

2 Peter 1:12-15 Remind, Refresh And Remember!

In last week's message from 2 Peter we looked at v8-11: 'Fruitful, Clear Sighted And Sure', looking at those three things and what they mean for the Christian. V8, if we possess those Christlike qualities of Jesus, which we have been looking at, "in increasing measure," "they will keep us from being barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." Remember, the Greek actually says, "these things being in you." So they are to be part of our whole being through "the renewing of our mind" by the Holy Spirit in the scriptures.

We are only "fruitful" when we are alive, having been ingrafted to the Vine, to Jesus! And when our lives are "fruitful" we are useful to the King and His Kingdom. While those who are not of the King, (bearing not those attributes v9,) "are blind and short sighted." Yes they are "blind" because they know not the King or his mission or His Kingdom. Therefore they are "short sighted" to anything of any real importance or value. They see only the here and now. What they can get out of it and how they can profit from it. That's what false teachers look like. There are "wolves in sheep's clothing." Not looking to feed the sheep but feed upon the sheep!

V10: "Therefore my brothers be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do this you will never fall." Remember, we need to sandbag our faith against falsehood. It's not that we can "fall" from God's Grace, but "fall" into false teaching! V5: "Make every effort." v10: "Be all the more eager." Be as the Bereans, to "search the scriptures everyday" to see if what people say to us is true!

V11: then by God's grace having persevered to the end in these things, we will be richly welcomed into heaven's glories by the King. As in Psalm 23:5-6: "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies, Thou annointest my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. And I shall dwell in the House of the Lord forever." Yes, for those who remain steadfast to the end by the power of the Holy Spirit, the eternal riches of the presence of the King awaits us!

We pick up the letter in 2 Peter 1:12-15: 'Remind. Refresh. And Remember!' The NIV has it in v12 as such: "So I will always remind you of these things even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have." And from the original: "Therefore I intend always to remind you concerning these things though knowing, and having been confirmed in the present truth."

Friends, last week a point I made was of us remembering God's past mercies to us, as I have done so many times throughout this series. Dick Lucas explains that, in these verses, Peter now gets to the very crux of the letter. Although as we have seen, (is about warning against falsehood and false teachers who had secretly slipped in among in among the fledgling churches) here we see the way he goes about sandbagging, or suring up their faith against that falsehood!

V12: Remind. V13 Refresh. And v15 Remember! In effect, it is Remember, Remember, Remember. He explains, that the apostle is not so much worried about his readers forgetting completely what he, Paul and others had taught them. But rather that when he was gone, (which he knew would be very soon according to v14) that their resolve to hold to those things in the face of trial and hardship and the offer of something new, might be very appealing, even very enticing! Yes something that was new. Perhaps more exciting. More inclusive, to use one of the popular words of our day. Yes more appealing, dare I say, more easy to live with, than the talk of "taking up one's cross" while

dying to self and living for Christ! Yes something new which would have them turn aside from what "they already had." The Truth about Jesus. Even falling by the wayside. Again v12. "Therefore I intend always to remind you."

You know it's interesting, that so much of modern Christianity and indeed the faith of many Christians today, is based around and caught up in what I like to call, (for of want of a better description) 'new and improved Bible teaching'. This results in some bizarre and outright fraudulent claims in the Name of Christ! 'Come to our worship services and you will find gold dust in your pockets upon leaving', I kid you not. 'Come to our church and your cancer will be healed'. 'Your emotional struggles will flee away'. 'You will find the partner of your dreams.' 'You will hear God's voice speak to you out of the air'. 'Your problems and financial troubles will disappear'. 'Come to Jesus and you will have hair grow on your bald head!' People have rattlesnakes in the aisles in the churches. Pogo sticking in the Spirit. Being slain in the Spirit. And many other bizarre heretical things. 'Yes, come to Jesus and you will be healthy wealthy and wise'.

As I said last week. Salvation yes. Reconciliation to God through the pouring out of Jesus' Blood upon us yes. An eternal inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade away. Yes. But there's more! Yes it does seem that many people who claim Jesus as Lord, are always looking over the fence for greener pastures. Unlike that which Paul says in Philippians 4:12-13, "I have learned the secret of being content in every situation. I can do all things through him who strengthens me." No the apostles were never, (and neither is any faithful teacher of the Bible) looking to introduce anything new. They were simply seeking to expound upon what Jesus taught, "as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" v21. But you see, this "being carried along by the Holy Spirit," in the revealing and speaking from God in that special revelatory way, was an Apostolic anointing from God. It was for them and them alone! It is only their "God breathed" words that have been recorded and by God's plan, have become the scriptures. It is only their God the Holy Spirit governed experiences that have become the completed Holy Cannon that we now call the Bible!

Beloved, this inner need, yes this inbuilt desire that humanity has in relation to the truth of God, for something new, does come from a spirit. But it is not the spirit of God! We have seen it many times over the years. Genesis 3: "Did God really say?" "You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be open and you'll be like God." "The woman looked and she saw." Knowing that it is not long before he dies, it is far from Peter to introduce anything new with his parting words. And when you think of it, if there was something which he had forgotten to tell them up until now, surely now was the time! But again, far from adding anything on the contrary, he wants to "remind them of what they, (and look at the words) "were firmly established in." Yes "remind you concerning these things, even though knowing them and having been confirmed in the truth."

So no, it was not the introduction of something new that Peter saw as all important. But to "remind them of the truth that they had already been firmly established in." It is a completely different way of looking at things compared to the modern view with the need for change, and something new isn't it. The instruction was not about something new and different. O perhaps new and exciting or new with extras! No again, it was about "reminding them about the truth which they already had." The hymn writer got it right. 'Tell me the old, old story. Tell me the old, old story. Tell me the old, old story, of Jesus and His love!'

Lucas explains that repetition and corporate remembering were ways that biblically historical inspired truths were instilled in the Jewish mind and psyche. According to Deuteronomy 5:14-15, one of the reasons God gave the Sabbath to the Israelites was to remind them of what it meant to

be slaves and to be delivered out of that bondage, which of course is the parallel of our bondage to sin. "Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. As the Lord your God has commanded you. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the 7th day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall do no work, neither you, nor your son or your daughter, nor your man servant or maid servant, nor your ox, your donkey or any of your animals, nor the alien within your gates, so that your manservant and maidservant may rest, as you do. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the Lord your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day."

So too the Passover meal, the commentator explains. They were to celebrated it every year so that they would be "reminded" of that day when the Angel of death passed over the sin of the then enslaved Israelite nation. And as is our custom also, each month when we celebrate the Lord supper together as we are "reminded" by Paul. 1 Corinthians 11:23-26: "For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you. The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said; This is my body, which is for you, do this in remembrance of me. In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me. For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

What did Jesus Himself say? "Do this in remembrance of me." "Do this in remembrance of me." Yes when we take the Lord supper each month we are "reminded." We are "reminded." And as we do this Paul tells us that "we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." Yes as we are "reminded" of these truths of God it has a two pronged effect. Not only are we reminded of God's past mercies while building barriers against falsehood with the truth, we also proclaim to the world the Cross of Christ suffering as the Lamb, who is coming again as The King. Even the Lion of Judah!

So friends, if we have preachers and teachers that perhaps preach some things over and over to us, even reminding us of things that perhaps we "already know and are firmly established in." Let us not be complacent and even in our hearts perhaps think; Well we already know this what's he going over this stuff again for? Let us rather in our hearts ask ourselves: What is it Lord that I need to know or relearn, that you keep reiterating this to me through your servants? Perhaps it is simply that we haven't grasped it yet. Or that there is a different aspect to this. Even a different way of looking at this thing. Or, that we just need to be "reminded," of whatever that part of God's truth may be. Just as Peter says. "I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have."

So the first step to standing against falsehood and false teachers, is to be "reminded of the truth about Jesus that we already know and are firmly established in." So that we continue to be bolstered, we continue to be surrounded by those truths! If something new, or out of the blue I guess is presented to us as being of God and His Word, how do we combat it? Measure it against God's Word "that we already know. And are firmly established in." Does it measure up? Does it ring true! Friends, it's not that we aren't always learning and seeking to grow in our understanding, (we must always have a teachable spirit) but we must always measure everything against God's unchanging Word!

In v12, Peter wants to 'Remind' them, and then in v13. "I think it's right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body." The biblical Greek word which Peter uses here for "Refresh" is "*diegeirein*" and it has a very different meaning than does the word "remind." We may even think that they're almost the same thing. I can "remind" you of something, or to "refresh" your memory. And I guess at first glance in all reality they are very similar. But in the original, and in the NASB, the

Greek word actually means to “Rouse” or to “Stir up.” Perhaps even to wake someone up. To relight, or to fan the flames of a fire. And the reason he uses this word here may I suggest, is because not only are we prone to forgetfulness within our faith, we can also become very sleepy. Even slothful or complacent. Worse still, familiar with God in a sinful way. The danger is that we can begin to think that we know it all. And for the Christian, (the true follower of Christ) within any of these predispositions there is great danger. Because they can only bring us into a place where we do not perceive God aright! As we all know yes He is the God of love because God is love, and yet He is also an “all-consuming fire” before whom both Isaiah and Saul were forced to fall down on their faces before the holiness of the Almighty.

Isaiah: “Woe to me for I am undone for I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell among the people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the king.” And from Saul: “Who are you Lord? I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.” Yes, Peter wants to “rouse” them, to “stir” them up from their slumber. At bible study on Monday night we drew the parallel with getting along to a teaching weekend of some kind. Some of us have attended Katoomba Men’s convention with 3000 men coming from all parts. Singing hymns, learning about and praising God. Or perhaps at an outreach night. At such things there is a real “rousing” a real reigniting of that first love of God within us. But also in all reality when our hearts are open, weekly worship, Bible study and prayer meeting can and should have the same effect. “Refresh.” “Rouse” us, “stir” us up in our remembering of the goodness and the Truth of God! And with this again is the sandbagging of our faith against falsehood!

Peter himself knew the importance of being “refreshed.” After his threefold denial of our Lord and even after Jesus` resurrection and appearing to the apostles on more than one occasion. It does appear that the men had returned to fishing. In John 21:15-17 we read: “When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter; Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these? Yes, Lord, he said, you know that I love you. Jesus said, Feed my lambs. Again Jesus said; Simon son of John, do you truly love me? He answered, yes, Lord you know that I love you. Jesus said; Take care of my sheep. The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do love me?” Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, do you love me? He said, “Lord, you know all things, you know that I love you”. Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.”

Yes the Lord reinstated Peter and did indeed ‘refresh’ him. He “roused” him up for ministry. Jesus lifted him up with a humble new zeal in his heart. But no longer in his own strength, he would now lean on only on Jesus!

Beloved, sometimes God does this. He brings us low before He “rouses” us and lifts us up! Psalm 23:1-3: “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul.” Friends within the Psalm there is the sense to which that at times, God “makes us to lie down.” It may be through illness. It may be through financial difficulties. A relationship breakdown. But whatever it be, God leads us there so that we can take a breath, reassess, return, rearm ourselves, as “He restores our soul.”

That's what Peter is guiding his brethren to do here. Be “stirred up” in the memory of your knowledge and teaching about Jesus. And he says he will do this “as long as I am in the tent, (Tabernacle) of this body because I know that I will soon put it aside as our Lord Jesus has made clear to me.” Brothers and sisters, the reason that both Paul and Peter referred to our bodies as being tents or tabernacles, is because like the Tabernacle of the Exodus and the Old Testament, (that movable House of God before Solomon built the temple) these earthly bodies of ours are temporary dwellings. And as we all know very well, they are slowly but surely wearing out! Yes the canvas is far more stretched and loose fitting than it used to be. There are patches and rips where it once was

new. The poles are old, brittle and splintery, and the ropes are dry and fraying. Each year that passes brings with it yet more wear and tear. Yet as long as Peter has breath within his lungs, he will seek to “Remind and Refresh” their memories, “to rouse” their minds, to all of those sound doctrines of Christ’s Truth through which their hearts had been opened.

And all the more urgently it seems, because Jesus had made it clear that he was not long for this world! John 21:18-19: “I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted, but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go. Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him follow me.”

Yes, the Lord had made it very clear to Peter that his passing was not going to be a peaceful death. And now for him, it had been made clear still! How specifically this was revealed we don’t know. According to the commentator, we can only surmise that the persecution under Nero had become so great and Peter’s ministry so tenuous, that God the Holy Spirit had revealed clearly that for him, the time had come! What we do know, is that it took place before the 9th of the 6th 68A.D. When Nero took his own life.

Yes, the hour had come for Peter, and so too dear friends will it come for us. The world will tell us that we can put that day off by eating the right foods and exercising 8 days a week, but no. “All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be” the psalmist tells us. Jesus had warned Peter many years before that his death was going to be violent. And now that the time was close he would spend his final days suring up the flock! Yes he would “Remind and Refresh” and also in v15 “and I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.” From the original, “and I will be diligent also, to make you after my exodus, the memory of these things.” Friends what I find revealing is that Peter doesn’t speak of his death, he speaks of his “departure,” literally his exodus. It’s a combination of “ex” meaning out and “hodos” meaning way. So literally it is his way out, or his journey from this life to the next.

This is very comforting for the Christian, because as with the very first Exodus, we know that God will carry us into the true promised land of heaven. He will not leave us short of our eternal home! It’s interesting that even pagans speak of a person’s death as their passing. And it does convey, (even if it not be their intention) of someone going from one place to another. And it is a going Beloved. A going out of this life into the very presence of God for either peace and rest with God, Father Son and Holy Spirit, or an unimaginable terrifying eternity! And before his “exodus” Peter will “also make every effort.” Remember, he has already exhorted them “to make every effort” v5 and also to be “all the more eager” v10, and now he says, while I am still with you before my journey out “I also will make every effort.”

We’ve heard his efforts to “Remind and Refresh” them, and now before he leaves he explains with his parting words, that they are going to have to do all that is within their power “to remember” all that he has taught and reinforced in them. That is if they were going to follow him into glory, having stood against the deceptions that were then at foot! He would do all that he could even with his dying breath to instil in them these things, but then it would be up to them to do all that they could “to remember.”

Brothers and sisters what Peter is doing here is explaining that we cannot, (for want of a better description) leave our salvation to rest within the labours of someone else. What I mean is, we can go to Bible studies and hear sermons and that’s wonderful praise God, the more the better. And yet they are someone else’s labours. But if we come to such things having prepared well. By reading

over the passage, even the whole book if it's short, even each day. Prayerfully having some thoughts on those things and perhaps actually writing those thoughts down, then God will doubly bless the preacher, (the preaching or teaching) and our hearing of those things. Yes in the power of the Holy Spirit we will be doing all that we can "to Remember." That is why I always take notes when others preach. I want to honour their labours, and I want to "Remember." And since these are Peter's dying words as it were, to Remind. To Refresh. And exhort them to all that they can do To "remember," then surely these things hold great weight for us also. Yes" Remind" one another. And "Refresh" one another. And do all that we can to "Remember" the simple, yet profound truths about Jesus!

Let's pray!