

## 2 Peter 3 – Fellowship Group Notes – 23/24 July 2014

Peter's primary concerns in writing this letter are wrapped up in this final chapter. The actual teaching of the false teachers becomes clear and Peter shows how doctrine, whether good or bad leads to living that's in turn either good or bad. Peter urges Christians to remember what they've been taught; to live for the world to come.

### **V1-3 – A reminder**

- To remind ourselves; look back over 2 Peter. What have been the key themes of Peter's letter?
- **A key theme of 2 Peter:** Look at 2 Peter 1:12, 13, 15, 3:2, 8. Then look at 2 Peter 1:9, 3:5. How important does Peter think it is that his audience remember what they've already been taught? How does this apply to us?
- *Peter is not writing and teaching 'new' truths to these Christians (3:1-2). These are things they have already been taught and should remember.* Do we 'rest on our laurels' too much, particularly those who might be more mature Christians and forget what we've already been taught?
- What kind of remembering do you think Peter is talking about? Is this an 'intellectual' activity? An act of our will? Or both? How can we practically help ourselves and each other to remember these truths?
- Compare 3:1 with 1 Peter 1:13; how does doctrine lead to action in our lives? Through 2 Peter how do we see the negative example of this with the false teachers and their doctrine and life? How much more then should we remember the things we've already been taught?

### **V4-7 – The question raised by false teachers and the reason they ask, Peter's answer**

- What's the reason/motive behind this question? (v3-5) What's the consequence if Christ's not returning, and there is no coming judgement? What do we learn about these false teachers from v5?
- How does Peter answer the question? What's the link between Peter's answer and the false teacher's reason and error (v5)?
- Bearing in mind the whole of 2 Peter and the theme of doctrine leading to life (or theology leading to morals) why do you think Peter doesn't give great depth to the details of Jesus' return and the coming judgement?

### **V8-10 – The 'delay'**

- Why the delay? For what reason is God patient? Is it a delay in judgment or a delay of grace? *See Psalm 90:4, and Romans 2:4, 9:22-23 for more on this.*
- How can we misinterpret v9? If *all* people are saved how do we reconcile this verse with 3:7? How does John 3:16 help us with this? *The offer is open to all, but not all will accept.*
- What's the counter balance to this truth in v10?
- What's the implication of God's patience for salvation for us Christians? Because of this truth, what is our mission? *Dick Lucas: "Peter's reason here, that the slowness is caused by God's patience, must mean that we are to use the time left to spread the news about it. Evangelism leaps to the top of the Christian agenda".*

### **V11-14 – This world will be burned, therefore we live for the world to come**

- First look at Peter's introductory verses in 1:4 and 1:11 to set this next section in the whole context of the letter.
- What then as Peter explains in v11-14, is the implication of v10? How should the *future* truth of v10 shape our living *now*? *Perhaps discuss the following quotes:*
  - *Richard Sibbes: "The life of a Christian is wondrously ruled in this world by the consideration and meditation of the life of another world. Nothing more steers the life of a Christian here than the consideration of the life hereafter."*
  - *Peter H. Davids: "Because nothing in this world is lasting, it therefore makes sense for the believers to live for the coming age and its values. Eschatology determines ethics."*

### **V15-16 – Paul's writing is counted as authoritative scripture; don't twist it!**

- **A valuable side point:** what do we learn about the formation of the bible as we have it from the last statement in v16? *The word Peter uses is the same word used to describe the OT. Peter counts Paul's writings equally alongside the OT.*
- How have we seen the false teachers ignore and twist words they've found hard to understand and believe? *See 1 Thessalonians 5, especially v1-3 for potential context of 2 Peter 3:15-16.*

### **V17-18 – Summary of 2 Peter**

- How do v17-18 summarise the whole of 2 Peter and it's key theme's and teaching?
- How does Peter come back to this key theme of doctrine leading to life?

Pray: That God would enable us to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ, and that we would remember to remind ourselves and each other of these truths.