

Second Peter
Courageous Living in Chaotic Days
Introduction

1. The Apostle's MINDSET

1956 years ago, almost to the day, an event occurred that shifted the face of Christianity...

July 19, 64 AD, Nero, the Emperor of Rome, in a desire to pave the way for him building...

Set fire to Rome...

When outrage rose for this great devastation, Nero needed a scapegoat...

He chose, out of pure evil, a growing group of people called Christians, as the ones responsible for the fires...

countless mansions, residences and temples were destroyed

The fire is reported to have burned for over a week. It destroyed three of fourteen Roman districts and severely damaged seven more.

Suetonius wrote that Nero started the fire because he wanted the space to build his Golden House. This Golden House or Domus Aurea included lush artificial landscapes and a 30-meter-tall statue of himself, the Colossus of Nero.

Tacitus wrote that Nero accused Christians of starting the fire to remove suspicion from himself.

According to this account, many Christians were arrested and brutally executed by "being thrown to the beasts, crucified, and being burned alive"

Prior to this event, the Apostle Peter, who was currently residing in Rome, had written what we now refer to as First Peter...

First Peter is very Pastoral in nature...

While struggle and persecution was going on throughout the Roman world, believers were struggling, but standing strong in their faith...

After the burning of Rome and the subsequent cruel persecutions, many were beginning to compromise their faith...

False teachers were continuing to rise up and shift Christianity into a more palatable inclusive religious system...

The time was around 67 AD...

The Apostle Peter knew that not only was his death imminent, but that he was one of the last of the remaining original Apostles and eyewitnesses of the historical Jesus of Nazareth...

As such, Peter felt compelled to write this final letter to the Church before his departure...

2 Peter 1:13–15 (ESV) — I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder, since I know

that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things.

2. The Apostle's MOTIVE

What was the motivating force behind his writing this letter?

Well, I'm certain there may have been many, but there is one that seems to stand out...

Peter was seeing persecution of his brothers and sisters happening all over...

Those who at one time were certain of their unwavering faith in Jesus, were facing the possibility of failing and falling away...

Peter knew what that felt like...

He knew what it was like to be so certain of standing strong and yet caving when the time came...

You know the event I'm referring to...

It was the night of Jesus' betrayal...

Matthew 26:30–35 (ESV) — And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. Then Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away because of me this night. For it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the

sheep of the flock will be scattered.' But after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee." Peter answered him, "Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away." Jesus said to him, "Truly, I tell you, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will deny me three times." 35 Peter said to him, "Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!" And all the disciples said the same.

Peter KNEW... he just knew that he was ready to die with Jesus...

And yet, when the time came he miserably denied knowing Jesus...

Luke 22:59–62 (ESV) — And after an interval of about an hour still another insisted, saying, "Certainly this man also was with him, for he too is a Galilean." But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are talking about." And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how he had said to him, "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times." And he went out and wept bitterly.

2 Peter 1:10 (ESV) — Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.

1. The Apostle's MINDSET

2. The Apostle's MOTIVE

3. The Apostle's MISSION

Before Jesus left to be crucified, He told Peter about a demand Satan had made regarding Peter...

Luke 22:31–32 (ESV) — “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”

In this exchange, Jesus gave Peter a command...

After Peter’s denial, Jesus’ resurrection, and Peter’s subsequent restoration, Peter made it his ambition to fulfill Jesus command...

Luke 22:32b (ESV) — ... And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”

The word “strengthen” used here means, to cause someone to become stronger in the sense of more firm and unchanging in attitude or belief

The word translated “strengthen” is the same word used repeatedly in this letter to convey the author’s intention in writing, sometimes negatively as “unsteady.”

2 Peter 1:12 (ESV) — Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have.

2 Peter 2:14 (ESV) — They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children!

2 Peter 3:17 (ESV) — 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.

Stability, unsteady, and established. Three times we are given the very word Jesus gave Peter those many years ago as the command “to strengthen” in Luke 22:32. In this little letter, the term is leveraged afresh, along with the word fall, to capture Peter’s intention in writing.

1. The Apostle’s *MINDSET*

2. The Apostle’s *MOTIVE*

3. The Apostle’s *MISSION*

4. The Apostle’s *MEANING*

So, what is Peter’s focus in this letter?

His focus is very clear throughout this letter...

He is focused on the imperative of *KNOWING GOD!*

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

2 Peter 1:3 (ESV) — His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,

2 Peter 1:8 (ESV) — For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 2:20 (ESV) — For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first.

2 Peter 3:18 (ESV) — 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.

With the Apostolic age coming to a close, the future of the Christian faith could not rest merely on the strength of stories told about those who walked and talked with Jesus.

People needed to understand what it means to truly KNOW the Lord...

John 17:3 (ESV) — And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

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A Journey through Second Peter

The Walk 2 Peter 1:3-11	The Word 2 Peter 1:12-21	The War 2 Peter 2:1-22	The Wait 2 Peter 3:1-16
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