

Remember, remember

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 17 February 2016

Preacher: Josh Johnston

[0 : 00] Good afternoon and welcome to our Wednesday lunchtime Bible talk. I'm Josh Johnston, a minister and training here at the Tron Church, and we're going to pick up again in our look at this first chapter of 2 Peter.

So if you could turn in your Bibles to the first chapter of 2 Peter, we'll read our passage for today. You'll find that in the Church Bibles on page 1018, and we'll read verses 12 to 15.

And I will make every effort so that after my departure, you may be able to recall these things. Let's pray together.

Heavenly Father, we thank you again this week that you're so gracious to us as sinners, gracious to the point of giving us your Son, gracious to speak and reveal your promises to us.

We pray that you would continually be using your words to remind us of the great grace that we've been given. We ask that you would use your word to remind us of the real Christian response to these promises.

[1 : 34] Remind us of Jesus' power to transform our lives. Remind us of what transformed lives look like. Lord, we pray that you would help us listen to your voice and your words in the midst of all the voices that we hear around us in the world.

That want us to be like them. Help us to prioritize your voice. We pray that you would remind us of the truth that we might stand firm in your gospel.

And that we might be continually growing up in it. We ask that you do these things. That we might be better able to make you known in our families.

Amongst our neighbors. With our colleagues. And to the rest of Glasgow and beyond. For we ask all of these things.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Please do turn back in your Bibles to 2 Peter chapter 1. We've been studying together this first chapter of 2 Peter.

[2 : 38] And we're beginning to see that this letter is a little bit like riding a bike. With a bike, you need to keep pedaling or you'll fall off. And Peter is warning Christians that he's writing to you to keep growing.

And so to keep going in their faith. That's what we see in 3.17-18. Because just like the bike, the same is true of the Christian life.

We must keep growing. Or we won't keep going at all. We'll fall and hurt ourselves. Peter says, If a Christian stops growing in the way of Jesus.

Then Peter says it's very clear what will happen. A loss of stability that will lead to a great fall. So Peter's message to us is an encouragement to keep growing.

In your knowledge of the truth. And in your lives that flow from that. We know that in chapter 2. Peter spells out in depth. What exactly the false teachers.

[3 : 54] Threatening these Christians were like. And he summarizes it again in chapter 3. They were guilty of two things. First. They didn't believe that Jesus was coming back to judge the world.

Look at 3 verse 4. They will say. Where is the promise of his coming? They'll say things like. Do not fret.

Jesus isn't coming back to judge. You don't need to worry about that. And so this leads on to their second error. It's their lives. Chapter 2 is crammed full of strong and stark language.

About really bad behavior. They take sin lightly. And it fits. Doesn't it? That the people who think there's no judgment. Will then live lives as they please.

Not worrying about consequences. Because they'll think there isn't a consequence. For what they do. So they can do what they want. And in reality.

[4 : 54] What it shows us is. That there are people who. Are greedy and exploit. Their conduct is depraved. They're like people from Sodom and Gomorrah. They follow all sorts of corrupt desires. They have eyes full of adultery. Insatiable for sin. Slaves of depravity. Really disturbingly strong language is used of them.

Many things that are wrong seemed right and good. And that's just like today. Isn't it? All sorts of things that are now said to be right and good. Are really not the way of Jesus at all.

And for God's people. That is dangerous. Seeing people who profess Christ. And look like they're okay. Living lives that don't look like Christians.

Living lives that value the world's thinking. And the world's way of living. Christians cannot be dragged into this. It's dangerous to think that you don't have to choose between knowing Christ.

[6 : 03] And embracing the ways of the culture around you. We can't be Christian. And display a liberty to live however we want. But isn't that exactly what people want from the church today?

Peter knows how dangerous it is to dwell on the sinful lives lived by those who do not really follow Jesus. If we look on longingly enough.

Eventually its attraction will draw us in. Eventually we'll adjust our theology to suit our newfound lifestyle. And as we do as we please we'll be saying things like.

I don't really believe that Jesus is going to come back. The message of 2 Peter is like riding a bicycle. Keep going.

Keep growing. Or you'll fall off and hurt yourself. Peter says keep growing and you'll keep going.

We've seen already that Jesus has granted to us by his power everything that we need for a godly life.

[7 : 08] Which is great news. We lack nothing to live a godly life. As we trust the gospel promise. Jesus' power transforms us. And we've seen how important it is for Christians faced with these temptations to live lives that are now like Jesus.

Peter reminds them of what growing Christians look like. It's distinct from the world. It's not just like the world. That's what we were looking at last week.

Growing Christians are Christians that are becoming more and more like Jesus. Now that they have Jesus' power. They're using that to become more and more like him with their lives.

This week we're looking at the heart of Peter's letter. The intention behind why he was writing. And it's a reminder. I'm sure we all have different ways of reminding ourselves of things.

Whether it be writing notes on our hands. Setting reminders on our phones. Maybe that old-fashioned way of keeping a diary. My mom's way was to put a random object on the dashboard of her car.

[8 : 19] So she'd wonder. Why is that there? In the hope that it would trigger her memory. You see we all forget. And we forget so easily. We need things to remind us what to do.

When to do things. All sorts of things. Are required. As reminders. And if we need that in everyday life. Then surely we need it too.

As Christians. As we live day by day. In fact. That is what Peter is honing in on in this passage. He doesn't want these dear brothers and sisters in the faith. To suffer Christian dementia.

He doesn't want them to forget. We can easily forget lots of things. Sometimes they can be important. Sometimes not. I forgot a family birthday just last month.

We can forget meetings. We can forget to pick up toothpaste at the shop. But I imagine we all would like to think. When it comes to important things.

[9 : 17] We won't forget. But in reality. We often do. Peter in this passage is saying. That for Christians to remember. Is an imperative.

It is vital. Remembering the gospel promises. Given to the prophets and the apostles. Is vital. There is nothing more important.

To keep in mind. We cannot afford to suffer Christian dementia. So there are two things to look at today. First. We need to keep being reminded of.

And remembering the truth. Verse 12. And then secondly. Because we must stick. To the departed apostles message. Verses 13 to 15.

They're much the same thing. The first point is telling us. What we must do. And the second. Is why it's so important to Peter. That we do it. So firstly. Peter's writing to remind Christians.

[10 : 14] Of the qualities. A real Christian will display. We looked at them last week. He wants to remind them. That they must live. Godly and distinct lives. By trusting. In God's power.

To transform them. Peter wants them to know. Both the truth of the gospel. At the end of verse 12. And the traits befitting the gospel. At the beginning of verse 12. He writes to remind them. Of the qualities. That Christians display. And the truth. That Christians hold. And live in light of. Maybe when you read of these qualities. And as you listen to them last week. You think. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I know that. And for many of us. We do know that. We know we ought to live a life. That honors Jesus.

We know we ought to live in light. Of the good news about him. But Peter's still saying. That that's what he's reminding. These people of. So why does he remind them?

[11:09] It's not because they don't know. Peter is sure that these Christians. Already know what he's saying. But he still reminds them. These Christians are established.

In the truth. They're already aware. Of what the fruit of the gospel. Should look like in their lives. Yet Peter is still determined. And to remind them. You see. It's possible for us.

To know something is true. Yet forget it. A husband and a wife. Will know that they love each other. But when they've had an argument. They'll probably often.

Still need reminded. And told. That they do love each other. We can know things are true. Yet still not have them. On the tip of our minds. It's possible.

To witness great acts of God. And be sure of his work in the world. And then forget. That we ought to respond to him. In certain ways. Peter is a realist.

[12:08] He knows that Christians. Will need to be reminded of the truth. We're in a dangerous place. If we think we know the gospel. And don't need reminded of things. That sort of complacency.

Will lead to a great fall. We must be wary. Of Christian dementia. That's what the tempters. In 2 Peter have done. They've forgotten what they knew.

Their lives have slipped. From honoring God. To being overcome. With wanting to do. What they wanted. And what they believe. Has slipped from what is true. Look at 2 verse 1.

False prophets. Arose among the people. Just as there will be. False teachers among you. Who will secretly bring in. Destructive heresies. Even denying. The master who bought them.

Bringing upon themselves. Swift judgment. They have forgotten. The master who has bought them. They've forgotten Jesus. Forgotten to the point.

[13:08] Of denying him. It's a dangerous thing. To think we're superior. To the Christians. Peter is writing to. Because the story. Because the story of God's people.

Throughout history. Is pointedly marked. With people forgetting. But it's also marked. With reminders. Shortly after God.

Worked miraculously. To rescue his people. From Egypt. To free them from slavery. They end up giving credit. For their rescue. To an idol. They made. A golden calf.

We must not think. We're immune. To the same thing. God knows. That we need to be reminded. And he is gracious. To give us. Reminders.

In his word. But also through his sacraments. We easily forget things. That's why. Israel were to celebrate. The Passover. Every year. To remind them.

[14:02] Of God rescuing them. From slavery. Did they need it? The golden calf. Would say. Absolutely. They needed it. It's why. God commanded.

Upon the crossing. Of the Jordan. They should build. A pile of rocks. To remind them. Of what. What God had done. Miraculously. It's why.

We have the Lord's Supper. Bread and wine. To have physical. And tangible signs. To remind us. Of the truth. Of the gospel. And to remind us. Of what it achieves. For us. How often.

Have we reacted. To a piece of news. Or an event. In a way. That seems. Maybe reasonable. As humans. Only to afterwards. Be thinking about it. Maybe that wasn't.

A gospel response. Maybe it's. A family member. Who wants to give up. A lucrative career. To better serve the Lord. And we think. Oh no. You don't want to do that.

[14:59] Only to afterwards. Think. Well. If it's okay. For others to do it. Why is it not okay. For my family. We can easily forget. The truth of the gospel.

And how we should respond to it. Often we find. That what we know. Is not just at the tip. Of our minds. When we need it. It's in there somewhere. But it needs jolted.

To the surface. We need. To be reminded. Because we forget. A Christian. Who thinks. They have sufficient knowledge. Of the truth. To keep them until the last day.

Is a Christian. That's in danger. When faced. With dangerous teachers. Teachers. Who secretly. Were influencing Christians. To think. And act. Like the world around them. To think. And act. Like they wanted to. Peter's answer. Was not something new. He didn't come up. With a new doctrine. Or a new teaching. For them.

[15:56] What he does. Is remind them. Of what they already know. He reminds them. Of the fact. They have everything. They need. In Jesus. He's really saying.

Don't slip off. In that direction. Stick to what you already know. Stick to what has saved you. And what will keep you. Until the end. You will never move.

Past that. We must. Not forget. The gospel. Peter says. In verse 12. That is. What his intention. Was in writing. It was to remind.

These Christians. Of the truth. That they already knew. And he goes on. To explain. Why it's just. So pivotal. Not just for these Christians.

But for us too. Verses 13 to 15. We must stick. To the departed. Apostles message. We must stick.

[16:53] To the departed. Apostles message. The theme of remembering. The theme of remembering. Continues in these verses. Verses 13. We see reminder. Verses 15. Recall. Peter's intention here.

Is not. Just to help. These Christians. Fight off. This one group. Of dangerous teachers. It's much bigger than that. It's much more important. Than that. Peter has in mind.

Not just. The immediate well-being. Of these Christians. But their well-being. When he's gone. Verse 14. Since I know.

The putting off of my body. Will be soon. Peter is soon. Going to die. And just as Peter. Is going to die. So too. Are the rest of the apostles. Peter is preparing.

Christians. For being the second. Generation of Christians. Which puts them really. In the same place as us. Peter is preparing them. To be the generation.

[17:52] That no longer. Have the apostles. With them. That no longer. Have the apostles. To point out error. To encourage people. To direct churches. As issues arise. That age.

And that era. Are coming to an end. Peter was aware of that. He knew his time. Was soon. Going to be up. That's why. Verse 13. As long as he's still here.

He wants to remind them. Of the gospel. That they already know. And love. He wants to keep them. Looking to the truth. That God has revealed. Because it's the same gospel. That will continue.

Beyond Peter. And the other apostles. Even beyond the Christians. He was writing to. Even beyond us. In 1.1.

Peter says. Christians. Share the same standing. As the apostles. They enjoy a share. In the same righteousness. Of God. They have the same faith.

[18:48] And Peter wants Christians. To know. That that is still true. Even when he's gone. Even when Paul is gone. Even when the rest. Of the apostles are gone. Verse 15.

Peter will make. Every effort. So that after his departure. Christians. May be able to recall. His teaching. That's why he's written. In this letter. His time.

Was running out. His role. As an apostle. Was to take the gospel. To the world. And to see. That was continuing. And most importantly. Of all. What was at stake here. Is that.

People remembering. The good news. Is vital. For the welfare. Of souls. He wanted people. To remember.

The good news. About Jesus. Because their souls. Depended on it. We no longer. Have the apostles. Sitting amongst us. Today. But because of.

[19:44] God's graciousness. To us. We do. Have their gospel. Peter tells us. That no prophets. Spoke of their own will. But it was God. Speaking through them. The apostles message.

Is the same message. As that. And we have it. Today. In the Bible. That's why we join. Week by week. To hear it taught. To have our minds. And hearts. Realigned.

With the truth. That's why we need. To be reminded. Each day. Of the gospel. We easily. Forget. We are constantly. Tempted. By a world.

Around us. That wants. Us to conform. To what they're like. We face. Regular drip. Feeding. From newspapers. From the TV. From conversations. That happen around us. We hear all sorts of input. From the world. And how they think. And so we need reminded. Of the truth. Of the gospel. If we're only exposed. To the world's thinking. And the world's agendas.

[20 : 42] Then eventually. We will forget the gospel. Our lives. Will start to mimic. The world's. And we'll soon. Turn to denying. The gospel.

We've always known. Just like the false teachers. Did in 2 Peter. We do not want to suffer. Christian dementia. And end up like them.

Look at 2.21. This is what Peter says. Of these false teachers. Who've forgotten. And denied. It would have been better.

For them. Never to have known. The way of righteousness. Than after knowing it. To turn back. From the holy commandment. Delivered to them. We must not forget.

The gospel. We must not forget. The way of Jesus. Or soon. We will end up. Denying it. Denying what he has done. And what he will do. Just like these false teachers.

[21 : 38] And we'll be denying his traits. We'll be living lives. Of slavery. Not freedom. They promise freedom.

But all they offer is slavery. Christians who drift away. From being reminded. From being taught the Bible. Will forget. And sadly in time.

As they only hear the voice of the world. Influencing them. They'll be pulled into the errors. Of these false teachers. We don't need a new message. Peter's answer.

Was to remind them. Of what they already knew. The first voices. We ought to listen to. Are not. Contemporary ones. The first voices.

We ought to listen to. Are those of the apostles. Whose voices repeat the prophets. Whose voices are God's voice. That's who we need to listen to.

[22 : 37] That's what we need reminded of. That's why Peter is writing. That's what we'll see of these Christians. From denying Jesus's return.

And from living lives. That look nothing. Like the Lord Jesus. We don't need random objects. On our dashboards. We don't need to write things in our arms.

But we do need to pay serious attention. To God's words. He's been gracious to us. To give us it. We need to remember it. He's graciously spoken to us.

He still speaks to us. As we remember his word. Because his word is a constant. And patient. And lasting reminder to us all. We do not need anything new.

But we must remember. What he said to us. Amen. Let's pray. Father we do thank you. So much.

[23 : 36] That you have given us your word. That we have in our hands. The gospel of the apostles. The message that you give to the prophets. The good news about Jesus.

The truth. About the world. About you. And about us. And so we ask. That you'd be so gracious. To remind us. Every day. Of what is true.

So that we will not. Descend into the way the world thinks. And we'll be spared from living lives. Of slavery. Help us remember the truth.

That we will never fall away. For we pray these things in Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.