

Turn to 2 Peter 1. 2 Peter 1, we'll be looking at verses 12 through 15. 2 Peter 1, verses 12 through 15. So far in this book, Peter hasn't said anything his readers didn't already know. His readers already knew about the imputation of Christ's righteousness.

That is the doctrine in view in the first verse of this letter. The idea that the people of God are counted righteous in God's sight, not because of their own personal piety, but because of the righteousness of Christ imputed to them and received by faith alone. The only way a sinner stands righteous in the sight of a holy God is the righteousness of another in their place, that is Christ Jesus. And they receive that righteousness not by any works which they perform, but by receiving and resting upon the work of Christ in their place.

Verse 1, they already knew this. And his readers already knew that those who are grounded in this grace of God are called to grow in the grace of God. And that's what's in view in verses 2 through 11. That those who are grounded in this grace of God are called to grow in this grace of God, and they already knew this. So why is Peter reminding them of things they already knew.

We read in chapter two that they are facing false teachers. If they're going to combat these false teachers, don't you think they might need some sort of new doctrine to try to fight these new false teachers? Well, no, this is exactly what they do not need. They do not need anything new to strengthen them as they face the false teachers of chapter 2.

What they need is the same unchanging true doctrines of the Holy Scriptures. What they need is to know these doctrines more, to hear these doctrines again. What they need is to be firmly established and rooted in the doctrines once for all delivered to the saints. So with this in view, Let us pray and ask God to bless the reading and then the preaching of his word.

Oh great and awesome God, indeed we come before you as Samuel the prophet. Your servants are listening. Speak, Lord. We ask and believe by your grace for coming with the posture of Mary. Behold, your servant is listening. Do to me according to your word.

Oh, Father, who art in heaven, give us hearts that burn as our heavenly Father with all power and glory, and yet with all mercy and kindness, speaks to us through his Son through this, your word this morning. We pray this in Jesus's name, amen. This is the word of God, 2 Peter 1, verses 12 through 15. Therefore, I intend always to remind you of these qualities. Though you know them and are established in the truth that you have, 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. Ascends the reading of God's holy word, may he bless the preaching of it now to our lives.

Well, Peter is writing to these Christians who are facing false teachers. And in the midst of facing these false teachers, Peter says in verses 12 through 15 of chapter one, I want to bring to your mind some truths. I want to bring to you some reminders. They needed these reminders so that they might be able to withstand the false teachers.

And this ministry of reminders is fundamentally what you need too. When you are struggling in your doctrine, or your life, you need the ministry of reminders to come home to your hearts. When you are struggling with your beliefs, and your behaviors, you need the ministry of reminders to come home to your hearts. You need the ministry of reminders. You need to be reminded again and again and again what the scriptures principally teach.

And so this morning you need the ministry of reminders and you see this in two particular ways in our text. You need the Ministry of Reminders because it is always needed. And you need the Ministry of Reminders because it is very urgent. It is always needed and it is very urgent. So first this morning, you need the Ministry of Reminders because it is always needed.

Look again at verse 12. Therefore, I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have. In this verse, you learn that the ministry of reminders is always needed for every Christian, old or young, it does not matter. Every Christian always needs the ministry of reminders. You see this by the words, I intend always to remind you. He doesn't just want to remind them of these qualities once or twice. He says he wants to always remind them of these qualities. But what are these qualities?

Well, the word translated qualities in verse 12 and translated qualities in verse eight and nine and 10 is translated as things in your ESV. The NASB, I think it's things sometimes and maybe qualities some other times. Actually, I think it's the King James version, if I'm remembering correctly, that gets it, I think, best. It always translates it things. But the word literally just means things. When it's translated qualities, that's an interpretive decision by the translators to say he's got to view these qualities, but the word literally simply means things.

So what are the things in view in verse 12 to which he is referencing that he wants to remind them of again and again and again? Well it's all of the things he has been talking about at least since verse 3 and perhaps all the way back to verse 1. So he says in verse 12 essentially this, I always want to remind you of the doctrines that I have been talking about for the first 11 verses of this book. So what do you need to do as a reader then? Remind yourself of what were the doctrines he talked about for the first 11 verses of this book.

He says, I want to always be reminding you about the righteousness of Christ that is received by faith alone, verse one. I always want to remind you of that. Every day I want to tell you about that. I always want to remind you that you continually need to be growing in this grace, that you can never have too much of this good grace to you in Christ Jesus, verse two. I always want to remind you of the divine power that has granted to you everything you need for life and godliness.

Verse 3. I always want to remind you about the divine promises which have been granted to you in Christ Jesus. Verse 4. I always want to remind you that since you have received this great work of God, you should strive to live for God. Verses five through seven. I always wanna remind you to look back to what Christ has done for you and to look forward to the eternal kingdom that he has provided for you. so that you might persevere and continue in obedience. Verses eight through 11. He's always wanting to remind them again and again and again of these truths. It is always needed.

And they need these things, even though he states unequivocally in verse 12, you know them and are established in the truth that you have. So why would he want to continually be reminding them of things that he himself says they already know? Because he says they are the truth.

And just like these people needed to continually be reminded of the truths, the doctrines of our holy religion, they needed to continually be told what Christ had done. They needed to continually be told to marvel in his excellencies. They needed to continually be told to work out their salvation with fear and trembling because God is at work in them, both the will and to do for their good, for his good pleasure. They need to continually be told these glorious truths because it's true.

And because the world was telling them lies, there were false teachers in their midst, and their own wicked hearts would have been prone to embrace the false doctrines which were being presented to them. You don't need anything new here this morning. What you need is the truth down deep in your hearts again and again and again. And if anything is causing you to drift away from the goodness of Christ, that thing is a lie. And you need the truth of who Christ is and what he has done deep in your soul that it might Make whatever that is in your life that is not good, gone, filled and replaced instead with the wonder and majesty of Christ.

Christianity is to infinity and never beyond the basics. It's to infinity and never beyond the basics. What do I mean by that little phrase, it's to infinity and never beyond the basics? What I mean is simply this, the doctrines of the Christian faith, are an ocean without a shore. They are a mountain without a peak. They are a pit without a bottom, and yet they're so basic that a little child can understand them. You're a sinner, and somehow you as sinner need to be able to stand righteous in the sight of a holy God. Verse one tells you how. Faith in the righteousness of Christ for you.

A little child can understand that. You need to always be growing in grace. You can never have too much grace from God. A little child can understand that. That's verse two. Verses three and four say, God graciously grants you what you need for life and godliness. A little child can understand that. Verses five through seven say, since he has given you, What you need for godliness, make every effort to live a godly life. Verses five through seven, a little child can understand that. Verses eight through 11 say, never forget the good work of Christ in the past for you, nor what he is doing richly providing for you in entrance into the eternal kingdom. A little child can understand this. In some ways, the first 11 verses in their own right, you could say, of this book are somewhat basic.

And yet, they're deep. They're profound. That God would declare a sinner righteous. that God would grant grace to a sinner, that God would give to a sinner what he needs to live a life of godliness, that the Lord Jesus Christ would shed his blood for a sinner, that the Lord Jesus Christ would richly provide an entrance into his eternal kingdom for sinners whom he has saved by his grace. That's profound. Those are truths that are deep. And so in this way, Christianity is an ocean without a shore. It's a mountain without a peak. It's a pit without a bottom. It is basic at some level, but it is deep and profound.

And you need these truths again and again and again, driven by the spirit into the depths of your own soul. But how are you gonna get these reminders? What are some practical ways you can get these glorious reminders that he's talking about in verse 12? Well, there are three really simple ways that God in his mercy has given you to be able to get a hold of these reminders. First, come to church every Sunday.

Every single Sunday, God has given you an opportunity to get these sorts of reminders, to be told again of the wonder of the gospel, to have preached to you the wonders of the work of Christ Jesus, to redeem his people from all of their sins. You get to hear about this. You get to marvel afresh at the resurrection from the dead. You get to look forward with fresh eyes at the reality of the coming day of his return when he will finish that which he has started. All of that God teaches you, he tells you, he reminds you about every single Lord's Day when you gather to worship him. Now you shouldn't need a reminder to remember the great things that Jesus has done for you.

But the truth is, we do need reminders. You know, a husband hopefully doesn't need a reminder that his wife's birthday is coming up. But a reminder every once in a while wouldn't hurt. My wife's birthday was yesterday, I didn't forget. In the same sort of way, you shouldn't need a reminder about what Jesus has done for you.

You shouldn't need a reminder that he's risen from the dead, but God knows that you do, and he loves you enough to give you that reminder. There's a lot we could say about the Lord's Day, about gathering corporately as the saints, but this is one of the things that you see in Lord's Day worship services.

You see God coming and saying, Let me remind you how much I love you. Let me tell you again that I save sinners. Let me declare to you again the resurrection. Let me make sure you get told again how awesome I am and how good I am and how true I am and how right I am and how wise I am.

All the wonderful things because he knows that you're prone to forget. And he says, won't you remember me? this day. And he declares this again in the sacraments of baptism in the Lord's Supper. What does he say in the Lord's Supper? Do this in remembrance of me, because he knows you're likely to forget him. And he loves you enough to say, look at this. I came and I died for you. Look to me by faith. And so the calling then is to prioritize Lord's Day worship.

If you want these reminders in your week, you need to be in some faithful church regularly that you might hear them because none of us is going to remember this throughout our days. Should we? Yes, obviously, but we don't. But a second way you can get these reminders is by preaching to yourself.

Perhaps sometime this week you can try this experiment when you're on a walk or maybe you're sitting down at your chair in the morning with your coffee. At some point this week, maybe you're laying in bed, take time to preach to yourself the truths of the first 11 verses of 2 Peter.

Just meditate on them. You don't have to memorize them, but meditate on them. Think of that imputed righteousness of verse one. Think of that multiplying grace and peace of verse two. Think about the wonderful granting of power to obey him, verses three and four. Think of these things. Work yourself through the first 11 verses.

And then a third way you get these reminders is by preaching to one another. Because the truth is, every single one of us is forgetting this regularly. So when you're with your brothers and sisters in Christ, take an opportunity to speak of the Lord with one another. Remind one another of these truths. It's an incredible blessing that I am sure everyone who's in Christ here this morning has experienced.

You've gotten together with somebody for lunch. or for breakfast or whatever, and maybe you don't even share with them that you're just weighed down. And then you spend 20 or 30 minutes talking with them about things of the Lord, and you walk away an entirely new person. They simply remind, you did not know those things, but you had forgotten them functionally, and they reminded you of them.

Well, secondly this morning, you need the ministry of reminders because it is urgent. It is urgent. You see this in verses 13 through 15. He writes here, 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 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. Well, you see in verses 13 through 15 that the ministry of reminders is very urgent.

And we'll try to capture what Peter says here by considering three words that start with the letter D. And these three words are these, departure, diligence, and descendants. Let us consider each of these words. So first, departure. We see the ministry of reminders is very urgent when you contemplate this word, departure.

Peter writes as a dying man to dying men. He knows, in other words, that he's about to die. His departure is soon. And we all know that the words you say on your deathbed are the words that are the most important to you. You get off your chest, you say what you believe these people need to hear before you die.

And he essentially says, as long as I have breath in my mouth, I want to preach to you the same things I've already preached to you again and again and again. I want to remind you of what I said in the first 11 verses of this book again and again and again. And then you see that it is the ministry of reminders is very important by this word diligence, diligence. Peter is diligent to make sure they receive these reminders.

He says that he wants to stir you up. Now this word can literally mean wake you up. He wants to wake them up from spiritual slumber. He wants to stir them up from their spiritual coldness. And how does he want to do it? Not by telling them something they haven't heard, but by telling them again what they already know that it might sink into their hearts. And so he's stirring them up by way of reminder.

And maybe that is someone here this morning. There hasn't been a single thing that I have said in this sermon that you don't already know. But maybe there's not a single thing that I have said in this sermon that has touched your heart. Maybe you haven't been stirred up. Maybe you are redeemed, clothed in the righteousness of Christ, but you've grown cold.

And Peter is saying to you, Let me stir you up. Let me remind you of Christ. Let me tell you afresh how good he is. Let me tell you of the excellencies of the doctrine of our holy religion. Let me tell you about how you get to live for King Jesus. Let me tell you again about the eternal kingdom, which is richly being provided for you in Christ Jesus. Let me tell you of these things. Let me remind you. Wake up.

Somewhere Calvin said something like this. The excellencies of Christ is the remedy to heresy. The excellency of Christ is the remedy of heresy. If we appreciated the excellency of Christ, it would banish heresy from us, and Calvin didn't say this in this particular quote, but it's true, and it would propel us to live for Christ. It would destroy, I mean, if we really were gripped by the excellency of Christ, it would destroy heresy. Heresy would be slaughtered. And also, holiness would be pursued.

And here is why. Because anything that diminished Christ, any doctrine, any belief, Jehovah's Witness, Mormon, any belief that would denigrate my God, Jesus Christ would have no place in my thinking. It would have nothing to do with it. Why? Because Christ is excellent in every way. He is God become man without ceasing to be God. And anything that's going to make him less God than God, I don't want to have anything to do with it.

It would slaughter heresy. But it also would promote holiness. Anything in my life that wouldn't be good to do in the name of my savior. Anything that would be a stain in his sight, I wouldn't want to do it. I wouldn't want to think it. I wouldn't want to live it.

Why? Because he's excellent, because I love him, because he's more wonderful than all the world combined. And that's the sort of things that he's been setting forth before his readers in the first 11 verses. He's saying, if we could put it like this, Readers, don't forget how excellent Christ is. Don't forget how good he is. Don't forget how marvelous he is. Because if you'll get that, you will want to think rightly, doctrinally, and you will want to live rightly as a follower of Jesus.

And his diligence continues not only with this word, stir up, but he says, I will make every effort, verse, He called them to make every effort in verse 5 and in verse 10, and now he is saying, I, Peter, am making every effort. Every effort as I'm dying to make sure that you hear about these truths again. But the third word with a D that we see that shows forth the urgency of the ministry of reminders is a word, descendants, descendants. Peter is burdened that the faith which he has been preaching in the first 11 verses would not only be believed by his readers then and there, he wanted it to be believed by you and me, and he wanted these truths to be believed by your children and your grandchildren. He wanted these truths to be passed down.

That is why he says in verse 15, so that after my departure, you may be able at any time to recall these things. He says at any time, in season and out of season, in plenty and in want, on the day where you sin miserably, and on the day where by God's grace you do fairly well, any time, He says, I want you to be able to recall the truths I have been preaching. I want you to have holy habits that almost without thinking about it, you think of these truths throughout your day. And this is all in the context, he says, of after my departure.

He's saying, I'm going to die, and I don't want these truths to die with me. Embrace these truths and own these truths for yourself and for the next generation. So you need this ministry of reminder, or you see the urgency, rather, of this ministry of reminder in these words, departure, diligence, and descendants.

Now, do you remember this story of King Hezekiah in the Old Testament? King Hezekiah of Judah, for the most part, was a good king. But towards the end of his life, he decided to show off his kingdom to the Babylonians. And God, through Isaiah, tells Hezekiah that because you have done this, because you have done this foolish thing of showing off your kingdom to the Babylonians, in the future I will raise up the Babylonians to destroy this kingdom, you take your descendants captive. Do you remember Hezekiah's response? Why not, he says, if there will be peace and security in my days? Hezekiah departed selfishly. He departed without urgency for the next generation. He didn't care as long as he got to die in peace.

Contrast that with Christ. Christ is getting ready to die and he says, do this in remembrance of me. He thought about those who would come after him. Christ is about to die and he prays not only for those who are with him, but those who would believe later in his name. John 17 verse 20. Think about Peter here, he is thinking about the next generation. Many Christians die like Hezekiah. Many Christians die without a concern for the next generation. In Judges chapter two, we learn that the first generation that entered the promised land was faithful, but there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord.

That's a direct quote, Judges 2.10.

And so there's certainly a challenge for us here this morning to not be those who don't care about the people who come after us. We are going to die, and we ought to have a burden on our hearts that those around us embrace. These truths are the first 11 verses of this book and particularly the next generation. For some of us, that's praying actively and consistently for those around us and particularly for our children and our grandchildren, our covenant children, our covenant grandchildren. It might look like helping with the VBS or being involved in some way.

But the point is simply this, that there ought to be this burden for the next generation. So we have seen this morning that the Ministry of Reminders is always needed. And we have seen that the Ministry of Reminders is very urgent. And the reason that it is always needed and very urgent is simply for this reason.

There is salvation in no one else. There is no other name under heaven by which you must be saved. Jesus says, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. There is no salvation outside of Christ. You need that reminder. And maybe you don't know that. You're not among those in verse 12 that he speaks of who says, I know that you know these things. Maybe you're here and you don't. And if you don't, come to know these things.

Embrace these truths. for they are to the salvation of your soul. Let us pray. Beloved Heavenly Father, we praise you for the ministry of reminders. We ask, O Lord, that even as much as we might claim to know or think we know, we would never think that we're above hearing again the glorious, simple, and yet profound doctrines of the Christian faith. that we are sinners and we cannot save ourself, that Christ is God and he was righteous in our place, and that our only way of salvation, the only way of salvation is to trust humbly upon him alone, that his righteousness be

imputed to us, that we be clothed in that righteousness, and in that righteousness, we indeed are safe, and out of the goodness of your righteousness to us and the power of your Holy Spirit, we are to live lives that reflect these truths. Oh God, maybe everyone has heard that many times here this morning in one way or another, but would all of us leave here freshly filled with gratitude because of what Christ has done for us. We pray this in Jesus's name, amen.