needs to do, gets done.

5. For God, in terms of the **passage of time**, a thousand years is like a single day.

a. We **get a feel** for what Peter means as we age.

b. When you're young, time drags. But as you age, the years pass more swiftly.

c. When you're 7, 8, 9, it's forever till your birthday or Christmas rolls round.

- d. When you're 70 & 80, you haven't even taken off your party hat when suddenly it's another birthday.
- 6. We look back over 2000 yrs & wonder why it's ***been so long*** & Jesus hasn't returned.
  - a. But 2000 yrs is like 2 days to God.
  - b. So What's ***HE*** waiting for? V. 9
- <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.
- 7. ***God*** made a promise There an end to History & a Final Judgment.
- 8. ***Jesus*** made a promise He's coming again.
- 9. God keeps His promises; all of them.
- 10. They cannot fail because that's what we mean when we speak of God.
  - a. The Biblical word God means someone Who cannot fail and does not lie.
  - b. He does what He says and says what he does.
- 11. God is not reluctant, hesitant, wavering, dithering, indecisive, perplexed, or vacillating.
- 12. What is IS Is ***waiting***! For you!
  - a. He's waiting for those of you who haven't responded yet.
  - b. He loves you and wants you to come home.
- 13. God doesn't want anyone to perish in the Final Judgment.
  - a. He wants everyone to repent; which means to turn around and go the other way.
  - b. If you're not a believer in Jesus, a follower of Christ, I have to be truthful & tell you something you may not want to hear but is no less true;
    - 1) You're not going to heaven when you die. You're going to hell.
    - 2) I say that because this says that, over and over again.
    - 3) Let me ask you a simple question that many in this room have already considered & it's why they've come to faith in Christ.
    - 4) If there was a way for you to get to heaven, apart from what Jesus did for you on the cross, would God have sent His Son to endure what He did?
    - 5) Doesn't the cross prove there's no other way?
- 14. There's only one reason why Jesus hasn't already come to put an end to evil & wrap up history.
- 15. God's waiting for ***you*** to come Home.
- 16. But even that time of waiting is about up.
- 17. One day, just like in the aside of the ark, the door will close.
- 18. Be sure you're on the right side of the door.