

2 Peter 1:12-15 “Gospel Reminders”

Intro/Context:

- a. As we come to 2 Peter today we get a chance to see Peter’s pastoral heart on display... in these four verses Peter is going to write what many call his last testament...
 - Here he gives us the reason for writing this book and the heart of his ministry as an apostle...
 - And what we find is that Peter’s ministry can be labeled as “A Ministry of Gospel Reminders”
 - So today I want us to recognize three truths about Gospel Reminders...

M.I. “Regular gospel reminders stir us and sustain us in our Christian Lives.”

1. We all need Gospel Reminders

- a. As we look at v.12 it is clear that Peter also understands the problem of forgetfulness... he writes in v.12 “Therefore I will always remind you about these things.”
 - When Peter refers to “these things” he most likely has v.1-11 in mind... could be this entire letter...
 - What has Peter said already? In the first eleven verses Peter has preached a sermon to these believers... and that sermon could be
 - One subject Peter has already spoken of is the Grace of God seen in our salvation... v.1 To those who have received a faith equal to ours through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ... in v.3-4 he spoke about the calling from God that Christians receive and the new nature we receive in union with Christ...
 - Peter also spoke about the new power the readers have... that they are to add, in increasing measure, qualities of life that will give them assurance of their salvation...
- b. And so out of love for these people... Peter says that as long as he can he is going to remind them of these truths!
 - There is in Peter an **urgency** to keep the truth before them... and we see this in other places in scripture as well...
 - Romans 15:14-15
- c. So Peter desires to remind these people of Gospel truth... to remind them of God’s commands... to remind them of God’s promises... but notice the rest of v.12 “even though you know them and are established in the truth you now have...”

- As Peter writes this letter he is telling the readers... I'm not telling you anything you don't already know... the passage in Romans said the same thing...
 - He says that they are already "established" (or strengthened) in the truth they now have...
 - So why such a desire to remind them? Because of what we already have mentioned... **we are so prone to forget!**
 - Many of us have heard these foundational truths... we have been strengthened by them, even, but over time they become more difficult to remember...
 - if we allow ourselves to not go under the house and check the foundation for long enough... it will be easy for things that we were once established in to become shaky...
 - The ministry of God's Word that Peter displays for us here is not a ministry of new information, but a ministry of reminding the people of what God has already said!
- d. As I studied this week I couldn't help but think of Old Testament passages that point to the problem of forgetfulness...
- In Genesis 3 Eve misquotes God's command about the tree of the knowledge of evil and good... leading to sin...
 - In Genesis 16 Abraham forgets God's promise that he will have a son with Sarah, and so he goes his own way and has a child with Hagar...
 - The whole book of Judges is a picture of what happens when God's people forget the commands and promises of God...
 - And in each of these situations what was needed was not a new revelation from God, but a fresh reminder of what God had already said!
 - We don't need a new foundation, a new faith... we need to be reminded of God's glorious Gospel and his clear instructions... and to allow that to reinforce us, daily, as we go...

2. Gospel Reminders Awaken us to Godly Living

- a. As we move into v.13 what we realize is that Peter's urgency to bring these reminders, even the entirety of this letter, before these people, is exasperated by the fact that he is nearing his death...
- V.13-14 I think it is right, as long as I am in this bodily tent, to wake you up with a reminder, ¹⁴ since I know that I will soon lay aside my tent, as our Lord Jesus Christ has indeed made clear to me.
 - Peter describes his body as a tent... he sees himself, as he sees all Christians, as a sojourner... this life and body as a temporary home.

- And from his own words he says that Jesus has made it clear to him that his life will soon end... what does this mean?
 - Most likely this refers back to his last words with Jesus in **John 21**
 - Jesus told Peter that he would die for him... and Peter looks around at his current circumstances... now in his 60s with the persecution of Nero beginning... and he realizes his time is short...
- b. So with this reality in his mind what does he plan to do? What does he plan to do? He plans to call others to do what he has done for thirty years... follow Jesus...
- In says that it is right for him to “wake you up” (stir) with a reminder...
 - **Mark 4 - “Wake up!”**
 - Peter’s intention, his desire, his heart, is not information, but transformation... Romans 12:1-2... the Gospel reminders are meant to awaken the Gospel affections and lead to Godly living...
 - Thomas Schreiner says it this way... **“Peter hoped his words would stab believers awake so they would reject what the opponents taught. Believers know the Gospel, yet they must, in a sense, relearn it everyday.”**
- c. The truth is that when the Bible speaks of setting up a reminder it does so with the intention of stirring the hearts of people to worship and obedience...
- Joshua 3-4... people finally get to enter the Promised Land... at this moment it is easy to be obedient... it is easy to worship... but God knows that our affections, overtime, can wane...
 - So when the people cross the water halts... and they set up a memorial of stones there... and the purpose given for the stones is seen in v.20-24...
 - The point is not to just remember that God stopped the river... it is not only to point back to God splitting the Red Sea... it is to bring the people to a fresh reverence of the Lord, which leads to their obedience!
- d. The reminders that we hear each week must create in us a hunger for God’s Word, a hatred of our sin, a desperation for Christ’s presence, a zeal for his glory!
- Simply receiving the truth is good but it is not the intended end! The abundant life of the Christian is found when the word stirs us to action...
 - v.8 - Peter wants to protect the people from being useless and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ...
 - **So the question, then, is this... are you awake? Does God’s Word awaken your heart? Does it stir you to worship? Lead you to live Godly Lives?**
 - Does it still move you to know that Christ died for you? Are you still invigorated by his love? Are you amazed by his majesty? Jesus, the son of God, took God’s wrath, that you may be righteous! May that awaken us to worship!

- This is Peter's heart as he writes this letter... not for you to gather information to store in your mind... but to receive truth that will stir your heart.

3. Gospel Reminders have Eternal Significance

- As we close this short section we do so with the final verse... v.15. Twice in the first eleven verses Peter used the phrase "make every effort."
 - In v.5 he says to the reader... " ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with goodness, goodness with knowledge, ⁶ knowledge with self-control, self-control with endurance, endurance with godliness, ⁷ godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love."
 - In v.10 he says, "Therefore, brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election, because if you do these things you will never stumble."
 - Now in v.15 Peter describes his own efforts... "And I will also make every effort so that you are able to recall these things at any time after my departure."
- Peter's effort here is not that he will be remembered... but that the message he proclaims be remembered...
 - Peter is fighting so hard to write this letter... to explain these truths... to give these warnings... to urge these readers to holiness... not that he will be remembered, but so that God's people will be strengthened by God's Word!
 - Peter is living out the truths of **Isaiah 40:6-8**
 - Peter is fading... Peter is falling... but he knows that the Word of God will endure forever... and so he makes every effort to continuously put that Word before them... and now, 2,000 years later, before us...
 - There is so much truth I know, because someone taught me it, but so much of it I have forgotten who taught it to me first...
 - And so all of us who believe in the power of God's Word should desire to be eternal investors in the lives of others...
 - Parents... be Gospel reminders to your children... Sunday School teachers... be Gospel reminders to your classes... Young people, be gospel reminders to your friends! Make every effort to put THIS BOOK before the people you love because you are temporary, but the effects of this Word on the lives of the people you love is eternal!
- So Peter says he will make every effort... but there is something here that Peter can't do for the people he is writing to... and this is where I want us to close our time today...

- Peter says that he will make every effort “so that you are able to recall these things at any time” after his departure...
 - Peter can write the letter, but he cannot force the people to read... he can give the reminder, but he cannot force the people to recall...
 - Peter lays the truth before them, but it is up to them to pick it up...
- d. So what I want to do, as we close, is to implore you, plead with you, to place yourself in position to receive, as often as possible, these Gospel reminders...
- There are many good things that you can invest in...
 - But there is only one investment that you can make which is eternal... and it is your investment in your walk with Christ!
 - We must make it a priority to engage with God through His Word because it is this investment that will last forever...
 - Psalm 1:1-2

Conclusion:

- a. So what should you do? Be invested in a local church that preaches the Bible, have time each day to be in God’s Word, be accountable with others in your Bible reading, set reminders to be reminded of the Gospel!