

## PETER'S PRIORITY: REMINDING US TO REMEMBER

Our memory—what we remember—can be a “funny” thing. Not “funny” as in “ha, ha”—but funny in the sense of being strange. For example, I’m going to give you the first **two** words of a **three**-word phrase:

You ready? Here goes: “Remember the \_\_\_\_\_!” What’s the **next word**? “**Alamo**”

So what do you remember **about** the Alamo—other than the phrase?

**Not much**, right? The battle took place in San Antonio, TX, 1836. The Mexican army—led by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Ana—killed roughly 200 men that were holed up in mission fort called the Alamo.

Two of the more famous men killed were Jim Bowie and Davy Crockett. Please know that I didn’t remember all this—I had to look it up! The only thing I remembered was that it was in San Antonio, TX, because I actually visited it once—or maybe twice. I’m not sure because I can’t remember 😊!

What are the ramifications for **forgetting** something? Depends on **what it is**, right?

--If you forget to open the damper of your fireplace and start a fire, smoke will stink up your house.

--If you forget your spouse’s birthday—or anniversary—you could end up in the doghouse.

--If you forget to pay a bill, you pay a late fee.

--But if you forget to stop at a stop sign, you could be killed!

So it is good to be reminded of things that **are important**. Why? Because **we forget!**

John MacArthur points out in a sermon he preached on this text that past surveys indicate that by 12:45—an hour after I am done—you will have forgotten 90% of what I said! That is depressing!

So...we need to be reminded of spiritual truths—even if we know them! In fact, God **says that very thing** through Peter in the verses we will look at this morning! Take your Bibles and turn again to II Peter, beginning with verse 8. Please follow along as I read vss 8-15.

What happens when we hear something we already know? We kind of “check out,” don’t we? Let’s ask the Lord to help us **not do that**—and be better about remembering what He wants us to remember!

### 1. The teacher’s resolve to remind

Notice again vss 12-13: “Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. <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;”

Pretty hard to miss the sense of urgency in Peter’s words and his desire for them to remember the things that he was telling them. It wasn’t just a **desire**, though—he made it **a priority** to remind them; almost like a resolution. It is as if Peter was saying: ‘I am going to do this—no matter what!’

First... A. The negligence in not reminding them

Vs 12 “Wherefore I will not be **negligent** to put you always in remembrance...” Did Peter **feel bad** that he was reminding them? Not at all! In fact, he felt that if he **failed to remind them**, he was being negligent...he was being neglectful...he was being careless...he was shirking his responsibility as a teacher!

So... he made a decision—a resolution—that he was not going to be negligent! Instead of being **careless**, he was going to be **careful to consistently** remind them!

Next, notice... B. The frequency in reminding them

Vs 12 again: “Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you **always** in remembrance...” It wasn’t going to be a **once-in-awhile** reminder—it was to be an **always** reminder. How often do you remind school-aged children to do their homework? Once a year? Once a semester? Once a month? No; you remind them **every day**—at least during the school year!

Some people take medication on a daily basis. When two people live in the same house and one is on some kind of **daily** medication, it is not uncommon for one to say to the other, “Did you take your pills today?”

Peter obviously didn’t text—or call—they every day, but he made it a point to remind them whenever **he wrote to them** that there were certain spiritual truths they needed to remember.

### C. The priority in reminding them

Vs 13 “Yea, I think it **meet**, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance:” “Meet” is not what you **eat**—and “meet” has nothing to do with a **meeting!** The Greek word that it comes from literally means “what goes before” or “what goes in front of.” In other words, you can think of it as the “**leading thought**” in someone’s mind. The leading thought in Peter’s mind...**his priority**...the thought that he regarded highly—was to **put them in remembrance**.

### D. The urgency in reminding them

Vs 13 again: “Yea, I think it meet, **as long as I am in this tabernacle...**” What did Peter mean by “tabernacle?”

Was he talking about a building or place where people gathered to worship God? Sometimes that is what it means—but not here! We’ll come back to “tabernacle” in a little bit, but Peter was in essence saying this: ‘As long as I’m alive—as long as I’m in this “tent” of a body—I’m going to stir you up—I’m going to arouse you from your sleep—by putting you in remembrance!’

So Peter resolved that he was going to remind them. He felt he would **be negligent** if he didn’t do that, so he made it a priority to remind them **till death did them part!** Peter wasn’t the only one in the “reminding business,” though. Look at what Paul wrote to the church at Philippi in **Phil 3:1** “Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. **To write the same things** to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.”

### Next, let’s consider... **2. The teaching to be remembered**

What was it that Peter was reminding them about? Notice again vs 12 “Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of... A. “These things” of vs 12

Pretty safe to say that “these things” in verses 12 are the things that Peter brought up in verses 1-11! What were those things?

--In vs 1, we see that they—and we—have received a “like precious faith with us”—meaning the same saving faith that Peter had. **How?** “through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

“The righteousness of God” is God’s way for us to become **right with Him**—and that way is through Jesus—and **only through Jesus**. He is the way, the truth, and the life—and no man comes to the Father but by Him. But when we **do come to God** in repentance—and in faith **trust Jesus’ death** as the payment for our sins—God **receives us** and makes wonderful exchange on our behalf. Not only is **our sin** counted by God as being laid on and paid for by Jesus; the **perfectness of Jesus**—His righteousness—is credited to our account!

--And **when that happens**—according to vs 3—Peter reminds them (and us) that **God’s divine power** has provided all that we need for **life and godliness!**

--But...according to vs 4, **growth** in Christ-likeness—and **escaping** our sinfulness—does not happen **automatically**. We need to know—and apply—the **great and precious promises** contained in God’s Word!

--We also have the **responsibility**—in the way of a **command**—to add to the foundation of our spiritual life the qualities listed in verses 5-7. When we do that, we will an **effective—a useful and fruitful**—relationship with God according to vs 8. **If we don’t do that**—if we fail to **lavishly supply** these qualities to our lives—verse 9 says **we are blind**. That means we **won’t see what God is doing** in our lives—and we won’t see **the dangers and snares**. We are also **short-sighted**—because we are focusing on the here and now—and are living like **we’ve forgotten** that we have been forgiven!

--In vs 10, we are reminded to diligently “make our calling and election sure.” What does that mean? It means to diligently work at **living like you** are a child of God. We don’t do good works to **get saved**—and we don’t do good works to **stay saved**. We do good works—we “let our light so shine before men”—because we **are saved!** If **we are** a child of God, we should **live like** a child of God—not like a child **of the devil** or **an orphan!**

--And when we **do diligently live for God**, God promises us that we will not fall away (vs 10)—and that we will be given—according to verse 11—a lavishly rich, “well done thou good and faithful servant” kind of hero’s welcome into heaven!

‘But we know that, Pastor, because you keep telling us that!’

I know I do—but I’m just following Peter’s example of reminding you what you already know! We see that in the middle of vs 12 “though ye **know** them.” **1) They already knew them.**

**Why** is it necessary to be taught things we already know? Because we **forget!**

It is sad—and eye-opening at the same time—to realize how disconnected we can be with what **we know**. Here’s what I mean. Several times over the last few months I have talked to people about different things they are going through. When I do that, my goal, of course, is to give advice and counsel from the Bible.

Thinking back on some of the conversations, what was eye-opening to me was not that **they** had forgotten certain things—it was what **I had** forgotten! **I failed to see**—until after the fact—that the very thing **I had been preaching on** would have been “just what the doctor ordered,” so to speak.

--For example, the truth that God has given us everything we need to be godly (vs 3)—and that what He has given us are revealed in His great and precious promises (vs 4)—is applicable to **every situation!**

--And the fact that if we **work on our spiritual life** we will be blessed—but if we **fail to work at it** we stumble and stray—is again a truth that applies to pretty much every situation.

So **we all need** reminders of what we already know—**especially me!**

In the end of vs 12 we see a second description that Peter gives regarding the truths of vss 1-11:

It was not just a truth they already knew; **2) It was the “present truth” they were already “established in.”**

What is meant by **present** truth? It is **not** a reference to time—as in “no time like the present.” Along the same lines, Peter is not suggesting that there is **past** truth...and **present** truth...and **future** truth. Truth is **always true**—and always true for **all ages!** What Peter is saying is that the truth is **present with them—and in them**. They possess/have it! It is not something that is **far from them**—it is the truth that they **now hold!**

**Established** means “fix firmly, support, strengthen.” Putting the two thoughts together, Peter is saying that you presently have the truth—and are firmly fixed upon it and strengthened by it. In essence, then, he is encouraging them! ‘Good job! You already know these truths—and you are standing firmly upon them! Keep doing it, though, because false teachers are coming!’ We see that in II Peter 2:1 “But there were false prophets also among the people, **even as there shall be false teachers among you...**”

That’s a good reminder for us, isn’t it? The best way to **identify** false teachers—and **not fall** for false teaching—is to **know** the truth and **keep standing on** the truth!

We’ll come back to vs 14 in a minute, but notice vs 15 “Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have **these things** always in remembrance.”

We had the “these things” of vs 12, now we have... B. “These things” of vs 15

Some commentaries suggest that the “these things” of vs 15 **are the same** as in vs 12. I tend to think that the “these things” of vs 15 **include** what Peter said earlier—but also what he says **after**. Why? Because he doesn’t **end the letter** at vs 15! He writes more—and wanted them to remember all that he said in the **whole** letter—not just what he said in vss 1-15! I believe II Peter 3:1 confirms that “This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds **by way of remembrance:**”

Lastly, let’s consider... **3. The temporariness of those who teach**

Our teachers—are spiritual leaders—are **temporary**, aren’t they? They don’t live forever—they get called home to heaven whether we are ready for them to leave or not! God doesn’t consult us or ask our permission as to **when** is a good time—and when He calls them home, they go! Peter himself knew that he wasn’t going to live forever and consequently was **preparing them** for his death.

So how did Peter go about preparing them for his death? There are probably more, but here are 2 ways:

A. Peter’s perspective on his death

What was Peter’s perspective on death? We actually get a lot of insight from verses 13 and 14.

Vs 13. “Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this **tabernacle...**”

**1) First, his body was a tabernacle—meaning a tent.** He knew it was **not** permanent. Instead, it was just a temporary **dwelling place** for his soul—the eternal part of him that would leave this life and go to be with Jesus. He was in his tabernacle—his temporary dwelling place—now, but knew he wouldn’t stay in it forever.

**2) He would be “putting it off.”** We see that in vs 14 “Knowing that shortly I must **put off** this my tabernacle...” Very picturesque wording, isn’t it? Just as I **take off a piece of clothing**—like my suit coat when I get home this afternoon—and lay it aside, Peter will be **laying his body aside** and leaving it behind! He is not lamenting...he is not feeling sorry for himself...he is not fighting to stay in his tent. Instead, he is ready to go!

**3) His decease was a departure.** Vs 15 “Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my **decease**...” I was quite intrigued to learn that “decease” in verse 15 comes from the Greek word “ex’-od-os.” Although Peter was about to be put **to death**, he didn’t consider it the end **of his life**. Instead, it was **a departure** from this life to the next! It was a **going out from one place** to another. It was not cessation—it was a **“relocation.”**

The same Greek word is used when Jesus, Peter, James, and John are all together on a mountain to pray. Luke 9:29-31 “And as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistering. And, behold, there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elias: <sup>31</sup> Who appeared in glory, and spake of His **decease** which He should accomplish at Jerusalem.”

**What a conversation** that must have been? Moses, Elijah, and Jesus talking about Jesus’ “exodus” back to heaven! Isn’t that a **great way to look at death**—as a departure and relocation! Peter and Jesus weren’t the only ones who had this perspective. Paul had it, too!

**II Cor 5:1** “For we know that if our **earthly house of this tabernacle** were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

--Here we see Paul calling his body an “earthly house of this tabernacle” that can be **dissolved**. It is **not permanent**—but the body that God gives us in the future will be!

**II Cor 5:6-8** “Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, **whilst we are at home in the body**, we are **absent from** the Lord: <sup>7</sup> (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) <sup>8</sup> We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be **absent from the body**, and to **be present** with the Lord.”

Both Peter and Paul were confident when they left this life, they would immediately be in the presence of the Lord. It was **not death** to them! It was **an exodus...a departure...a relocation!**

**What about you?** Do you have the same assurance that they do—that to be **absent from** the body means to be **present with** the Lord? **You can have** that kind of assurance—and God wants you to have that kind of assurance.

--The same Jesus died for you as for them. And Jesus is just as able—**and willing**—to **save you** as He saved them. Let’s not forget that Paul was a Christian hater—and Christian persecutor—before he was saved.

--God’s Word has not changed. The same Word that gave Peter and Paul confidence and assurance in the face of **their death** can give you confidence and assurance in the face of **your death**.

--God wants you to have that assurance; He has provided a **“know-so”**—not a ‘hope-so’—kind of salvation. **I John 5:12-13** “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. <sup>13</sup> These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; **that ye may know** that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

You can know—and God wants you to know. Do you know?

How did Peter prepare them for his death? First, by his example and perspective.

Second, by... B. Peter’s preparation for their life

This was a rather precarious time for Christians. A number of commentators point out that persecution was ramping up, Paul had already been killed and now Peter was going to be killed. That made this letter Peter’s farewell address where he was led of God to prepare them for not only persecution, but also for false teachers. So what did God lead Peter to do to prepare them for life without him? Here are 3 things:

1) In vss 1-11, he **reminds them** of the importance of growing spiritually

2) In vs 15, he wants them to **remember what he has written**. “Put **these things** in remembrance...” Let’s not miss the point. He is **not saying**, “Remember me, remember me, remember me!”

Instead, he is saying is this: “Remember **the teaching** more than the teacher! The teacher is leaving—but the teaching—the truth—will remain!”

Please turn now to II Peter 3:1. Here again we see that he wanted them to remember what **he** wrote.

Now look at vs 2. 3) Here we see that Peter—but ultimately God—wants us to be mindful of “the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets...” What is that referring to? **The OT**, right?

And “of the commandment of us the apostles.” What is that referring to? The NT books—most of which were written by this time. We also know he was referring to what Paul wrote because in vss 15-16, Peter refers to Paul’s epistles—his letters—as **Scripture**.

So...do you want to grow spiritually?

--Read and obey God’s word!

Do you want to know the great and precious promises God has for you?

--Read His Word

Do you want to have a relationship with God that is effective and fruitful and meaningful?

--Read and obey God’s Word

Do you want to not fall away from God and have a hero’s welcome into heaven?

--Read and obey God’s Word

Do you want to be able to identify false teaching and teachers?

--Read and study God’s Word

Do you want to be so confident that you are ready for death that you look at it as a departure and relocation?

--God’s Word has the answer for that, too, doesn’t it?

His name is Jesus! **Acts 4:12** “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

So what does God want **you to do** in light of what we’ve heard this morning?

1. First, be honest about whether or not you are ready to die! Peter did not fear death—to him it was a departure to heaven! Do you have that same confidence?

--You can—but only if you personally have Jesus as your Savior!

2. Second, be honest about your attitude toward the Bible. God through Peter tells us to remember what he says...and remember what the OT prophets say...and remember what the apostles say.

--In other words, remember what God says in the Bible!

But don’t just remember what God says—**believe** what God says and **obey** what He says!

--Are you doing that?

--If you are, keep it up!

--If you aren’t, get at it!