

# 2 Peter

July 16, 2023

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ online ministry. This week's message is titled "Second Peter." Thank you to Rhonda, Ed, and Don for being part of the video. The scripture reading is 2nd Peter 3, 1-7. Happy birthday this week to Dave.

## Welcome, Announcements, Prayer

Good morning and welcome. And it's so good to be here with all of you today and it's always lovely to worship together. Renee, our little Renee that comes sometimes, it's his birthday today and Peter, Peter, yeah, Peter, Mariam, and Jonathon's uncle Peter is having a birthday this week too. And continue to pray for Ruby. Ruby broke her pelvis here a couple of weeks ago, I guess a week ago, week and a half ago. So, continue to pray for her. And Darlene fell off a horse and she injured herself fairly badly and she's in the hospital so keep her in your prayers also. And let us pray.

Thank you God for the opportunity that we have to worship and the freedom we have to worship and thank you that that we can worship with each other and thank you for the faith of the people in this room and for, for their the way that they, they worship you and we, we pray that that we can be inspired by each other this morning and that that we will, will gain strength from being together. And we pray for those who are unable to be here, and we pray for people with, with spiritual health concerns. We pray for people with physical health concerns and, and that you'll, you'll be with, with all of us and, and that our faith will continue to grow day by day in Jesus' name amen.

## Communion

On a number of occasions Jesus has asked this question well, what do you, what do we have to do to be saved? And it's interesting what he says and it's interesting what he doesn't say. What he does say is to love God the Lord your God with all your heart soul mind and strength and to love your neighbor as yourself well the Jewish people that would hear these words would understand what they were because they had it was well told in in the prophetic writings that we know as the Old Testament. The Israelites grew up this was their mantra love God with all your heart soul mind and strength and love your neighbor as yourself well the question is how are we doing it that?

I think it's valuable to spend time in the Gospels because in the Gospels we have the stories of Jesus the things that he did day by day; who he talked to, how he talked to them, what he said, what kinds of things that he did, his actions. And so, we can get some clues about what this loving God and loving our neighbor is about by looking at how Jesus behaves. The epistles are also helpful in that we see people here who are trying to follow Jesus in their way and we have records of how they did that and the kinds of challenges that they had and the kinds of weaknesses that they had but you know, there's something about last words. I don't know if any of you have been with somebody in their dying moment. I have not; but here's Jesus. It says, now the 11 disciples went to Galilee to the mountain where Jesus had designated and when he's, when they saw him, they worshipped him but some doubted. Jesus came up and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth is given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you and lo, I am with you always even to the end of the age.

These are potentially the last words of Jesus and what's he saying he's saying go. Go. Go where? Go where you are. Be like me all the things that I've taught you either verbally or by actions and so if we spend time in the gospels we get a sense of what Jesus was about the kind of person that he was the kinds of things that he said the kinds of actions that he port- portrayed and so we're challenged to imitate those things, those words, and those actions.

One of the things that he did prior to his crucifixion was that he established this communion meal he was taking elements from the Israelite nation's history and he was saying this is this bread this is my body that was broken for you on the cross this is this fruit of the vine this is the blood that was shed for what so that we might know him that we might believe him and that we might live our lives in accordance to his teaching. So, we have had the children come to the front and one of the songs they've been singing is I don't want to be a banana, pineapple, I don't want to be, but I want to have the fruits of the spirit. What are those things? Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and so on. So if those things are the fruits of the spirit and this it's not just the fruit of well having a good time I'm in a spiritual mood you know I'm you know I'm in the spirit of having fun it's in the spirit the Holy Spirit that's talked about here. Baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, these three godly entities. So, when we say loving God, we're really saying loving God Jesus and the Holy Spirit to be reminded of this massive gift that God has given to us this massive love that he shows for us. The massive mercy that he shows towards us and this propels us into our lives to go and teach and to make disciples and to try to be obedient to all the things that he has said and done so as we commune today we were reminded of this great gift of love and joy and mercy and peace we're reminded of that gift and that gift propels us into our life. Let's pray.

Our Father in heaven, we are grateful for the mercy that you have on us. That you created this world and that you created all of the living things and the balance of nature then that somehow you put us in this place with special identity that in some ways we're like you. We pray, Father, that we might— despite the distractions that we have in our lives—that we might love you. Not just say that we love you but love you; that can be displayed in our words and our actions and our attitudes and our motivation. And for this feast that we have, a simple feast of the bread and the fruit of the vine, that we'll remember that great mercy that washes away our sins that we can stand before you; honor you in our lives; and honor you in our death. To this end, Father, we pray for that we might be propelled into our lives by your grace and mercy extended through your son Jesus. And it's in his name we pray, Jesus the Christ, Amen.

## Reading

### 2 Peter 3:1-7

Dear friends this is now my second letter to you. I've written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your Apostles. Above all you must understand that in the last days, scoffers will come scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, "Where's this coming he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has been since the beginning of creation." But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens came into

being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed by the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

## Sermon

Good morning, everyone, thank you for being with us today. We're going through the epistles and today we're going to be looking in 2nd Peter. Peter was, if we've read the Bible a little bit, Peter's kind of all over the place in this wonderful New Testament. He was an amazing leader. He emphasized on Pentecost what Joel the prophet had stated years previously: that in these last days God said I will pour out my spirit on all people. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy; your young men will see visions; your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my spirit and they will prophesy. And prophecy isn't just thinking of a hit in the future. Prophecy is declaring the word of the Lord: a prophetic message from God to us.

Peter also was at Pentecost which was a unique understanding where the Holy Spirit was pronounced in a mighty way and Peter said, people of Israel listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited to you by miracles, wonders, and signs, which he did among you as you yourselves know. He was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge and you, with the help of wicked men, and put him to death by nailing him to the cross but God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death for it was impossible for death to keep its grasp on him. So, when Peter writes this letter Peter had experience. He knew the power of God; he knew the love of God; the power of Jesus; and the love of Jesus; the power of the Holy Spirit; and the love of the Holy Spirit. And I guess one of the questions I want to ask ourselves is do we? Do we? Do we know that love? Do we know that wonderful experience of God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit living in us? Not just occasionally visiting us but living in us. Every breath we take we can breathe the Spirit of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. I am with you always.

So, Peter is writing to a group of churches, and he's got some powerful things to say and I'm just going to be reading several excerpts from 2nd Peter and if you would just allow the words to come to you into your heart. And he begins by saying to various people that grace and peace: They're abundant! And we offer that to you and the knowledge of Jesus Christ. And then he says this: that God's divine power, listen now, has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his glory and goodness. It overwhelms me! Through these, he has given us his very great and precious promises so that through them you may participate in this divine nature God gives us. To us, he gives us his divinity. He gives us this joy; this incredible experience of God living in us. His divine nature. Having escaped the corruption of the world caused by evil desires. So, here's his encouragement for us: For this very reason make every effort to add to your faith goodness, and to goodness add knowledge, and to knowledge add self-control, and to self-control add perseverance, and to perseverance add godliness, and to godliness, natural affection and natural affection to mutual affection, love. Love! For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you and me from being ineffective and unproductive. As Christians, we want to be some kind of example we don't want to be ineffective we want to just be able to show who we are.

Lots of conversations dealing with people regarding this wonderful Savior Jesus and what we've already read. This incredible Holy Spirit living inside us, too much to comprehend but it's interesting to me.

Going to sleep at night and knowing that God is right beside us. He doesn't leave us, not for a moment. I am—how often is he with us? —always. I will never leave you; I am with you always. I knew you before you were born and when you pass, I'm still with you. We'll be together someday. So, Peter, this incredible man who had fervor and vigor, is saying look what he gives us. It's amazing.

So, in verse 10 he says therefore my brothers and sisters make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you won't stumble, and you'll receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. One day you and I will receive this welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The kingdom that we have right here today and the kingdom that someday, when heaven and earth come together as one, it will be amazing. So, he says this: So, I want to always remind you of these things. He says, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth, I think it's important to refresh our memory. I'm going to say absolutely, absolutely, I forgot about that didn't I? I forgot about this didn't I? Oh, I forgot about this. I said I was gonna do this; I forgot about that. But he says, I don't want you to forget these things as long as you live in your own body; because I know Peter says this: I know that I will soon put it away, as our Lord Jesus Christ made it clear to me. Peter knew he was going to die and it's cultural to suggest that when Peter died he was going to be crucified the way Jesus was crucified. And history says suggests anyway that Peter said, "I don't want to be crucified the way He was. Turn me upside down." I don't know that for sure; a lot of scholars suggest that's what happened. But Peter, it didn't matter to Peter. He had to go through agony like Jesus did, but he knew that when he breathed his last breath, he knew he would be looking into the eyes of Jesus. And so will you and I. When we take our last breath, we will see the face of Jesus, and God, and the Holy Spirit. And, for many of us, our mother, our father, our little baby. All the way through this is part of who we are as Christians; the promises that God gives us that we can share with so many, so many people.

And yet there were false teachers and false prophets in the church who wanted money and they put themselves forward. And it's not a pleasant thing to read, but I'm gonna read it. He says but there were also false prophets among the people just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them, bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories. Not nice.

And then in verse 4 chapter 2: For if God did not spare angels when they sinned—stop. Angels sin? Well, some would suggest that Satan himself was a fallen angel and you know his sin. The angels of God bring glory to God but there were some angels that sinned, and they sent them away into chains of darkness to be held for judgment. And if it did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood to the ungodly people but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others. If he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes and made them an example of what's going to happen to the ungodly and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man who was distressed by the depraved conduct of the lawless, for that righteous man living among them day after day was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard. If this is so, then the Lord knows—listen—the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment of that day of judgment. No matter what is happening unto us, just keep loving Jesus because he loves us. And then there were false teachers and false prophets, and he says this—and I hope it's not too horrible to listen to—With eyes full of adultery, they never stopped sinning. They seduced the unstable they are experts in greed they are an accursed brood they have left the straight

way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Bezer who loved the wages of wickedness. And then this very interesting story, and you can check it out later, but he was rebuked for his wrongdoing. He was rebuked by a donkey. You've got to read that story; it's an interesting story. An animal without speech, who spoke with the human voice and restrained the prophet's madness. God will use anything to get our attention. Anything. Even, even a donkey speaking to us. Somehow, God will get his message to us. But he said there are people that know all that it doesn't matter these people are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them for they mouth empty, boastful words and by appealing to the lustful desires—appealing to the lustful desires of their human nature, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error. They promise them freedom while they themselves are slaves of depravity.

Well, enough of the negative. So in chapter 3 this wonderful man Peter says let me tell you about the day of the Lord. He says this: Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I've written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your Apostles. Above all, you must understand that in the last days (some translations say in these last days), scoffers will come scoffing, following their own evil desires, and they will say, "Where's this coming that he's promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on just as it has since creation." But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed of water and by water and by these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. Remember the story of Noah? By the same word, the present heavens and earth reserved for fire being kept for the day of judgment and destruction on the ungodly and that should fear anyone. If they said I don't believe in God, I want nothing to do with it. That's a deep, deep chasm to be in. So, he says but do not forget this one thing dear friends with the Lord a day is like a thousand years and a thousand years are like a day. But the Lord is not slow in keeping his promise as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patiently waiting with you, not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance. I'm waiting because I want more and more and more people to come to Christ Jesus. We're not sure when that's going to be but Peter says this but the day of the Lord will come like a thief the heavens will disappear with the roar, the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people are we to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives —listen—as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with this promise we're looking forward to—listen—a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells. That's a promise for us and Peter helps us to remind us. So, in verse 18 here's one of the ways that we can do this: But grow. Grow in the grace, grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him both now and forever, amen. It's a precious, precious book.

In Acts chapter 3, Peter speaking: Repent then, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out. The times of refreshing may come from the Lord and that he may send the Messiah who has been appointed for you, this Jesus. Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything as he promised long ago by his holy prophets. One day, that will come true. Peter, impetuous Peter, rugged Peter, aggressive Peter, writes some of the most tender words in the scripture for all of us. It's a hug from God saying, "I know things were rough but remember here are my precious

promises for you and I have never made a promise that I've gone back." The promise of Jesus Christ. Thank you, Peter for writing such an amazing book. Amen.

## Closing

I'm going to read from Psalms 19 and this turns into a prayer part way through. And it says: The word of the Lord (which is our Bibles) the word of the Lord is perfect; it gives us new strength. That the commands of the Lord are trustworthy; giving wisdom to those who lack it. The laws of the Lord are right and those who obey them are happy. The commands of the Lord are just and give understanding to the mind. Reverence for the Lord is good; it will continue forever. The judgments of the Lord are just; they are always fair; they are more desirable than the finest gold; they are sweeter than the purest honey. They give knowledge to me, your servant. I am rewarded for obeying them. And now it turns into a prayer and this is where it's just: None of us can see our own errors. Deliver us Lord from hidden faults; keep us safe also from willful sins. Don't let them rule over us. Then we shall be perfect and free from evil and sin. May my words and my thoughts be acceptable to you, Oh Lord, my refuge, and my Redeemer. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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