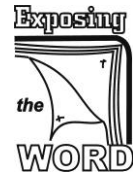


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The Epistles of 1 & 2 Peter

BY DR. EDGAR PIERCE



XVIII- Remember to Keep Diligent: 2Pe 3:14-18

In the world of sports, one of the things that separate the runner up and the champion many times is concentration. The best athlete does not always win but the one who can bring their mind into focus when the body is fatigued or distracted. A driver who runs a racecar at 200 mph cannot afford to have momentary laps of concentration for a instance because disaster lurks. A runner cannot let down their guard even when leading the race because a moment's lack of focus can open the door for a competitor to pass and win.

Let us notice one more reminder of truth from the epistles of Peter. Let us remember to be diligent in our faith and not have a lap of spiritual concentration and slip behind. You will recall that Peter had warned in *1Pe 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*

He now states *2Pe 3:14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things...* The things here he refers to is the consummation of the ages and the destruction of the earth that we talked about in the last session. Because we know what is to come we should act accordingly. We see he exhorts us to keep or stay diligent.

I- Keep Diligent:

...be diligent that ye may be... So what does it mean to be diligent. *Thayer's Greek Definitions* says it means:

- 1) to hasten, make haste
- 2) to exert one's self, endeavour, give diligence

The NIV and HCSB both translate it *“make every effort.”*

Paul writes in *1Co 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

Jesus warned His disciples you may recall to, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Mat 26:41*

Peter is going to give us some specific things that being diligent means or should produce.

1- found of him in peace... *Wuest* says found in peace, “refers to the saints living at peace with one another. John Wesley said it means that we, “May meet him without terror...” *Barnes Notes* says, “Found by him when he returns in such a state as to secure your eternal peace.

Jesus told us He was giving us peace in *Joh 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

I would suggest that we be diligent to make sure we are found *“in Christ”*, as a Paul often used term, and being in Him we will be in peace.

2- without spot... How do we get to be without spot in the first place? By the regeneration and cleansing of the blood of Christ. Notice *Eph 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

Now with the reality that we are not made perfect in the flesh until our body is changed at death or the second coming of Christ this does not relieve us of our responsibility of attempting to live a life without spot. This motive for holy living remember is tied to the expectancy of the return of Christ. James says in *James 1:27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.*

3- and blameless. *Barnes Notes* says:

It should be an object of earnest effort with us to have the last stain of sin and pollution removed from our souls. A deep feeling that we are soon to stand in the presence of a holy God, our final Judge, cannot but have a happy influence in making us pure.

Something that we might not talk about enough is the separation from the contamination of the world. We Christians in the modern world have lives so intertwined with the world with technology and a lot of things that we sometimes forget that others see our

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every move, and sometimes on face book our every word.

Another thing we sometimes make the mistake of is assuming that the leaders of the church should be a notch above the others in holiness. After all it does say in *1 Tim 3* that a bishop should be blameless. Now I am not saying that the standard of the leadership should be brought down, totally the opposite, the leadership should live as an example so that all can live blameless. There are not a double standard that makes it acceptable for Christians to live a courser life.

Paul talking to the church at Thessalonica said in *1Th 5:23* *And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Peter also wrote in his first letter, *Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. 1Pe 3:16* One purpose of living blameless is that the world will not look at us and attach a black eye to the church and especially to the Messiah.

II- Paul Warned as Well:

Peter speaks of the writings of the Apostle Paul as authoritative and rising to the level of Scripture. Remember that the canon of the Bible had not yet been established.

2Pe 3:15 *And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; 16* *As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood,*

Peter said that some had problems understanding some of the hard things Paul taught. Paul said to the Corinthians in *1Co 3:2* *I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.*

The writer of Hebrews also talked about those who could not receive the strong teaching of the Word of God. *Heb 5:12-13* *For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13* *For every one that useth milk is*

unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

Notice who Peter says were having trouble understanding...*which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

Now the word “wrest” needs some attention here. The ESV and HCSB says, “twists” while the NIV says, “distort.” *Barnes Notes* says it is “Pervert.”

My, do we not see this today. Men twist the Word of God to condone their evil, they distort it to make it say what they want it to say many time to support their evil lifestyle.

III- Final Word of Warning:

2Pe 3:17 *Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.*

Let us hear the warning of Peter well. Those of us who handle the Word of God need to attempt to make sure we teach the Word and not the traditions of men, or simply mans opinion of the Word. When we think that we are above ever being deceived then we are in a dangerous situation.

Adam Clarke writes:

Seeing that by prophets and apostles you have been thus forewarned, beware, ... keep watch, be on your guard; cleave to God and the word of his grace, lest ye be led away from the truth delivered by the prophets and apostles, by the error of the wicked, ... of the lawless - those who wrest the Scriptures to make them countenance their lusts, exorbitant exactions, and lawless practices.

IV- Word of Encouragement:

Peter closes this second epistle with a word of encouragement. *2Pe 3:18* *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

Grow in grace and knowledge. None of us have arrived in perfect knowledge and certainly we need to rest in grace more each day.

So remember that are a lot of truths that we need to not let slip from our memory as we live our lives in Christ and anticipating His soon eminent return.