**Members of One Another**

2 Peter 1:1-2

**Good Morning Beloved,**

* We start a new sermon series today…
  + As we went through the book of Esther, each sermon was highlighting an attribute of God… his love, power, wisdom.
  + In our new 12-week series, we will go through 2 Peter.
    - It is written by the Apostle Peter at the end of his life.
      * Roman Historians recall that those associated with Peter (and maybe this was even the way Peter died) probably died by…
        + Being covered with wild beasts’ skins…
        + Torn to death by dogs…
        + Fastened on crosses…
        + And as daylight failed… burned to serve a torch.[[1]](#footnote-1)
* Yet the scriptures make clear… the biggest threat is not from the hostilities of the world… but by the false teachings and immoral lives of the unrighteous in the church.
  + Because of the emphasis from the book itself…
    - Each sermon in this series will draw attention to God’s commands and descriptions of the church.
      * BE devoted to one another (Rom. 12:10a)
      * Accept one another (Rom. 15:7)
      * Edifying one another (Rom. 14:19)
      * Honoring one another (Rom. 12:10b)
* How should we pray?
  + 2 Peter… pure and zealous waiting for the returning Lord.
    - Dustin Benge in *The Loveliest Place: The Beauty and Glory of the Church*
      * “… the church is the brilliant reflection of God’s beauty and loveliness through Christ to the world.
      * If we accurately grasped the church’s beauty and loveliness in all its glorious richness, how dramatically our lives would more appropriately reflect God’s plan and purpose. How quickly we would reject petty squabbles that mar our snow-white garments. How lovingly we would serve one another by following the self-denying footsteps of our bridegroom.
      * Behold, you are beautiful! Beholding the church’s beauty changes everything.” (p. 28)
* Benge seems to draw from 2 Cor. 3:18… *18 And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.*

**Reading of God’s Word**

*1 Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ,*

*To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:*

*2 May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.*

**Preaching of God’s Word**

1. **Unity (vs. 1a)**
   1. *1 Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ,*
      1. What is it that binds the church together in unity?
         1. It is not ethnicity… not education… nor income levels.
         2. It is what Matthew 16 teaches us.
            1. *13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16 Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” 17 And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

Affirmation of Blessing (vs. 17)[[2]](#footnote-2) – blessed because you know the person that the father has revealed… JESUS

Promise of Building (vs. 18) – Christ will build “MY” church… personal. He will build his church as living stones on the teachings of the apostles!

Assurance of Victory (vs. 18) – Hell shall not prevail… evil is on the defensive. We have healing in our wings.

* + 1. The unity for the church is built on the profession of Peter… not the person of Peter.
       1. The unity and fellowship we have is in confessing with our hearts, souls, minds, and strength…
          1. “You (Jesus) are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”
    2. But there is a problem impacting the church that led Peter to write.
       1. False teachers are denying God’s authority (2 Peter 2:10).
          1. Brannon Crowe – “How do they deny God’s authority? They do so by denying, despising, or ignoring God’s Word. But it is not possible to love God and laugh off his authority over our lives, which comes primarily through his Word.”[[3]](#footnote-3)
       2. In order to confront those who abuse the Flock of God,
          1. Peter… the disciple whom the Risen Savior commissioned to “feed my lambs” (John 21:15)…

Now communicates the Word of God with authority.

* 1. Peter writes as *A servant and apostle of Jesus Christ.*
     1. *Servant*
        1. Peter had his feet washed by Jesus and then was told…
           1. John 13 - *14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. 16 Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.*
        2. Peter is a servant… but the word in this context communicates authority.
           1. Moses in Exodus 3:10
           2. Gideon in Judges 6:14
           3. Isaiah in 6:8
           4. Jeremiah in 1:7
           5. Ezekiel in 2:3

Spoken as servants of God only communicating the very words of the Living and True God.

* + - 1. Peter now takes up that same role as a servant of God and as…
    1. *Apostle of Jesus Christ*
       1. The word “apostle” means “sent one”…
          1. So in one way we could say that missionaries are sent… All Christians are sent…
       2. But the meaning here in context is that Peter is a distinctly commissioned representative of Jesus Christ.
          1. Dick Lucas notes… “He (Peter) is claiming to be the New Testament equivalent of an Old Testament prophet.”[[4]](#footnote-4)
    2. Beloved… our unity come because of Christ’s glory and the Prophetic Word.
       1. *20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. 21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*
  1. Application: Pray for the Church to be on “the same mind with one another” (NASB) Romans 15:5-6
     1. *5 May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, 6 that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
  2. Transition: Because God speaks we are not only united… we are humbled.

1. **Humility (vs. 1b)**
   1. *To those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:*
      1. This sentence is critical for understanding the letter.
         1. *We have obtained a faith*
            1. In Jude 3… we received the good news of *the faith*… meaning the facts of what God has done in Christ.
            2. But here *a faith*… means the inward believing in Jesus Christ.

John 6:47 - *Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.*

* + - 1. *of equal standing with ours*
         1. The Apostle writes to the weakest believer (1 Cor. 8)
         2. The Jew writes to the Gentile (Gal. 3:28)
         3. The man who saw Jesus face to face writes to those who believe but never saw (John 20:29)

Thus the title of this sermon… that we are members of one another.

* + - 1. *by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:*
         1. Scholars differ on how to take this word righteousness.

View #1 – We are all declared righteous because of Christ.

Just as Peter’s other letter spoke of being sprinkled with the blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:1)… you status is restored… just like the fisherman experienced with Christ after the resurrection.

View #2 – We are all pursuing righteousness because of Christ.

Just as Peter’s other letter spoke “for obedience to Jesus Christ”… thus contrasting the way of the false teachers mentioned in chapter 2 of this letter.

* + - 1. Either way we understand that one phrase… both ideas are true.
         1. Salvation is a free gift from God… we do not earn it (2 Peter 1:3)
         2. The free gift of God leads us to strive to make your calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:10).
    1. Application: Pray for every Christian to work hard at building up the body of Christ.
       1. Romans 15:4-5 - *4 For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.*
  1. Lastly… there is a clear call for unity… and humility… to blossom into…

1. **Maturity (vs. 2)**
   1. *2 May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.*
      1. The body analogy is so helpful.
         1. Here is an eye being committed to the health and well-being of a hand.
         2. A foot being concerned for the care a spleen.
            1. The Apostle Peter is modeling what it means to “be devoted to one another in brotherly love.” (Rom. 12:10a).

The disciple who wanted to call down fire from heaven… now wanted the saints to abound in GRACE.

The zealot who chopped off another man’s ear… now pleads for PEACE.

* + - 1. There is no apathy in this older man’s thought life as he nears his death.
         1. Instead there is a prayer for the saint to grow in…

Doctrinal purity (1:5-6; 3:18)

And personal devotion (1:3, 8; 2:20-21).

* 1. Application: Pray for every Christian to want good for one another.

1. **Conclusion**
   1. Why a series on 2 Peter with a focus on the church?
      1. Col. 1:18-20 - *18 And he (Jesus Christ) is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. 19 For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.*

**Prayer (2 Peter 3:17-18)**

*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. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*

**Benediction (2 Peter 1:2)**  
*May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.*

1. Dick Lucas, *2 Peter*, 30 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. From Dr. Craig Sheppard – 2016 CPC Missions Conference [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Crowe, *The Message of the General Epistles in the History of Redemption: Wisdom from James, Peter, John, and Jude, 78* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Lucas, 2 Peter, 33 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)