

Remembering Christ's Coming: Are You Stirred Up?

2 Peter 3:1–3

WHAT IS TRUE AND WHAT TO DO:

What's the big deal? Don't all Christians know Jesus is returning? Well, it is quite possible for Christians to stumble at the world's scoffing that Jesus will not return. Christians should remember the words spoken in advance by the Holy Prophets (Old Testament) and the commandment of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ spoken by your apostles (New Testament) and not be led astray (v. 3:4,17).¹

1.) Dearly Beloved (i.e., beloved friends): (v.1)

A. This is now the second letter I have written to you, and in both, I want to: (v. 3:1)

a. Stir up your sincere understanding

- A pastoral stirring up: 'I have written and want to/tryed to wake [you] up.' (i.e., 'to arouse someone who is sleeping'; to stimulate, rouse, awaken); Peter deeply cares and is concerned for them.
- A sincere/pure mind or understanding is one that reflects and meditates on the truths of the Lord, and not just in an intellectual sense. It stems from a purity of motive. It implies a capacity for spiritual discernment and moral thought, being 'unmixed' with no hidden motives like the false teachers in chapter two.
- Thus, in this context, having a "sincere understanding" means spiritual thinking that is 'correct/right,' 'sound,' or 'orthodox.'

b. By way of a reminder (i.e., 'I have reminded you of these matters so that you will (continue to) think right (or have correct thoughts)).

2.) Why? So, what's the big deal?

A. So that you recall (or remember) (v.2)

➤ **Christians ought to have the ability to recall, think, and apply truth beyond head knowledge; it is more than "recalling" what you learned. It means discerning and applying spiritual truth.**

B. ... the words previously spoken (see also 1 Peter 1:12–15); the idea is that you will recall and employ wholesome thinking, live right, and not stumble.

a. Recall those words spoken by the Holy Prophets; recall that the Old Testament spoke about the end of history, the day of Judgment, and God's great salvation in a coming Messiah. The apostles repeated those themes. Pay attention to true prophecy!

b. And recall the commandment of the Lord and Savior Jesus

- 'Commandment' points to God's expectations of Christians regarding their ethical decisions and obedient behavior. Most likely,

it refers to the moral norms expected of believers (Jn. 13:34, Mt. 22:37–40). It is used at least sixty times in the New Testament and always refers to some kind of expectation (see 2:21, 1 Tim 6:14, Gal. 6:2). Peter isn't referring to a series of dos and don'ts but to the basic command for believers to conform to the image of Christ, becoming holy as God who called them is holy (see 1 Pet 1:13–23, e.g., "Be Holy for I am Holy").

- False teachers were ignoring the need for believers to obey God's call to holiness as taught by Christ and the apostles.

c. Given through your apostles; Peter is emphasizing that the teaching of the apostles represents the words of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The words of Jesus Christ have been transmitted correctly by the apostles. You can be 100% confident that Scripture declares Christ's return accurately.

d. The New Testament also emphasizes the Messiah's coming. 23 of the 27 books explicitly reference Jesus's return, and two others allude to it. Only Philemon and 3 John do not mention His return. This is important when we get to v.4 next week; Christ is returning!

- Jesus himself addressed His return numerous times (ex., Matt 16:27; 24:29–30; 25:31; 26:64; Mark 13:3–27; Luke 12:40).
- Peter in Acts 3:17–21 refers to the Old Testament's predicted Messiah's coming and judgment (Ex., Isa 13:10–13; 24:19–23; 34:1–4; 51:6; 66:15–16; Ezek. 30:3; Dan 7:9–14; Joel 2:31; Mic 1:3–5; Zeph 1:14–18; 3:8; Zech 14:3–5; Mal 4:1–5).
- Paul repeatedly confirmed his belief in Christ's glorious return (Ex., 1 Cor 4:5; 15:23–28; 1 Thess 1:9–10; 3:13; 4:14–16; 2 Thess 1:7–8, 10; 2 Tim 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13).
- John followed suit (Ex., Rev 1:7; 16:15; 19:11–16).
- The apostles refer to Jesus' second coming about 300 times; Peter knows the longer Jesus tarries, the more this godless world scoffs, tempting discouragement to our faith.

3.) The scoffers will come (v.3): they indulge in their own desires/lusts (evil):

- a. 'Scoffers' are not smarter and more rational or scientific people. This is all about Spiritual warfare. Satanic influences deceive/lead them.
- b. Self-pleasure-seeking, they resist and rebel against God.

CONCLUSION AND APPLICATION: Do not fall into the temptation of doubting God; follow Jesus Christ, the Holy Prophets, and the lessons handed down by the Apostles. The Day of the Lord is Coming! *Again, it starts by knowing your Bible!*

¹ Shaddix, James, and Daniel L. Akin. Exalting Jesus in 2 Peter, Jude. Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2018.