

VISION FOR THE WORD OF GOD

I and II PETER

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Dates of Composition

I Peter, between 65-68, AD; one of the earliest books of the NT (New Testament)

II Peter, between 130- 160 AD: one of the latest or even the last book to be accepted into NT

Author:

I Peter, Peter himself with assistance of Silvanus (Silas, Acts 15: 22-40; 16: 25-34)

II Peter, Unknown---included because of its contents and the authority of the name of Peter

Audience:

Churches, primarily Gentile, who were in crisis

Purpose:

I Peter, Persecution from without

The church under attack during reign of Nero

Martyred by Nero who scapegoated Christians after great fire that destroyed much of Rome

Christians became target

Resented because of lifestyle that did not mix with Roman hedonism

When we don't fit in with popular context, what we stand for can be misinterpreted

(charges of cannibalism associated with the Lord's Supper)

Traitors to Roman Empire (particularly seen in Book of Revelation)

II Peter, Corruption from within

Compromise of the teachings of the faith

Contents:

I Peter reflects preaching of the early church:

1. A new age has dawned and Jesus Christ is God's last and greatest revelation.
2. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.
3. By virtue of the resurrection Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of God and is the Messianic head of the new Israel.
4. The ascended, exalted and interceding will soon return in glory as judge of the living and the dead.
5. These beliefs, truths, and facts are the grounds for an appeal to repentance, the offer of forgiveness, the coming and abiding presence of the Holy Spirit, and the promise of eternal life.

Submission:

1. The Bible never counsels submission to evil or that which is against the word of God. Exodus event; revolts in the book of Judges; prophetic tradition; unrest in times of New Testament against Roman authority in Judaism. God people have always rebelled against unjust judicial systems.

2. Authority and systems can be established by God but stray from God's vision of order. Domination of men over women in marriage was a consequence of sin by both males and females.
3. New Testament affirmed the equality of all persons in Christ and before God, which was an undermining principle for systems of injustice.

Faithfulness during suffering (I Peter 4)

Standards for leadership (I Peter 5)

II Peter, The Threat from Within

1. Persons who watered down the faith to suit their own lifestyles
2. Persons who exploited the church for their own purposes
3. Persons who denied certain teachings of the scriptures---the Second Coming

Christians must not only stand fast and endure, but also continue to grow through all we encounter