

# Beloved In 2 Peter 3

Intro: Peter near the end of his life (martyred during the Neronian persecution probably about AD 67 and wrote 2 Peter around AD 66 or 67) writes to brethren to guard them against false teachers and doctrines and safeguard them with knowledge. As he comes to the end of his letter, Peter uses the powerful term *beloved* (ἀγαπητός—*agapetos*) four times in chapter 3. Peter's love for them was overflowing. Let us learn some lessons from these four usages.

## I. BE MINDFUL

A. **2 Pet. 3:1-2** <sup>1</sup>This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: <sup>2</sup>That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:"

### B. We are to be mindful of the great truths of God's Word.

1. There would be scoffers—false teachers.
  - a. Contextually it has reference to those who deny Christ Second (final) Coming.
    - (1) 2 Pet. 3:4 <sup>4</sup>And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation."
    - (2) 2 Pet. 3:9-10 <sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. <sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."
  - b. Would extend to any false teacher.
    - (1) 2 Pet. 3:16 <sup>16</sup>As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."
    - (2) 2 Pet. 2:1 <sup>1</sup>But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."
    - (3) 2 Pet. 2:3 <sup>3</sup>And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."
    - (4) 2 Pet. 2:12 <sup>12</sup>But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;"
    - (5) 2 Pet. 2:18-19 <sup>18</sup>For when they speak great swelling *words* of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much* wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. <sup>19</sup>While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage."
2. We need to be reminded as to how to live.
  - a. 2 Pet. 1:3-7 <sup>3</sup>According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: <sup>4</sup>Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. <sup>5</sup>And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; <sup>6</sup>And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; <sup>7</sup>And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."
  - b. 2 Pet. 3:11, 14 <sup>11</sup>Seeing then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, <sup>12</sup>Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? <sup>13</sup>Nevertheless we,

according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. <sup>14</sup>Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”

3. We need to be reminded as to why we are to live as we should.
  - a. Positive:
    - (1) Will not be barren or unfruitful; 2 Pet. 1:8 “<sup>8</sup>For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
    - (2) 2 Pet. 1:10-11 “<sup>10</sup>Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: <sup>11</sup>For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”
    - (3) 2 Pet. 3:12-13 “<sup>12</sup>Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? <sup>13</sup>Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”
  - b. Negative
    - (1) Blind and forgotten; 2 Pet. 1:9 “<sup>9</sup>But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.”
    - (2) Destruction and damnation; 2 Pet. 1:1, 3 “<sup>1</sup>But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. <sup>2</sup>And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. <sup>3</sup>And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.”
    - (3) Punished; 2 Pet. 2:9 “<sup>9</sup>The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished:”

### C. These great truths were spoken of by:

1. The Old Testament prophets
2. The apostles
3. Christ

## II. BE NOT IGNORANT

**A. 2 Pet. 3:8** “<sup>8</sup>But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.”

### B. There is no need for us to be ignorant.

1. Ignorant comes from *λανθάνω* (*lanthano*) which means “is hidden from someone, escapes someone’s notice” (BDAG).
2. It is not someone who is incapable of knowing.

### C. God has revealed things to us.

1. John 7:17 “<sup>17</sup>If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself.”
2. John 8:32 “<sup>32</sup>And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”
3. 1 Cor. 2:6-13 “<sup>6</sup>Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: <sup>7</sup>But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, *even* the hidden *wisdom*, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: <sup>8</sup>Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. <sup>9</sup>But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the

things which God hath prepared for them that love him. <sup>10</sup> But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. <sup>11</sup> For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. <sup>12</sup> Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. <sup>13</sup> Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

#### D. We are not to be ignorant of God's nature.

1. God is truthful and faithful.
  - a. Deu. 32:4 <sup>4</sup> "He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."
  - b. Psa. 31:5 <sup>5</sup> "Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD God of truth."
  - c. Isa. 65:16 <sup>16</sup> "That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the God of truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes."
  - d. God cannot lie.
    - (1) Tit. 1:2 <sup>2</sup> "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;"
    - (2) Heb. 6:18 <sup>18</sup> "That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:"
2. God will fulfil His promise.
  - a. Time does not matter or alter it
    - (1) This is the context of the statement.
    - (2) While not the context, God is eternal and limited by time.
  - b. The day of the Lord will come.

#### E. It takes work or effort on our part.

1. 2 Tim. 2:15 <sup>15</sup> "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."
2. John 6:27 <sup>27</sup> "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."

#### F. The awful consequences or failure of ignorance.

1. Isa. 5:13 <sup>13</sup> "Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because *they have* no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst."
2. Hos. 4:1, 6 <sup>1</sup> "Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel: for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because *there is* no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land.... <sup>6</sup> My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children."

### III. BE DILIGENT

- A. 2 Pet. 3:14 <sup>14</sup> "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."
- B. Diligent:
  1. It is from the Greek σπουδάζω (spoudazo).
  2. It means, to make every effort, to work hard, to do all that one can, to do one's best to.
  3. Peter also uses it in 2 Pet. 1:10, 15 <sup>10</sup> "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: <sup>11</sup> For so an entrance shall be ministered unto

you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup> 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; <sup>14</sup> Knowing that shortly I must put off *this* my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. <sup>15</sup> Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.”

4. Among other places, it is translated *study* (KJV) in 2 Tim. 2:15 “<sup>15</sup> Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

### C. In Peace

1. *Diligent* is translated *Endeavoring* (KJV) in Eph. 4:3 “<sup>3</sup> Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”
  - a. When we keep the seven ones in Eph. 4:4-6 (<sup>4</sup> *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; <sup>5</sup> One Lord, one faith, one baptism, <sup>6</sup> One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.”) we will have unity.
  - b. When we have that unity, we will have peace.
2. This would be peace in all its aspects:
  - a. Peace with God
    - (1) Rom. 5:1 “<sup>1</sup> Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:”
    - (2) Col. 1:20-22 “<sup>20</sup> And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven. <sup>21</sup> And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled <sup>22</sup> In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:”
    - (3) This peace comes from our obedience to God’s commands:
      - (a) In becoming a Christian.
      - (b) In living the Christian life.
  - b. Peace with self
    - (1) John 14:27 “<sup>27</sup> Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”
    - (2) Phi. 4:7 “<sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”
  - c. Peace with others
    - (1) Rom. 12:18 “<sup>18</sup> If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.”
    - (2) Heb. 12:14 “<sup>14</sup> Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:”

### D. Without spot and blameless

1. The background of this statement is the sacrificial system in the Old Testament.
  - a. The only animals acceptable for sacrifice were those without spot and blemish.
  - b. It found its fulfilment in Christ; 1 Pet. 1:19 “<sup>19</sup> But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:”
2. These are the opposite of the false teachers, libertines, and mockers; 2 Pet. 2:13 “<sup>13</sup> And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, *as* they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you;”
3. They are describing someone who has the cleansing blood of Christ washing their sins away.
  - a. We are cleansed by the blood of Christ;
    - (1) 1 John 1:7 “<sup>7</sup> But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

- (2) Rev. 1:5 <sup>45</sup> And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,”
- b. Seen initially in the water of baptism.
  - (1) Acts 22:16 <sup>16</sup> And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”
  - (2) Acts 2:38 <sup>38</sup> Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”
- c. We have the continual cleansing as we walk in the light.
  - (1) 1 John 1:7-9 <sup>7</sup> But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. <sup>8</sup> If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. <sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
  - (2) As we repent of our sins and pray to God for forgiveness; Acts 8:21-24 <sup>21</sup> Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. <sup>22</sup> Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. <sup>23</sup> For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and *in* the bond of iniquity. <sup>24</sup> Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.”
- d. It is then our spiritual sacrifices are acceptable to God.
  - (1) 1 Pet. 2:5, 9 <sup>5</sup> Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. <sup>6</sup> Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. <sup>7</sup> Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, <sup>8</sup> And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, *even to them* which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. <sup>9</sup> But ye *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:”
  - (2) Heb. 13:15-16 <sup>15</sup> By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of *our* lips giving thanks to his name. <sup>16</sup> But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.”

#### IV. BEWARE

- A. 2 Pet. 3:17 <sup>17</sup> Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know *these things* before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness.”
  - 1. They knew in advance regarding these matters and serves as the basis for the exhortation that follows.
  - 2. There are two possibilities grammatically:
    - a. They are coordinate circumstances:
      - (1) Beware not to be led astray.
      - (2) Beware not to fall.
    - b. That it is explanatory (as the KJV, NKJV, ASV) has:
      - (1) They were to beware not to be led astray.
      - (2) Being led astray would cause them to fall.
  - 3. Both are possible from a grammatical and Scriptural standpoint.

## B. Beware lest being led astray.

1. This word was used by Paul regarding Barnabas.
  - a. Gal. 2:13 <sup>13</sup>“And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.”
  - b. Peter had come from Jerusalem causing Barnabas to be led astray and commit hypocrisy.
2. Those causing others to be led away were the wicked.
  - a. It is used of the men of Sodom; 2 Pet. 2:7 <sup>7</sup>“And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:”
  - b. Our actions are influenced by others.
    - (1) 1 Cor. 15:33 <sup>33</sup>“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”
    - (2) Pro. 13:20 <sup>20</sup>“He that walketh with wise *men* shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.”
    - (3) Thus, we separate ourselves from them:
      - (a) 2 Cor. 6:14, 17 <sup>14</sup>“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? <sup>15</sup>And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? <sup>16</sup>And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. <sup>17</sup>Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *things*; and I will receive you,”
      - (b) Eph. 5:11 <sup>11</sup>“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*.”
3. The immediate context is false teachers.
  - a. Those who wrest Paul’s writings to their own destruction; 2 Pet. 3:15-16 <sup>15</sup>“And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; <sup>16</sup>As also in all *his* epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as *they do* also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.”
  - b. The scoffers denying the Lord’s coming; 2 Pet. 3:3-15 <sup>3</sup>“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, <sup>4</sup>And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation. <sup>5</sup>For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: <sup>6</sup>Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: <sup>7</sup>But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. <sup>8</sup>But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day *is* with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. <sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. <sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. <sup>11</sup>Seeing then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, <sup>12</sup>Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? <sup>13</sup>Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. <sup>14</sup>Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. <sup>15</sup>And account *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you;”

- c. 2 Pet. 2:1 “<sup>1</sup> But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”
- 4. This corresponds with the total context of the Bible.
  - a. Mat. 7:15 “<sup>15</sup> Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”
  - b. Acts 20:29-30 “<sup>29</sup> For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. <sup>30</sup> Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”
  - c. Phi. 3:2 “<sup>2</sup> Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision.”
  - d. 2 Tim. 2:16-18 “<sup>16</sup> But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. <sup>17</sup> And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; <sup>18</sup> Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.”
  - e. 1 John 4:1 “<sup>1</sup> Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

### C. Beware not to fall.

1. Some teach the impossibility of apostasy (falling).
2. The Scriptures teach that we can fall so we need to beware.
  - a. 1 Cor. 10:12 “<sup>12</sup> Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”
  - b. Gal. 5:4 “<sup>4</sup> Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”
3. Avoiding falling:
  - a. Adding the Christian graces; 2 Pet. 1:10 “<sup>10</sup> Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:”
  - b. 2 Pet. 3:18 “<sup>18</sup> But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and for ever. Amen.”

Conclusion: Peter had a sincere love for his brethren and desired their salvation, thus with the tenderest care and compassion he encourages and warns them. It serves as an encouragement and warning to us as well. Let us make sure we are mindful of the right things and not ignorant of the great truths God has revealed and be diligent and beware of those things that might lead us astray.