

**"Introduction to 2 Peter"**

**Introduction:** This evening we are going to start a study in 2 Peter but before we get into the letter, I want to give you some information to set the stage for our study in this letter.

**I. The Writer**

**Notice 2 Peter 1:1**

Here we see that Peter claims to be the writer of this letter. I want to show you how we can be sure that Peter is the writer by examining some internal evidence.

➤ **Internal evidence #1**

**2 Peter 1:13-14**

<sup>13</sup> *Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;*

<sup>14</sup> *Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.*

Peter wrote this letter right before his death and from his words we see that he knew his death was approaching. Now let us notice the parallel passage that connects with this.

**John 21:15-19**

<sup>15</sup> *So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.*

<sup>16</sup> *He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.*

<sup>17</sup> *He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.*

<sup>18</sup> *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.*

<sup>19</sup> This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

➤ **Internal evidence #2**

**2 Peter 1:15-18**

<sup>15</sup> Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

<sup>16</sup> For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

<sup>17</sup> For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

<sup>18</sup> And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

Now let us notice the parallel text.

**Matthew 17:1-5**

And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,

<sup>2</sup> And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

<sup>3</sup> And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

<sup>4</sup> Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

<sup>5</sup> While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

These are two internal evidences that Peter is the writer of the letter. There is very little external evidence, but there is one other Biblical writer we can look to.

➤ **External evidence.**

**2 Peter 2:1**

*But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*

Now let us notice what Jude wrote approximately 6 years later.

**Jude 1:4**

<sup>4</sup> *For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.*

It is believed that Jude is referencing 2 Peter when he writes these words. Peter says that false teachers ARE COMING, and Jude tells us they ARE ALREADY HERE.

Now I also need to address a point the critics make about 2 Peter. They say that 1 Peter and 2 Peter are different in language or in other words they are linguistically different. For this reason, the critics want to throw 2 Peter out and say that it should not be part of the Bible. They will accept that Peter wrote 1 Peter but not 2 Peter. So how do we answer this criticism?

**1 Peter 5:12**

<sup>12</sup> *By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.*

Here is the answer. Peter used a scribe by the name of Silvanus/Silas to write 1 Peter. This explains the difference in the language. Peter then wrote 2 Peter with his own hand.

➤ **Facts concerning Peter.**

The twelve Apostles are listed four times in the Bible. Three times in the Gospels and once in Acts. In each of the listings Peter is always named first. This tells us that Peter was the leader.

He is a member of a group of three Apostles that were privileged to see things which the other did not see. The group was made up of Peter, James, and John. Let us notice one such miracle the three were permitted to see. It was the raising of Jairus' daughter.

**Mark 5:36-42**

<sup>36</sup> *As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.*

<sup>37</sup> *And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.*

<sup>38</sup> *And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.*

<sup>39</sup> *And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.*

<sup>40</sup> *And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.*

<sup>41</sup> *And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.*

<sup>42</sup> *And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.*

Another such occasion was the Mount of Transfiguration.

Another interesting fact is that Peter denied the Lord three times and then went on to become a very powerful preacher. It was Peter who preached in Acts 2 and 3 where thousands are saved. What does this mean to us? It tells us that God is not looking for perfect people to use. He works through people who are flawed and know it. He looks at the heart and desires to use people who have a heart that is after His. The reason God is not looking for perfect people is because there are no perfect people. We are all flawed. Therefore He can use each of us if we are willing to walk in His Truth. One more thing about Peter. He was given the keys to the Kingdom.

### **Matthew 16:18-19**

<sup>18</sup> *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

<sup>19</sup> *And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

What does it mean that he was given the keys to the Kingdom?

Peter opened the door to the Jews to become members of the church in Acts 2. He opened the door to the Samaritans to be members of the church in Acts 8 and he opened the door to the Gentiles to be members of the church in Acts 10.

## II. Place of writing.

I want to take a few minutes and correct something I said last week.

### 1 Peter 5:12-14

<sup>12</sup> *By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.*

<sup>13</sup> *The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son.*

<sup>14</sup> *Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.*

Last week I told you that Babylon was like a code name for Rome. But as I step back and think about it, I do not believe that is accurate. Many Bible teachers will tell us that Babylon was Rome but there is a problem with that.

### 1 Peter 1:1

*Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,*

These are the geographic locations of the believers Peter was writing to and we understand these places to be literal places. So why should we not understand Babylon in chapter 5 to literally mean Babylon? The question would be, "How did a church end up in Babylon?" If we remember when we studied Esther, we talked about how many of the Jews never went back to Jerusalem. They made the choice to stay in Babylon. But how did the church get started there? Let us notice who was at Jerusalem when the church began.

### Acts 2:4-9, 41

<sup>4</sup> *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

<sup>5</sup> *And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.*

<sup>6</sup> Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

<sup>7</sup> And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

<sup>8</sup> And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

<sup>9</sup> Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia,

<sup>41</sup> Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

Mesopotamia is Babylon. Some of them were saved and they went back home and started churches. This is how the church came about in Babylon. Therefore, Peter wrote 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter both from Babylon.

### III. The Reason for writing

#### 2 Peter 2:1

*But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*

Here is why Peter wrote this letter. It was because there was a false teaching that was fast approaching his audience. The false teaching was Gnosticism. The Gnostics taught dualism. This teaching stated that the physical world is bad, and the spiritual world is good. This kind of teaching does great damage to a person's Christian doctrine. These people taught that Jesus was not coming back to rule on the earth because the earth is bad. So this teaching denies the earthly Kingdom of Jesus Christ. This is where amillennialism comes from today. This teaching then leads many to allegorize the prophecies of God's Word. In other words they will not see many of the prophecies of Revelation as literal. In Peter's day this led many to believe that Jesus did not have a human body because that would be bad. This false teaching was a major problem in the early church.

#### 1 John 4:2-3

<sup>2</sup> *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:*

<sup>3</sup> *And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*

## **2 John 1:7**

<sup>7</sup> *For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.*

This teaching led to rampant sin. Those who believed this false teaching claimed that when they sinned it was not them but their body that was sinning. So they took no responsibility for their actions, and they then just lived in sin.

### **Conclusion:**

We will see more of this next week. I want to leave you with two verses.

### **Notice 2 Peter 1:3-4**

Here we see how he counters the false teaching of the Gnostics.