

2 PETER

Author: Apostle Peter

Date: c. A.D. 65-66

Place of Writing: Probably Rome

Purposes in Writing:

1. To challenge the readers to grow continually and in the knowledge of Christ (1:2-15)
2. To reaffirm the truthfulness and the trustworthiness of the prophetic Word of God (1:16-21)
3. To warn of the danger of false teachers and their destructive doctrines (2:1-22)
4. To encourage watchfulness and steadfastness in light of our Lord's certain return (3:1-18)

2 PETER

Author: Simon Peter is the stated author of this letter (1:1). This affirmation is supported by the text of the epistle by the following evidence: (1) the use of the first person pronoun in the context of Jesus' prediction of his death (cf. 1:14), (2) the claim to be an eyewitness of the transfiguration of Jesus (cf. 1:16-18), (3) the acknowledgement to the readers that this is his second epistle (3:1), (4) his references to Paul as "our beloved brother" (3:15) and (5) his honest admission that in Paul's letters are "some things hard to understand" (3:16).

External evidence for the authenticity of 2 Peter also exists, though it must be admitted, it is not as strong as it is for his first epistle. 1 Clement (c. A.D. 95) and the Didache (c. A.D. 100) may allude to it. In the late 2nd and early 3rd centuries, support for its canonicity (inclusion in Holy Scripture) grows, though some doubted its genuineness. Eusebius (A.D. 265-340) classified the book as *antilegomena* or disputed (other N.T. books disputed but eventually recognized as divinely inspired include Hebrews, James, 2 and 3 John, Jude, and Revelation). By the end of the 4th century the epistle was generally accepted by the vast majority of the Christian world. Modern critical scholars have attacked this book more than any other in the New Testament as to its authenticity. Many have judged it as pseudepigraphic (meaning a "false writing"), i.e., a forgery, and date it well after the time of Peter's death (c. A. D. 67-68). Some would even date it in the second century. Most skeptical scholars do not wish to remove the book from its authoritative place in Holy Scriptures (though some do), but they argue that the style and vocabulary of 2 Peter is so different from

that of 1 Peter that it rules out a common author. Some believe the differences to be so significant that if the two letters had been anonymous, no one would have ever thought to attribute them to a common authorship. How should we respond to these issues?

There is indeed a difference in style. However, the real difference is between the Petrine epistles and the rest of the New Testament. The fact is no other book is as much like 1 Peter as 2 Peter (with the exception of Jude). The differences that do exist may be explained by a change in subject matter, by time and circumstances of writing, and especially by the part played by an amanuensis (secretary). In 1 Peter 5:12 Peter suggests the strong possibility that Silvanus (Silas) served as the amanuensis for this epistle. 2 Peter has no such reference. Perhaps some differences in style and vocabulary can be attributed to the service of Silvanus as an amanuensis for the writing of 1 Peter, whereas Peter himself (or some other secretary) is responsible for the actual and direct penning of 2 Peter. When a careful study and a balanced investigation is made, there is no compelling reason for rejecting 2 Peter as genuine. The letter should be viewed as authentic. It comes from the apostle whose name it carries.

Date: The second epistle appears to have been written shortly after the first and from the same location, probably from Rome (cf. 1 Peter 5:13 and the cryptic use of "Babylon" for Rome). Proper assignment then is c. A.D. 65-66, during the latter part of the reign of the infamous Roman emperor Nero (A.D. 54-68), and toward the end of Peter's life (cf. 1:12-15).

Recipients: The reference in 2 Peter 3:1 to the present epistle as the second letter indicates that the recipients were the same believers who were addressed in 1 Peter (cf. 1 Peter 1:1).

Theme: A variety of subjects is discussed in 2 Peter, but all reaffirm the truthfulness of the apostolic witness and the need to be forewarned of the imminent danger of the testimony by false teachers. The book concludes with an eschatological note designed to encourage and fortify the faith of believers. Second Peter is a short letter of just 61 verses and 3 chapters. Its message however is concise and clear: beware of false teachers, theological error and moral corruption as we live in the last days before Jesus comes again.

Purposes:

- 1) To encourage spiritual growth (Ch. 1).
- 2) To counter false teaching (Ch. 2).
- 3) To foster watchfulness in light of our Lord's certain return (Ch. 3).


Characteristics of Spiritual Teachers	
False Teacher	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Controlled by the flesh 2. Immoral 3. Slave of sin 4. Starves sinners 5. Destination: Lake of Fire
Faithful Teacher	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Controlled by the Spirit 2. Moral 3. Slave of the Savior 4. Feeds sinners 5. Destination: Heaven

**The Relation of
2 Peter and Jude:**

There is a close relationship between 2 Peter and Jude. The resemblances are largely between 2 Peter 2:1-18; 3:1-3 and Jude 4-13, 16-18. There are four possible explanations for this close resemblance. (1) Jude is dependent on 2 Peter; (2) 2 Peter is dependent on Jude; (3) Both letters were dependent on a common source; or (4) Common authorship. The majority view is that 2 Peter is dependent on Jude. Since Jude is shorter, there seems to be no reason to suppose that it would have been published after 2 Peter if all the common points had been covered. Some also argue that Jude is more harsh, and that 2 Peter softened the tone. Jude makes use of apocryphal material, and Peter allegedly corrects this in his letter. However, it is certainly conceivable that Jude may have used 2 Peter to meet his particular situation. Just because it is shorter does not mean that Jude could not have used the pertinent parts and adapted them to suit his own purpose. It is also possible that Jude saw the need to adopt a stronger approach as the threat of false teaching was growing stronger.

It is quite probable that Jude makes a reference to 2 Peter. This is seen most clearly in Jude 17 which exhorts the readers to remember the apostles' predictions and the words cited occur almost verbatim in 2 Peter 3:3. Further, **it seems that Jude is experiencing what Peter prophesied. Peter said false prophets were coming and Jude says that false prophets are here.** This

could also help to explain the harsher tone of Jude. Another reason to hold to Petrine priority is that it is more difficult to conceive of Peter (a well-known apostle) making use of a lesser-known non-apostle, than it is to conceive of Jude referring to Peter.

 Comparing First and Second Peter	
1 Peter	2 Peter
Major Focus: Hope in the midst of suffering	Major Focus: The danger of false teaching and practices
Christology: The sufferings of Christ for our salvation and the example of His life.	Christology: The glory of Christ and the consummation of history at His return.
The day of salvation when Christ suffered, died and rose from the dead.	The day of the Lord when Christ returns in judgment.
Be encouraged in your present trials.	Be warned of eschatological judgment.
We need hope to face our trials.	We need full knowledge to face error.
Numerous similarities to Paul (especially Ephesians and Colossians)	Almost identical similarities to Jude (compare 2 Peter 2 with Jude 4-18)

A Study of 2 Peter

Purpose: To warn against false teaching, doctrinal error and moral compromise as we live in live in the last days.

Key Words: Lord Jesus Christ, Knowledge, Diligence, Destruction, Beloved, Remember/Remind, Corruption

Date: A.D. 66-67

Tone: Urgent, Intense, Encouraging

	Spiritual Growth	Doctrinal Compromise	Eschatological Hope	
Introduction	How can I grow in godliness?	How can I recognize false prophets?	How will it all end?	Conclusion
1:1-4	Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	3:14-18
<i>Warning</i>	Add to your faith. (v. 5)	Know the truth. (v. 3)	Be diligent! (v. 14)	
<i>Promise</i>	“You will never stumble.” (v. 10)	“God will deliver you.” (v. 9)	“Jesus is coming!” (v. 12)	
<i>Perspective</i>	Looking within	Looking back	Looking ahead	

“How Do You Grow As A Christian”
2 Peter 1:1-11

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| I. <u>Accept the foundation you have in Jesus.</u> | 1:1-4 |
| 1. Know you have righteous perfection. | 1:1-2 |
| 2. Know you have divine power. | 1:3 |
| 3. Know you have precious promises. | 1:4 |
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| II. <u>Add to the faith you have in Jesus.</u> | 1:5-9 |
| 1. Pursue Christian character. | 1:5-7 |
| 2. Perceive Christ’s cleansing. | 1:8-9 |
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| III. <u>Abound in the future you have in Jesus.</u> | 1:10-11 |
| 1. Look <u>back</u> to your call and election. | 1:10 |
| 2. Look <u>forward</u> to Christ and eternity. | 1:11 |

“Why I Am A Christian”
2 Peter 1:12-21

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| I. | <u>We have the teaching of God’s servants.</u> | 1:12-15 |
| 1. | Know that you are established in present truth. | 1:12 |
| 2. | Know that you have a proven teacher. | 1:13-15 |
| II. | <u>We have the testimony concerning God’s Son.</u> | 1:16-18 |
| 1. | Be confident in the earthly eyewitnesses of His majesty. | 1:16 |
| 2. | Be confident in the heavenly witness of His glory. | 1:17-18 |
| III. | <u>We have the truth of God’s Scriptures.</u> | 1:19-21 |
| 1. | The Scriptures instruct our souls. | 1:19 |
| 2. | The Scriptures are inspired by the Spirit. | 1:20-21 |
| | a. God guides the interpretation of Scripture. | 1:20 |
| | b. God governed the production of Scripture. | 1:21 |

“The Deeds and Destiny of False Teachers”
2 Peter 2:1-3

- I. False teachers work diligently. 2:1**
1. They were active in the past.
 2. They will be active in the future.
- II. False teachers witness deceptively. 2:1**
1. They deploy in secret.
 2. They deny the Savior.
- III. False teachers win disciples. 2:2**
1. They are effective recruiters.
 2. They are erroneous blasphemers.
- IV. False teachers will be destroyed. 2:3**
1. They are judged by their works.
 2. They are judged by their words.

“The Judgment of God”
2 Peter 2:4-11

- I. God has proven in the past He judges the ungodly. 2:4-9**
1. God judges wicked angels. 2:4
 2. God judges wicked men. 2:5
 3. God judges wicked cities. 2:6-8
 - a. He destroys the unrighteous. 2:6
 - b. He delivers the righteous. 2:7-9
- II. God promises in the future He will judge the unjust. 2:9-11**
1. He judges the sinful. 2:9
 2. He judges the sensual. 2:10
 3. He judges the self-willed. 2:10
 4. He judges the scoffers. 2:10-11

“A Portrait of Spiritual Deceivers”

2 Peter 2:12-17

- I. Spiritual deceivers are sensual. 2:12-13**
1. They are sensual in their conversation. 2:12
 2. They are sensual in their conduct. 2:13
- II. Spiritual deceivers are seductive. 2:14**
1. They have careless eyes.
 2. They have a corrupt will.
 3. They have a covetous heart.
- III. Spiritual deceivers are senseless. 2:15-16**
1. Forsaking truth they go astray. 2:15
 2. Desiring treasures they go crazy. 2:15-16
- IV. Spiritual deceivers are a sham. 2:17**
1. They are destitute.
 2. They disappoint.
 3. They are doomed.

“Prophets Who Cannot Deliver”
2 Peter 2:18-22

- I. They preach what does not work. 2:18**
1. Their words are empty of wisdom.
 2. Their words entice the weak.
- II. They promise what they cannot deliver. 2:19**
1. Liberty is what they proclaim.
 2. Slavery is what they provide.
- III. They proceed where they will not escape. 2:20-22**
1. In time they return to the pollutions of the world. 2:20
 2. In time they reject the revelation of righteousness. 2:21
 3. In time they reveal the corruption of their nature. 2:22

“Things God Wants Us To Remember”
2 Peter 3:1-13

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| I. <u>Every Christian should think about the Lord.</u> | 3:1-7 |
| 1. Listen to His words. | 3:1-4 |
| 2. Learn from His works. | 3:5-7 |
| II. <u>Every Christian should work like the Lord.</u> | 3:8-9 |
| 1. Patience marks our God. | 3:8 |
| 2. People matter to our God. | 3:9 |
| III. <u>Every Christian should look for the Lord.</u> | 3:10-13 |
| 1. When the Lord comes there will be judgment. | 3:10-12 |
| 2. When the Lord comes there will be joy. | 3:13 |

“Until Then”
(Jesus is coming again: What should I do?)
2 Peter 3:14-18

- I. Be diligent to maintain certain priorities. 3:14**
1. Pursue peace.
 2. Pursue purity.
- II. Be devoted to meditate on our Master’s patience. 3:15-16**
1. It expresses His heart. 3:15 (cf. 3:9)
 2. It exposes the heretic. 3:16 (cf. 2:1-2)
- III. Be determined to mark your position. 3:17**
1. Remember what you were taught.
 2. Remain where you stand.
- IV. Be dedicated to magnify God’s praise. 3:18**
1. Grow in grace daily.
 2. Give God glory eternally.