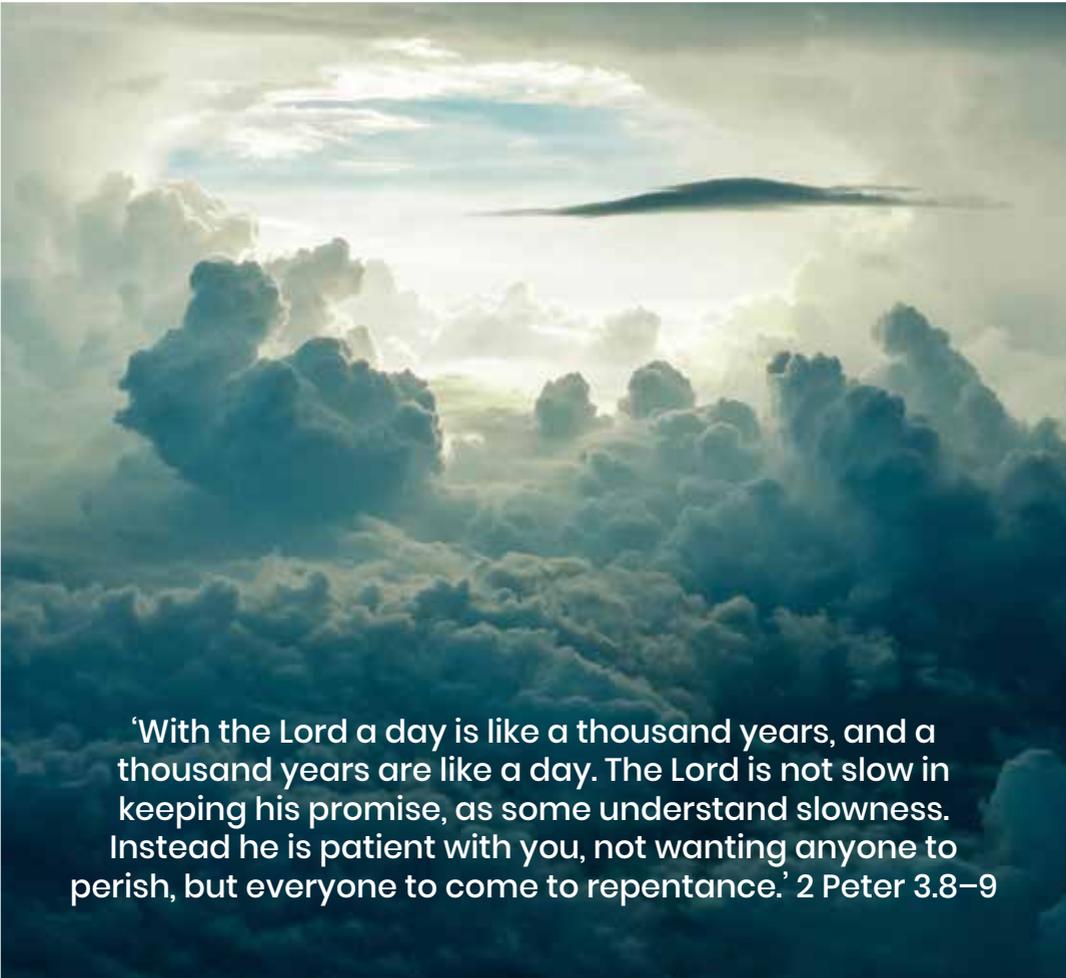


 Christ Church W4

2 Peter

A Study Guide



‘With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.’ 2 Peter 3.8–9

Study One: 2 Peter 1.1–11

Welcome

Think about someone who has influenced you for good (maybe a teacher, parent, church leader, author or friend). What was it about them that made a difference to you? What stood out in their character? How might you be a good mentor to those who are younger in the faith?

Word

1 Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: 2 Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. 3 His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

5 For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6 and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7 and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. 8 For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But whoever does not have them is near sighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

10 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, 11 and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ

- What is Peter (or one of his close disciples) saying by identifying himself as a 'servant'? Why is 'servant' leadership so important for the church?
- In verse 1 Peter talks about having a 'received faith'. How did you come to faith? How was the faith shared with you?
- In verse 3 there is the phrase 'knowledge of God'. What does this mean? (Read 1 Corinthians 1.18–2.5).
- It's sometimes very easy to see difficulties and corruption in the world. How can we stay 'participating in the divine nature'? What would it look like today for us to bring God's light into the places we live and work? How can we help support each other in this?
- How is it possible for us to grow in Christian character (verses 3 and 4)?
- What is it that we can do to help our growth (verse 5–7)?
- As we look at verses 8–11, what are we taught?
- God has a rich welcome planned. What are you most looking forward to when you meet the Lord?

Worship & Witness

To live a productive life, we're to grow in: faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, mutual affection and love.

Why not leave some quiet space (maybe put on some instrumental music) and allow some time to reflect upon just one of those characteristics asking for God's help for you to grow in that.

It would be good to then spend some time praying for our world and the church.

Study Two: 2 Peter 1.12–21

Welcome

Have fun playing a memory game. There are lots of ideas on the internet: you could play empires or the 'how many objects on the tray can you remember'. Find a fun group game that has something to do with 'remembering'.

Word & Witness

12 So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. 13 I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, 14 because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. 15 And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.

16 For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 He received honour and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." 18 We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.

19 We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. 20 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. 21 For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

- How good are you at remembering the Christian faith as you go about your daily life? What helps and what hinders?
- Why did Peter write this letter?
- Peter was thinking about some of the implications for the church if he were to die. How can we prepare for the future? Who do we pass things onto? What legacy will we leave?
- What two things did Peter remember from the transfiguration (verses 16–18)?
- What did Peter and the prophets bring to us (verse 16–19)?
- What's so special about Scripture and why does it deserve our very special attention?
- The prophecies within Scripture are very special too. Have a look at these prophecies about the coming of Christ: Isaiah 7.14; 9.2–7; Micah 5.2; Jeremiah 23.5–6.
- How might we grow in our regular feeding from Scripture, so that we can stay strong and good at remembering God's ways?
- If you (or your friends) are unsure if they can trust the Bible, why not have a listen to one of the talks below:
 - 'Can We Trust the Bible?' (<https://www.zachariastrust.org/can-we-trust-the-bible>)
 - 'Does the Bible Record myths or Actual Events?' (<https://www.zachariastrust.org/does-the-bible-record-myths-or-actual-events>)

Worship

Say evening prayer. You can find this on the app 'Daily Prayer' or online.

Study Three: 2 Peter 2.1–22

Welcome

Can you think of a time when someone has given you false information or when (due to a misunderstanding) you've given false information to others? What trouble has it caused?

Worship

Play or put on some Christian music and worship together. Perhaps read out some of the Psalms and give God praise.

Word

But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them – bringing swift destruction on themselves. 2 Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. 3 In their greed these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.

4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them in chains of darkness to be held for judgment; 5 if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; 6 if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; 7 and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the depraved conduct of the lawless 8 (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard) – 9 if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment. 10 This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the flesh and despise

authority. Bold and arrogant, they are not afraid to heap abuse on celestial beings; 11 yet even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not heap abuse on such beings when bringing judgment on them from the Lord. 12 But these people blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like unreasoning animals, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like animals they too will perish.

13 They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and blemishes, revelling in their pleasures while they feast with you. 14 With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed – an accursed brood! 15 They have left the straightway and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Bezier, who loved the wages of wickedness. 16 But he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey – an animal without speech – who spoke with a human voice and restrained the prophet's madness.

17 These people are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them. 18 For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of the flesh, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error. 19 They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity – for “people are slaves to whatever has mastered them.” 20 If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and are overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. 21 It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. 22 Of them the proverbs are true: “A dog returns to its vomit,” and, “A sow that is washed returns to her wallowing in the mud.”

- Who were the false teachers and what were their terrible words and actions?
- How can we guard ourselves and our church against false teaching?
- What makes false teaching attractive?
- How did the early church deal with it (1 Timothy 1.3–7; 6.3–5; Jude 17–23)?
- What made the false teachers worse off than before (verse 20)?
- What, according to the passage, is the worst mistake of the false teachers?
- Power issues, pride, lack of knowledge and understanding are often difficult to work through. Are there any traits in your own life you need to call into check so that you're not wittingly or unwittingly being a 'false teacher'?
- Is there any 'false teaching' that you need to graciously, but confidently, challenge? How best can we do that today in a society where people balk if you tell them anything?
- The subject of 'judgement' is difficult for us, as we want to remain those that 'extend grace'. How do we also warn people of judgement?

Witness

In what ways can we live as people of truth in this world? Where is that challenging? Where is that exciting? What help might we need?

Study Four: 2 Peter 3.1–18

Welcome

What do you look forward to?

Worship

Invite the Holy Spirit to come and be present with you as a group and allow some time for quiet personal worship. I suggest playing Jason Upton, 'This is My Home'. This piece of worship reflects on our home being with God.

Word

1 Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. 2 I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Saviour through your apostles.

3 Above all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. 4 They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our ancestors died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." 5 But they deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens came into being and the earth was formed out of water and by water. 6 By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed. 7 By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

8 But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. 9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.

11 Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives 12 as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. 13 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

14 So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

15 Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. 16 He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

17 Therefore, dear friends, since you have been forewarned, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of the lawless and fall from your secure position. 18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

- If you'd preached on Sunday, what things from the passage would you want to focus on and why?
- Using your imagination and what you know from the bible, what do you think the new heaven and the new earth will be like? What will a 'home of righteousness' mean?
- What are the key instructions to us in this passage?
- What examples can your group find of times when God has been patient with individuals or nations?

- Why do people scoff and doubt (verses 3–7)? And how should we respond to that in our hearts?
- Why is Christ delaying his return?
- In what ways could we be better prepared for Christ (verses 11–16)?
- The Ephesian church could spot heresy, but they needed to grow in their love (Revelation 2.1–7). How can we be on our guard without become ungracious?

Witness

Spend some time praying for people who don't yet know Jesus and for God to give you opportunities to witness.

There are no study notes produced for December.

Instead we'd like to encourage you to follow any of the brilliant Advent resources that are available

We'd love the small groups to have time for socials.

We'd love to challenge and encourage you to invite a friend, neighbour or contact you have to one of our Christmas services.

Missed A Service?

Why not catch up using our Podcast? We record the talk from each of our Friday and Sunday services. You can access them through iTunes (search Christ Church W4), our website under 'Talks', and ChurchSuite under 'My Podcasts'.