

Being Established In The Present Truth

Text: 2 Peter 1:12 I plan to keep on reminding you of these things—even though you already know them and are standing firm in the truth.

Introduction:

This morning I would like to speak on the subject of BEING ESTABLISHED IN THE PRESENT TRUTH.

A. It is of utmost importance that a child of God be established in truth. If not he will be like the one that the Apostle Paul speaks of.

- Ephesians 4:14 Then we will no longer be like children, forever changing our minds about what we believe because someone has told us something different or because someone has cleverly lied to us and made the lie sound like the truth.
- Hebrews 13:9 So do not be attracted by strange, new ideas. Your spiritual strength comes from God's special favor, not from ceremonial rules about food, which don't help those who follow them.

B. Let us be as those that hold fast to sound doctrine.

- Titus 1:9 He must have a strong and steadfast belief in the trustworthy message he was taught; then he will be able to encourage others with right teaching and show those who oppose it where they are wrong.

C. Thus, let us not make merchandise of the TRUTH, but let us...

- Prov.23:23 Get the truth and don't ever sell it; also get wisdom, discipline, and discernment.

Peter sets forth before his readers four basic, yet important elements of truth. He wanted them to be stirred up in the truth. So he stirs them up by encouraging them in the truth.

- 2 Peter 1:13-15 Yes, I believe I should keep on reminding you of these things as long as I live. ¹⁴But the Lord Jesus Christ has shown me that my days here on earth are numbered and I am soon to die. ¹⁵So I will work hard to make these things clear to you. I want you to remember them long after I am gone.

May God be pleased to STIR you up in the truth! What caused or motivated Peter to have such a devoted heart to stir them up? I believe that if we look back to the Gospel of Luke we see

D. The Lord Jesus Christ instructed Peter to strengthen the brethren and build them in the most holy faith.

- Luke 22:32 **But I have pleaded in prayer for you, Simon, that your faith should not fail. So when you have repented and turned to me again, strengthen and build up your brothers."**

It doesn't take long for the reader and student of the Epistles of Peter to acknowledge that Peter is strengthening and stirring up the brethren. In his first Epistle Peter encourages his readers, concerning the hope in Christ Jesus in the midst of their sufferings. In his second Epistle Peter encourages them concerning their salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. Peter encourages his readers to add to their faith (vv. 5-7) the graces of God. Then he gives a solemn warning in regards to making their calling and election sure (vv. 8-10). Thus, he puts them in remembrance concerning the importance of being established in the present truth.

I. Regarding the Truth.

A. Definition of the word NEGLIGENT.

The word that Peter used in our chief text, "NEGLIGENT", is the Greek word "ameleo" which means **"to be careless of; make light of, neglect."** Notice its usage in other verses:

- 1 Timothy 4:14 Do not neglect the spiritual gift you received through the prophecies spoken to you when the elders of the church laid their hands on you.

- Hebrews 2:3 What makes us think that we can escape if we are indifferent to this great salvation that was announced by the Lord Jesus himself? It was passed on to us by those who heard him speak,
- Matthew 22:5 But the guests he had invited ignored them and went about their business, one to his farm, another to his store.

In all these verses we see the importance of being wary of negligence. Peter is setting forth the zeal, care, mindfulness and watchfulness that we must maintain concerning TRUTH.

B. Duty of Not Being Negligent.

1. We must be careful of maintaining truth.

- Ephesians 6:14 Stand your ground, putting on the sturdy belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness.

"A sturdy belt of truth" speaks of the importance of fastening our hearts with truth. Our minds and hearts need to be reinforced with truth.

The Apostle John ALSO wrote concerning the importance of truth.

- 3 John 1:4 I could have no greater joy than to hear that my children live in the truth.
- 1 John 2:21 I am writing to you not because you don't know the truth but because you know the difference between truth and falsehood.

Peter had a pastor's heart. He wanted to make sure those under him would be established in truth.

- Peter wasn't interested in statistics.
- Peter wasn't interested in numbers.
- Peter wasn't interested in a mega church.
- Peter wasn't interested in pragmatism, i.e., getting them saved and in the church regardless of the methods.
- Peter wasn't interested in recognition or making a name for himself.
- Peter wasn't interested in what the major population had to say about him.
- PETER WAS CONCERNED THAT THOSE UNDER HIM BE ESTABLISHED IN TRUTH!

Sad to say but many pastors are more interested in anything else BUT doctrine and truth. Doctrine and truth should be the heartbeat of a Christian. After all,

2. we were saved (born again) in truth.

- James 1:18 In his goodness he chose to make us his own children by giving us his true word. And we, out of all creation, became his choice possession.
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13 As for us, we always thank God for you, dear brothers and sisters loved by the Lord. We are thankful that God chose you to be among the first to experience salvation, a salvation that came through the Spirit who makes you holy and by your belief in the truth.
- 1 Thessalonians 2:13 And we will never stop thanking God that when we preached his message to you, you didn't think of the words we spoke as being just our own. You accepted what we said as the very word of God—which, of course, it was. And this word continues to work in you who believe.
- Ephesians 1:13 And now you also have heard the truth, the Good News that God saves you. And when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago.
- Colossians 1:5-6 You do this because you are looking forward to the joys of heaven—as you have been ever since you first heard the truth of the Good News.
⁶This same Good News that came to you is going out all over the world. It is changing lives everywhere, just as it changed yours that very first day you heard and understood the truth about God's great kindness to sinners.

These and many other verses show the significance and prominence of truth in our salvation and in our Christian walk.

II. Retention of the Truth

A. The Importance of Remembering Truth.

Peter is doing his pastoral work of reminding his people of the importance of truth. Peter reminds them concerning the importance of recollecting truth. He reminds them that truth needs to be in the heart not just the head. We must be cautious of mere intellectual truth that does not affect our emotions and our actions.

B. The Importance of Retaining Truth.

1. We need to be CAREFUL of retaining truth.

- Psalm 25:5 Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in you.

2. We need to be COMMITTED to the truth.

- Psalm 40:11 LORD, don't hold back your tender mercies from me. My only hope is in your unfailing love and faithfulness.
- Psalm 43:3 Send out your light and your truth; let them guide me. Let them lead me to your holy mountain, to the place where you live.
- Psalm 86:11 Teach me your ways, O LORD, that I may live according to your truth! Grant me purity of heart, that I may honor you.

3. We are to be CUSTODIANS of truth.

- Psalm 60:4 You have given a banner to those who fear You, that it may be displayed because of the truth.
- Psalm 119:30 I have chosen to be faithful; I have determined to live by your laws.
- Proverbs 3:3 Do not let kindness and truth leave you; bind them around your neck.
- Prov.23:23 Get the truth and don't ever sell it; also get wisdom, discipline, and discernment.

Thus, Peter seeks to keep them in remembrance of TRUTH!

III. Recognition the Truth.

Peter Reminds Them Concerning Their Knowledge of Truth.

His readers knew truth. He said, "you...are standing firm in the truth." We need to be as those who Malachi would write about,

- Malachi 2:6 They passed on to the people all the truth they received from me. They did not lie or cheat; they walked with me, living good and righteous lives, and they turned many from lives of sin.

Not just know ABOUT truth but know the truth!!!

- John 8:32 **And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."**

Truth sets you free from sin. Truth sets you free from religion.

A. People are always trying to replace biblical truth with their own traditions.

- 1 Timothy 4:3 They will say it is wrong to be married and wrong to eat certain foods. But God created those foods to be eaten with thanksgiving by people who know and believe the truth.

B. Acceptance of truth leads to true love. Many want to be loved but fail to realize that love cannot grow in untruthful ground.

- 1 Peter 1:22 Now you can have sincere love for each other as brothers and sisters because you were cleansed from your sins when you accepted the truth of the Good News. So see to it that you really do love each other intensely with all your hearts.

C. Knowledge of truth is a source of protection.

- 1 John 2:21 So I am writing to you not because you don't know the truth but because you know the difference between truth and falsehood.

D. A person who will not listen yield to the truth of God's Word is not of God.

- 1 John 4:6 But we belong to God; that is why those who know God listen to us. If they do not belong to God, they do not listen to us. That is how we know if someone has the Spirit of truth or the spirit of deception.

The Holy Spirit lives and works in our spirits. He makes sure that truth remains.

E. If truth does not reside in our hearts, perhaps the Holy Spirit does not either!

- 2 John 1:2 the truth that lives in us and will be in our hearts forever.

F. A fierce warning from God's Word concerning those who do not seek, nor care for the TRUTH.

1. God will be angry with you.

- Romans 1:18 But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who push the truth away from themselves.

2. You will be led into false religion.

- Romans 1:25 Instead of believing what they knew was the truth about God, they deliberately chose to believe lies. So they worshiped the things God made but not the Creator himself, who is to be praised forever. Amen.

3. You will be bewitched – have your mind controlled by outside influences.

- Galatians 3:1 O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

4. Your spiritual walk will be interfered with and you will be held back.

- Galatians 5:7 You were getting along so well. Who has interfered with you to hold you back from following the truth?

5. You will be condemned.

- 2 Thessalonians 2:12 Then they will be condemned for not believing the truth and for enjoying the evil they do.

6. You'll end up being a trouble maker, corrupted, dishonest and self-seeking.

- 1 Timothy 6:5 These people always cause trouble. Their minds are corrupt, and they don't tell the truth. To them religion is just a way to get rich.

7. You will not only be misled, but you will mislead others.

- 2 Timothy 2:18 They have left the path of truth, preaching the lie that the resurrection of the dead has already occurred; and they have undermined the faith of some.

8. You will become incapable of understanding truth and will end up fighting truth because your mind will be depraved. You will not be saved.

- 2 Timothy 3:7-8 Such women are forever following new teachings, but they never understand the truth. ⁸And these teachers fight the truth just as Jannes and Jambres fought against Moses. Their minds are depraved, and their faith is counterfeit.

9. You will place your own desires above truth, seek out false teachers who sound good and end up following strange myths.

- 2 Timothy 4:3-4 For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to right teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever they want to hear. ⁴They will reject the truth and follow strange myths.

10. You will have turned your back on truth and instead followed human philosophies.

- Titus 1:14 They must stop listening to Jewish myths and the commands of people who have turned their backs on the truth.

Sad to say but the following is the state of most churches of our day.

- Isaiah 59:4 No one cares about being fair and honest. Their lawsuits are based on lies. They spend their time plotting evil deeds and then doing them.
- Isaiah 59:14-15 Our courts oppose people who are righteous, and justice is nowhere to be found. Truth falls dead in the streets, and fairness has been outlawed. ¹⁵Yes, truth is gone, and anyone who tries to live a godly life is soon attacked.

- Jeremiah 5:1 “Run up and down every street in Jerusalem,” says the LORD. “Look high and low; search throughout the city! If you can find even one person who is just and honest, I will not destroy the city. ²Even when they are under oath, saying, ‘As surely as the LORD lives,’ they all tell lies!”
- Jeremiah 7:28 Say to them, ‘this is the nation whose people will not obey the LORD their God and who refuse to be taught. Truth has vanished from among them; it is no longer heard on their lips.

Peter denied the Lord one fateful night. The Master had predicted Peter’s betrayal and had commanded him to strengthen the brethren when he returned to the fold. Now we hear Peter saying:

- 1 Peter 5:10 In his kindness God called you to his eternal glory by means of Jesus Christ. After you have suffered a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation.

Notice how Peter ends his first epistle with the same thought he starts the second epistle with: The importance of being established. That is exactly what the Lord Jesus did for Peter.

G. We must give ourselves to be rooted and established in truth.

- Joshua 24:14 “So honor the LORD and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD alone.
- 1 Samuel 12:24 But be sure to fear the LORD and sincerely worship him. Think of all the wonderful things he has done for you.

1. Notice Hezekiah's testimony:

- 2 Kings 20:3 Remember, O LORD, how I have always tried to be faithful to you and do what is pleasing in your sight.” Then he broke down and wept bitterly.

2. Notice how David pleases with God to lead and teach him truth.

- Psalm 25:5 Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in you.

3. Notice David's testimony even after he died:

- 1 Kings 3:6 Solomon replied, “You were wonderfully kind to my father, David, because he was honest and true and faithful to you. And you have continued this great kindness to him today by giving him a son to succeed him.

4. David's son Solomon also understood this need of being rooted and established in truth,

- Proverbs 3:3 Do not let kindness and truth leave you; bind them around your neck.
- Prov.23:23 Get the truth and don't ever sell it; also get wisdom, discipline, and discernment.

5. The truth should not only be in our hearts but also on our mouths:

- Malachi 2:6 They passed on to the people all the truth they received from me. They did not lie or cheat; they walked with me, living good and righteous lives, and they turned many from lives of sin.

6. True love rejoices in truth not in lies or iniquity:

- 1 Corinthians 13:6 It (Love) is never glad about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out.
- Ephesians 4:15 Instead, we will hold to the truth in love, becoming more and more in every way like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.

7. We have a duty to handle the Word of God in truth:

- 2 Corinthians 4:2 We reject all shameful and underhanded methods. We do not try to trick anyone, and we do not distort the word of God. We tell the truth before God, and all who are honest know that.

8. We must clothe ourselves with truth

- Ephesians 6:14 Stand your ground, putting on the sturdy belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness.
- 9. Even in regards to the church. **The church of God is to be a pillar of truth:**
 - 1 Timothy 3:15 so that if I can't come for a while, you will know how people must conduct themselves in the household of God. This is the church of the living God, which is the pillar and support of the truth.

Conclusion:

In every aspect of our Christian life we see the importance of being established in the present truth. May our God be pleased to speak the following of us:

- 3 John 1:4 I could have no greater joy than to hear that my children live in the truth.

To those of you who are lost consider the Lord Jesus Christ as your LORD and SAVIOR, for HE HIMSELF says to you:

- John 14:6 Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."