

## **Sermon Outline**

### **"The Stability of Our Times"**

**2 Peter series, part 1 – 2 Peter 1:1-2 – Robin Boisvert – September 18, 2011**

#### **Overview of 2 Peter**

1. Main Theme: Peter was concerned about the stability of the faith of the saints and churches to which he was writing. He was concerned because false teachers threatened their stability. These false teachers were denying Christ's redeeming work and the second coming of Christ, and enticing many to follow in their example of sensuality. Peter wanted the saints and churches established in the truth; he wanted them to be stable and strong. He knew that if these false teachers with their heretical ideas were not challenged, the Christians and their witness would suffer. Peter strongly confronts the heretical teaching so the saints could "grow in the grace and knowledge" of Christ. Below are verses that highlight Peter's theme [emphases added]:
  - a. "Be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure." (2 Peter 1:10)
  - b. "But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them ... And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. And in their greed they will exploit you with false words." (2 Peter 2:1-3)
  - c. "I intend to remind you of these qualities though you know them and are established in the truth that you have." (2 Peter 1:12)
  - d. "You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ..." (2 Peter 3:17-18)
2. Author: Peter, the apostle and eyewitness of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, is the author of this letter.
  - a. Peter, foremost among the disciples, was bold, impetuous, first to speak, and first to act. Peter also made many mistakes. He rebuked Jesus for his comment about his death; he denied knowing Jesus at Jesus' trial; and, fearing men's opinion, he separated himself from Gentile Christians (Galatians 2) only to be publically rebuked by the Apostle Paul. Additionally, if Peter was the source of Mark's gospel, then he humbly numbered himself among those who were extremely slow to grasp who Jesus really was.
  - b. In 2 Peter 1:1, Peter describes himself, first, as a servant of Jesus Christ, which could also be translated "slave." Peter had seen Jesus' example of wrapping a towel around

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his waist and stooping low to wash the disciples' feet. Peter emulated Jesus and, therefore, thought of himself, first, in the lowly position of a slave of his Master, Jesus.

- c. Peter was also an apostle, which means one sent on a mission with the message of the gospel. He was an eyewitness of the sufferings of Christ and the glory of Christ's resurrection. He was a man with a message, a man with a mission, and a man commissioned to proclaim that message.
- 3. Date of Letter: Peter was writing this letter near the time of his death (AD 64-67). He is about to be executed, probably at the hands of Nero. These are his last words. In this farewell letter, Peter is not concerned about how he will be remembered, but what the saints will remember about God, about Jesus and about the message of the gospel.
- 4. Audience: He was probably writing to the same churches as his first letter (see 3:1), which were elect exiles in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey).
  - a. The letter is "... to those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours... [emphasis added]" Ours is a faith of equal standing with the apostles, a faith equally precious and privileged as Peter's. We all stand at the foot of the cross equally favored, equally blessed and equally loved.

## **What Do We Need to Know to Be Established?**

- 1. Peter's opening greeting (2 Peter 1:2) answers the above question, "May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord [emphasis added]." To be established, we need the knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord. We need to know who Jesus is, what he has done and wholeheartedly believe it.
- 2. In verses 1-2, Peter helps us to grow in knowing Jesus by mentioning him three times in four different ways:
  - a. Jesus as Christ – Christ is Jesus' title. It is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word, *Messiah* or *Messiah*, which literally means, the anointed one. In the Old Testament, there were three offices that were anointed: the offices of prophet, priest and king. The Messiah would combine all three.
  - b. Jesus as Savior – The designation "Savior" occurs only 16 times in the New Testament. A Savior saves, delivers and rescues. But from what has Jesus saved and delivered us? Jesus saves us from the wrath of God for our sins and delivers us from the punishment we deserve. And he did it by taking that punishment on himself.
  - c. Jesus as God – the grammatical construction presents Jesus as fully God. All that God is, Jesus is.

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- d. Jesus as Lord – This is the most common designation in the New Testament for Jesus. This represents the covenantal aspect of God and is most closely tied to the Old Testament name of God, Yahweh. It means that Jesus has authority over everything: over the elements, over sickness, over sin, over the demonic realm, over death, and over the cosmos. And he is not just a lord; he is the Lord of lords and King of kings. And one day, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord (Philippians 2:10-11).

## **Fellowship Starters**

1. Take time as a Care Group to read the entire letter of 2 Peter.
2. In unstable and troubling times, where do tend to run for comfort, security and refuge? If Christ were your stability, your “solid rock,” how would your life be different?
3. When you are tempted to anxiety and fear, what truths and promises from God’s Word bring stability to your soul?
4. Robin shared that, “stability comes from knowing God and Jesus our Lord.” What, in your knowledge of God’s truth, do you need to understand more fully?
5. How does the truth that all believers are equally favored, equally blessed and equally loved (2 Peter 1:1) stir fresh gratefulness and affection in your heart toward God?