

The Books of 1 and 2 Peter

Lesson 13: Grow in Grace; Final Words -- 2 Peter 3:14-18

There is a particular weight to the last words of someone who loves us and knows they are leaving. A dying parent does not waste breath on trivialities. They gather up everything they most want their children to remember and press it into a few final sentences. Peter is writing his last recorded words. He has told us his death is near, that the Lord made it clear to him. And now, at the close of his second letter, this old apostle, this restored failure, this fisherman turned shepherd, gives the church his parting charge. When a man like Peter says, 'therefore, beloved,' for the last time, we lean in.

His final concern is not that we would have all our questions answered or all our enemies defeated. It is that we would be found ready. 'Be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.' He has just described a world that will dissolve in fire and a day that will come like a thief. Now he tells us how to live in the meantime: not anxiously scanning the horizon, not paralyzed by fear, but diligently pursuing a clean and peaceful life, so that whenever the Lord comes, He finds us at peace with Him and with one another.

Then Peter does something gracious and revealing. He mentions 'our beloved brother Paul,' whose letters he places alongside 'the other Scriptures.' Two great apostles who had once clashed at Antioch, and Peter, near the end, calls Paul beloved and honors his writings as the very word of God. He admits, with refreshing honesty, that some things in Paul are 'hard to understand,' which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction. The Scriptures are not a toy to be bent to our preferences; they are a treasure to be handled with humble care.

And so Peter ends where a wise pastor would, with both a warning and a hope. Watch yourselves, he says, so that you are not carried away by the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. And then, 'grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.' The Christian life is not a plateau to be maintained but a growth to be pursued, all the way to the end. Read these final verses as a charge from a man about to meet the Lord he loves. He wants you ready, he wants you stable, he wants you growing, and he wants the last word to be what it always should be: 'To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.'

Group Discussion: Peter ends his letter, 'grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ' (v. 18). Why do you think Peter chose growth as his final charge? What is the difference between a Christian who is genuinely growing and one who is merely maintaining or coasting, and how can you tell which you are?

Personal Reflection: Peter urges us to be 'diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace' (v. 14). If Christ returned today, is there a relationship, a habit, or an unconfessed sin that would leave you not 'at peace'? What is one thing you sense God calling you to set right so that you would be found ready?

Study Questions

1. Peter says, 'Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these things, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace' (v. 14). What does it mean to be found 'without spot or blemish, and at peace,' and how does the expectation of Christ's return motivate this kind of diligent, holy living?
2. Peter assumes that those 'waiting for these things' will live differently now. As you near the end of this study of 1 and 2 Peter, how has waiting for Christ's return actually shaped the way you live, and where do you still need it to?
3. Peter says to 'count the patience of our Lord as salvation' (v. 15), echoing his earlier point that God delays so that more may be saved. How should we understand the time we are given, every day before Christ returns, as an opportunity for salvation, both for ourselves and for others?
4. Peter speaks of 'our beloved brother Paul,' even though the two had once openly disagreed (Galatians 2:11–14). What does Peter's warm reference to Paul teach about handling disagreements among believers, and is there a brother or sister you need to regard, and speak of, with that kind of love?
5. Peter places Paul's letters alongside 'the other Scriptures' and warns that ignorant and unstable people 'twist' them 'to their own destruction' (vv. 15–16). What does this teach about the inspiration and authority of the New Testament writings, and about the serious danger of distorting Scripture to suit ourselves?
6. Peter warns that twisting Scripture leads 'to their own destruction.' Where are you most tempted to bend or explain away a passage that is clear but inconvenient, and what would it look like to submit to the text instead of reshaping it?
7. Peter warns, 'Take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability' (v. 17). What does this teach about the relationship between sound doctrine and spiritual stability, and how does being 'carried away' by error threaten a believer's standing?
8. Peter assumes a believer can 'lose' his stability and be 'carried away.' What are the influences most likely to carry you away or unsettle your footing right now, and what keeps you anchored and stable in Christ?
9. Peter's closing command is, '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' (v. 18). What does it mean to grow in both the grace and the knowledge of Christ, why does Peter make ongoing growth his final charge, and what does it teach us that he ends with glory given to Jesus, whom he calls 'Lord and Savior' and 'God' throughout these letters?
10. Look back across the whole of 1 and 2 Peter, which ends here. From a living hope and the call to holiness, through suffering, submission, and the sure word of God, to growth, watchfulness, and the day of the Lord, name one specific way Jesus has been forming you

through this entire study. What single truth from these two letters do you most want to carry forward for the rest of your life?

Now or Later

Reflect on these passages: 2 Peter 1:5–11, the qualities to add to faith that this final charge echoes; Ephesians 4:11–16, growing up into Christ and no longer tossed about; Colossians 1:9–10, increasing in the knowledge of God; Philippians 1:6, God completing the good work He began; Jude 24–25, the One able to keep us from stumbling and present us blameless