

"The Application of Peter's Defense of God's Word"

2 Peter 3:11-15

Introduction: The last time we were together we looked at how Peter refuted the teaching of the false teachers. They would be teaching uniformitarianism which means they denied God's intervention in the past and they also deny His intervention in the future. They omit God in their reasoning. They question the Second coming of Jesus Christ, and they scoff at those who hold to this doctrine.

Notice 2 Peter 3:3-6

Peter went on to refute their denials by pointing to the flood of Noah's day. He explained that just as God judged the world in the past so He will do the same in the future. This was the opposite of what the false teachers wanted to hear. They denied God's intervention because they do not want to acknowledge a day when they will be held accountable for their sins.

Peter went on to explain why the Lord has delayed His return.

1. God is not bound by time. (:8)
2. God is longsuffering and desires all men to be saved. (:9)

Then Peter explained that the Lord will return and when He does it will catch the false completely unprepared.

Notice 2 Peter 3:10

The Day of the Lord here refers to a period of time that will begin with the Tribulation and extend through the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ. In this verse Peter is looking to the end of the Kingdom.

Revelation 20:11

¹¹ *And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.*

Here is the event Peter speaks of and Peter gives more details than we find here. Peter is also looking beyond this event.

Revelation 21:1-5

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

² *And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*

³ *And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

⁴ *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*

⁵ *And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.*

Now Peter is going to move on, and he is going to make an application to our lives based upon the Truth of the return of Jesus Christ and the destruction of this old world. Before we see his application however, I want to consider the importance of prophecy. There are many churches who will never get into the subject of prophecy. Prophecy makes up 27% of the Bible so if prophecy is avoided then we are missing one fourth of the picture. To avoid prophecy would also keep the pastor from teaching the entire counsel of God. But still there are many churches that refuse to study prophecy.

Remember what the words of Rick Warren in his book, "The Purpose Driven Life"? He says that if we are interested in prophecy then we have been distracted by Satan.

I remember speaking to a friend of mine when we were in the study of Revelation, and he told me that his pastor had made the statement that his church would never get into a study of "that" book. He claimed it was entirely too mysterious. I do not know if you have ever thought about this or not but to eliminate prophecy from our teaching would only leave you with what we have to deal with NOW. I do not know about you but when I am in the middle of a trial, I find myself looking to prophecy to be reminded of what awaits me in eternity. Let us now get to Peter's application of prophecy to the believer's life.

1. Knowing prophecy produces holiness.

Notice 2 Peter 3:11

There are two thoughts we need to consider in this verse. First of all Peter reminds us that this world and everything in it will one day dissolve. The word "dissolved" here has an interesting meaning. It means "TO LOOSEN." The idea is that all the "stuff" that people hold so tightly to will one day be taken from their grip. Notice what Solomon wrote:

Ecclesiastes 2:15-19

¹⁵ Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity.

¹⁶ For there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now is in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise man? as the fool.

¹⁷ Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me: for all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

¹⁸ Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: **because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.**

¹⁹ And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This is also vanity.

The only thing that truly matters in this life is what we do for the Lord. Only those things that have spiritual value will last.

1 Corinthians 3:7-15

⁷ So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

⁸ Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

⁹ For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

¹⁰ According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

¹¹ For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

¹² Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

¹³ Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

¹⁴ *If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.*

¹⁵ *If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*

Now let us get back to Peter's words.

Notice 2 Peter 3:11, 14

Peter asks a piercing question to his readers. "Since this world is going to pass away and the Lord is going to return then shouldn't our lifestyles be filled with holiness and godliness?" The expected answer is, "YES!" Knowing prophecy means that we know the Lord will return and that there will be a day of reckoning. We have been entrusted with spiritual gifts and unlimited opportunities to glorify our Savior. This should truly affect the way we live.

1 John 3:1-3

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

² *Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*

³ *And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*

The end of verse 3 here is interesting. We are PURE in position in Christ, so John is calling on us to live in such a way that our practice matches our position.

Matthew 25:14-19

¹⁴ *For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.*

¹⁵ *And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.*

¹⁶ *Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents.*

¹⁷ *And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two.*

¹⁸ *But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.*

¹⁹ After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

2. Knowing prophecy gives us hope.

Notice 2 Peter 3:12-13

This is what we touched on in the introduction this evening. Without prophecy we are left with NOW and all the problems that we must face. But because we know prophecy, we have a hope that we can look to when problems arise. It was faith in the promises of God that gave the Old Testament saints the strength to live in a way that glorified God.

Hebrews 11:8-10, 13-20

⁸ By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

⁹ By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

¹⁰ For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

¹³ These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

¹⁴ For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.

¹⁵ And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned.

¹⁶ But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

¹⁸ Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

¹⁹ Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.

²⁰ By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come.

Our knowledge of prophecy gives us a great hope in the midst of trials and storms.

1 Peter 1:3-5

³ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

⁴ *To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,*

⁵ *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

1 Peter 3:14-15

¹⁴ *But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;*

¹⁵ *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:*

3. Knowing prophecy gives us a burden for the lost.

Notice 2 Peter 3:15a

God has delayed the second coming because He longs to see more people saved. As we understand what we are taught in prophecy we should have a great burden for those who are not saved.

Revelation 20:12-15

¹² *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.*

¹³ *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.*

¹⁴ *And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.*

¹⁵ *And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*

This is a prophecy that should stir God's people into action. This is the judgment of all the unsaved.

Luke 16:19-24

¹⁹ There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

²⁰ And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

²¹ And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

²² And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

²³ And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

²⁴ And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

Conclusion:

If you take prophecy away from the church then you take away the incentive for a lifestyle of holiness, you take away our hope as we walk through the storms of life, and you take away the urgency to share the Gospel.