

Keep Your Bearings

2 Peter 3

1. **Remember**

Peter begins wrapping up his final letter (cf. 2 Pet. 1:14) in the same way that he began it: urging believers to remain grounded in the truths of the gospel (2 Pet. 1:1-4) and in the clear teaching of the Scriptures (2 Pet. 3:1-2; cf. 2 Pet. 1:16-21). We must never think that our unique time in history allows us to discover a new way of Christian doctrine and practice that is out of alignment with those who have gone before us (Eph. 2:20 cf. Hos. 7:13).

2. **Prepare**

Peter's primary focus for the believer's preparation is for their ability to remain steadfast in the faith (cf. Jude 3) amidst false teaching and trying times (2 Pet. 2:1-22; 3:3-7). Men often have grandiose ideas of either calamity or utopia but almost always operate as if the world itself will continue on in relative normalcy (2 Pet. 3:4; cf. Jas 4:13-15). They fail to heed the awesome power of God (cf. Ps. 19:1), and disbelieving that a sudden catastrophe could actually occur in their own time (cf. Matt 24:38-39) they mock those who wait for the return of Christ (Jude 17-21). Believers must remember that God's timing is purposeful (Ezek. 18:32; cf. Ps. 90:4), and our present afflictions are another reminder of the surety of the coming judgment of the world (cf. 1 Pet. 4:15-19).

3. **Persevere**

The continuing duty of the Christian is clear: maintain your confidence in the promises of the Lord while living in holiness and godly conduct at all times (cf. 2 Pet. 1:5-11). Godliness in life can be manifested in many ways (cf. Ps. 69:9; John 2:17), but Peter's emphasis is upon peace in relationships (cf. Eph. 2:13-14; Col. 3:15; 2 Tim. 2:22, 24; James 3:18; Heb. 12:11, 14) and moral purity in actions (cf. Eph. 1:4; Phil. 2:15). Maintaining a life of faithfulness (cf. 2 Pet. 1:5-9) will help Christians retain a proper perspective for why Christ has not yet returned (Luke 17:22; Rom. 2:4) and enable us to recognize and reject false teaching when it is presented in an alluring light (Eph. 4:14-16).