

2 Peter Chapter 1 Continued

Verses 12-13

“I will not be negligent”:

Truth always needs repetition because believers forget so easily (2 Thess. 2:5; Jude 5).

2 Peter 1:12 "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know [them], and be established in the present truth."

In the last lesson, we learned that Jesus is the only way to heaven.

Those who are truly saved are taking up their cross daily and walking in the footprints of Jesus here on the earth.

We also learned some of the character traits of those who follow Jesus.

Some of the character traits are faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, kindness, charity, and godliness.

Peter is reminding them of these things, so that they will not be negligent in keeping them.

He says that they are already aware of this, but he is just reminding them, so they will grow in the Lord.

"And be established in the present truth":

This means you are daily studying God's Word and growing in that knowledge.

To do otherwise, would make you a backslider.

Verses 13-14

“This tabernacle”:

Which is literally “his body”:

Death is described aptly as laying asides one’s earthly dwelling (2 Cor. 5:1).

Peter was likely in his seventies as he wrote this letter (likely from a Roman prison), and anticipated dying soon.

Nero's persecution had begun and he was martyred in it, soon after writing this epistle.

Tradition says he was crucified upside down, refusing to be crucified like his Lord.

2 Peter 1:13 "Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting [you] in remembrance;"

"Meet":

This means, is right.

Peter is speaking of the tabernacle of his body.

He knows it is important to not only be saved, but to stay saved.

Walk daily in the salvation you have received.

Since Christ gave him such authority in the church, he was obligated to keep reminding them how important it is to walk uprightly before the Lord.

2 Peter 1:14 "Knowing that shortly I must put off [this] my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me."

Peter was aware that not too long hence he would be dead.

He was speaking to them while he could.

The Lord had shown Peter that he would die the martyr's death almost 40 years earlier.

History tells us that he was crucified upside down.

Verses 14-15

"Shortly I must put off this my tabernacle":

This refers to Peter's impending death, which the Lord had predicted (in John 21:18-19).

Thus, Peter urges his readers to remember his testimony after he has died.

2 Peter 1:15 "Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance."

"After my decease":

Peter wanted to make certain that after he died, God's people would have a permanent reminder of the truth, thus he penned this inspired letter.

A written message like this could be read over and over.

It was not like a spoken message that just had use for the one message.

In fact, even hundreds of years later, until our very time, it is useful to all Christians.

Verses 16-18

Peter claims to have been one of the "eyewitnesses of his majesty" at the transfiguration of Christ, when He was revealed to Peter, James and John in all His glory (Matthew 17:1-8).

2 Peter 1:16 "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty."

"Cunningly devised fables":

The word here was used to refer to mythical stories about gods and miracles (1 Tim. 1:4; 4:7; 2 Tim. 4:4; Titus 1:14).

Realizing that false leaders and their followers would try to discredit this letter, and that he was probably already being accused of concocting tales and myths in order to get people to follow him so he could amass wealth, power and prestige as false teachers were motivated to do.

Peter gave evidences in the following verses to prove that he wrote the truth of God as a genuinely inspired writer.

"Made known":

This word is a somewhat technical term for imparting a new revelation, something previously hidden, but now revealed.

"The power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ":

Since there is only one definite article with this phrase, the meaning is, "the powerful coming," or "the coming in power."

The false teachers who were opposing Peter had tried to debunk the doctrine of the second coming of Christ (see 3:3-4), about which Peter had spoken and written (1 Peter 1:3-7, 13; 4:13).

"Eyewitnesses of His majesty":

The “we” that begins this verse refers to the apostles.

In one sense, all of the apostles had been eyewitnesses to Christ’s majesty, especially His miracles, resurrection body, and ascension into heaven.

Peter however, is referring to a more specific event which he will describe in the next verse.

The kingdom splendor of Christ revealed at this event was intended as a preview of His majesty to be manifested at His second coming (Matt. 16:28).

The Transfiguration was a glimpse of the glory to be unveiled at the final revelation, the apocalypse of Christ (Rev. 1:1).

It must be noted that Jesus’ earthly ministry of healing, teaching, and gathering souls into His kingdom was a preview of the character of the earthly kingdom He will establish at His return.

Transfiguration of Christ: (In Matthew chapter 17), Jesus was temporarily glorified in the presence of three disciples.

This was a foreshadowing of Christ’s coming in power and glory to establish His kingdom.

The presence of Moses and Elijah on the mountain represented all those who enter the kingdom by death or translation.

The declaration of the Father reinforces Christ’s dominion over His kingdom.

Since Christians live expectantly looking forward to the return of Christ, they ought to give Him first place in their lives today, just as He will have in the kingdom.

Power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”:

Peter reminds his readers that at the Transfiguration, they had beheld Christ’s dynamic power and majestic “coming” (Greek parousia, the same word used for both the Rapture and the Glorious Appearing).

This scene was a foretaste of His glory to be revealed at His second coming.

Peter is explaining to them that the things he tells them are not things that he has heard, but are things he actually saw.

He was one of the three apostles closest to the Lord Jesus.

Peter, James, and John were with Jesus at the transfiguration.

They had been with Jesus some times when the others were not.

They had heard the voice of God the Father, who said this is my beloved Son.

They knew even better than the others who Jesus really was and is.

They had seen Him in His magnificence at the transfiguration.

Peter was trying to warn them to stay strong in the Lord, and not make the mistake he had made when he denied Jesus.

Peter's knowledge was first-hand knowledge; he had been there when Jesus taught these truths.

Peter had seen the miracles Jesus had done.

Peter knew first-hand that He rose from death.

Peter was there when Jesus walked on the water.

He was there when Jesus calmed the angry sea.

He knew that Jesus caused Lazarus to rise from the dead.

We could go on and on.

All of Peter's knowledge was not hearsay.

He was there when it happened.

2 Peter 1:17 "For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

This is a reference to the glory cloud on the Mount of Transfiguration from which God spoke to the disciple (Matt. 17:5).

"This is my beloved Son":

This means, "This One is in essence with Me."

The Father is thus affirming the deity of Christ (Matt. 17:5; Luke 9:27-36).

The most outstanding thing to Peter, in all of this, was the moment of transfiguration, when the glory of God appeared on the mount, and Peter, James, and John heard the Father speak of Jesus as His Son, in whom He was well pleased.

Matthew 17:5-8 "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye

him." "And when the disciples heard [it], they fell on their face, and were sore afraid." "And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid." "And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only."

This showed them Jesus in His glory.

2 Peter 1:18 "And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount."

“When we were with Him”:

Peter implied that there was no reason to believe the false teachers, who denied the majesty and second coming of Christ, since they were not on the Mount of Transfiguration to see the preview of the kingdom and glory of Christ, as he, James and John were.

This is just explaining that the voice was an audible voice from heaven, and that all three of them heard it.

Verses 19-21

“A more sure word of prophecy” refers to the infallibility of Scripture as the greatest and clearest revelation of God to man.

“Prophecy” may be used here as a general term for divine revelation.

“Private interpretation” means “origination.”

Thus, true revelation does not originate by the “will of man.”

It comes from God Himself through “holy men” who were godly human instruments of recording God’s message (see 2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Tim. 3:16).

“Moved by the Holy Ghost” describes the process of revelation and inspiration.

“Moved” means to the “carried along as a sailboat in the wind.”

Thus, human beings were so moved by the Holy Spirit that what they wrote was God’s inerrant Word.

2 Peter 1:19 "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:"

“More sure word of prophecy”:

God's prophetic Word is more complete, authoritative, and permanent than the most profound spiritual experiences, even that the Transfiguration beheld by Peter.

The Word of God is the light and lamp of divine revelation, shining in a world filled with spiritual darkness (Eph. 5:11; 6:12; Col. 1:13; 1 Thess. 5:4-5; 1 Peter 2:9).

The prophetic word refers not just to the Old Testament major and Minor Prophets, but to the entire Old Testament.

Of course, all of the Old Testament was written by "prophets" in the truest sense, since they spoke and wrote God's Word, which was the task of a prophet, and they looked forward, in some sense, to the coming Messiah (Luke 24:27).

"A more sure word":

This translation could indicate that the eyewitness account of Christ's majesty at the Transfiguration confirmed the Scriptures.

However, the Greek word order is crucial in that it does not say that.

It says, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy.":

That original arrangement of the sentence supports the interpretation that Peter is ranking Scripture over experience.

The prophetic word (Scripture), is more complete, more permanent, and more authoritative than the experience of anyone.

More specifically, the Word of God is a more reliable verification of the teachings about the person, atonement, and second coming of Christ than even the genuine first hand experiences of the apostles themselves.

"Ye do well that ye take heed":

Peter was warning believers that since they would be exposed to false teachers, they must pay careful attention to Scripture.

"A light that shineth in a dark place":

The murky darkness of this fallen world keeps people from seeing the truth until the light shines.

The light is the lamp of revelation, the Word of God (Psalm 119:105; John 17:17).

Believers will have a new understanding in their hearts of the magnitude of His future revelation in glory, as represented by the arising of "the day dawn, and the day star," clear expressions of the coming of Christ.

Peter says here, that the Word of prophecy fulfilled in Jesus Christ is even greater evidence than the transfiguration.

Jesus is the Light of the world.

The world was lost before the Light (Jesus Christ), came to save us.

Psalms 119:105 - "Thy word [is] a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

The Word of God, both spoken and written, are the light that directs us unto all Truth.

When you accept Jesus as your Savior and He comes to dwell within you, you are filled with the source of all Light.

This Light does away with all darkness.

Salvation occurs in the heart.

This Light shines in the heart of the Christian.

"The day dawn, and the day star arise":

These simultaneous images mark the parousia, i.e., the appearing of Jesus Christ (Luke 1:78; Rev. 2:28; 22:16).

Jesus is this Day Star.

Without this Light, there is no life.

The Light of Jesus gives everything the power to be.

Darkness is symbolic of evil and of Lucifer.

Lucifer pretends to be the light, but is not.

"Day star", in this instance, means bearer of the Light.

"In your hearts":

The second coming will have not only an externally transforming impact on the universe (3:7-13), but also an internally transforming impact on those believers who are alive when Jesus returns, forever removing any of their remaining doubts.

The perfect, but limited revelation of the Scriptures will be replaced with the perfect and complete revelation of Jesus Christ at the second coming (John 14:7-11; 21:25).

Then the Scriptures will have been fulfilled; and believers, made like Christ (1 John 3:1-2), will have perfect knowledge and all prophecy will be abolished.

2 Peter 1:20 "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation."

“Knowing this first”:

A call to recognize His truth as priority, namely that Scripture is not of human origin.

“Prophecy of the scripture”:

This phrase includes not only specific prophetic teachings, but the totality of God’s grand revelation of Himself and His plan for time and eternity in the entire Word of God.

No Scripture was privately originated in human will, released from a mere human mind, or understood by one’s own power.

Scripture is not the product of mere human interpretation of historical events, but the result of God’s own initiative.

“Of any private interpretation”:

The Greek word for “interpretation” has the idea of a “loosing,” as if to say no Scripture is the result of any human being privately, “untying” and “loosing” the truth.

Peter’s point is not so much about how to interpret Scripture, but rather how Scripture originated, and what its source was.

The false prophets untied and loosed their own ideas.

But no part of God’s revelation was unveiled or revealed from a human source or out of the prophet’s unaided understanding (see verse 21).

We see from this, that all who are guided by the Holy Spirit of God can get their own message from God from any Scripture.

The smallest, uneducated child, who is searching for answers in the Scriptures, can have his or her own understanding of any Scripture.

The greatest scholar, who is not guided by the great Teacher (Holy Spirit), however, might not understand the simplest Scripture.

The Scriptures are spiritually discerned.

1 Corinthians 2:14 "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know [them], because they are spiritually discerned."

2 Peter 1:21 "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake [as they were] moved by the Holy Ghost."

"By the will of man":

As Scripture is not of human origin, neither is it the result of human will.

The emphasis in the phrase is that no part of Scripture was ever at any time produced because men wanted it so.

The bible is not the product of human effort.

The prophets, in fact, sometimes wrote what they could not fully understand (1 Peter 1:10-11), but were nonetheless faithful to write what God revealed to them.

"Moved by the Holy Ghost":

The inspired writers of the sacred Scripture were "holy men of God" who were moved, borne along, guided, and impelled by the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit so guided their thoughts and writings, without suppressing their individual styles and vocabularies, that they composed and recorded (without error), in the original manuscripts the exact words God intended (2 Tim. 3:16).

Grammatically, this means that they were continually carried or borne along by the Spirit of God (Luke 1:70; Acts 27:15, 17).

The Holy Spirit thus is the divine author and originator, the producer of the Scriptures.

In the Old Testament alone, the human writers refer to their writings as the words of God over 3800 times (e.g. Jer. 1:4; 1 Pet. 3:2; Rom. 3:2; 1 Cor. 2:10).

Though the human writers of Scripture were active rather than passive in the process of writing Scripture, God the Holy Spirit superintended them so that, using their own individual personalities, thought processes, and vocabulary, they composed and recorded without error the exact words God wanted written.

The original copies of Scripture are therefore inspired, i.e., God-Breathed (2 Tim. 3:16), and inerrant, i.e., without error (John 10:34-35; 17:17; Titus 1:2).

Peter defined the process of inspiration which created an inerrant original text (Prov. 30:5; 1 Cor. 14:36; 1 Thess. 2:13).

The scriptures were written by about 40 holy men of God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

While in no way denying the personalities of the human writers or rejecting the distinctiveness of their particular styles, the Holy Spirit controlled the process of bringing things to the writers' memories (John 16:13), and ensuring what they recorded was the very Word of God.

As Christians read the bible, they can be confident that it is the very Word of God (Judges 2:1; John 10:35).

God is the Author of the Bible.

God is a Spirit.

If a Spirit is the Author of the Bible, then we must understand it by the Spirit of God.

Let the Holy Spirit of God be your Teacher and Guide.

God moved upon holy men of God, and they were the penmen of God's thoughts.

True ministers of God do not bring their own message to the church.

They speak the message God has placed into their heart for a particular congregation at a particular time.

Luke 12:11-12 "And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and [unto] magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:" "For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say."

We are ambassadors for Christ.

We do not carry our own message, but the message God has given us.

We are messengers.

2 Peter Chapter 1 Continued Questions

1. Who is the only Way to heaven?
2. What are some character traits of Christians?
3. Why is Peter reminding of this?
4. What does being established in the Truth mean?

5. If you are not growing in the Lord, you are a _____.
6. What is the tabernacle Peter is speaking of in verse 13?
7. What is important to do after you are saved?
8. What is indicated that the Lord has revealed to Peter in verse 14?
9. History tells us Peter died how?
10. Why is a written message better than a spoken message?
11. Who is this letter, that Peter wrote, important to?
12. What is Peter explaining in verse 16?
13. Who were the three Apostles that were closest to Jesus?
14. What had happened that caused them to know beyond any doubt who Jesus was?
15. Peter's knowledge was _____.
16. What were some of the things Peter had been eyewitness of?
17. What did the voice from heaven say about Jesus?
18. What is even greater evidence than the transfiguration?
19. Where does salvation occur?
20. What does day star in verse 19 mean?
21. Why can a child sometimes understand a Scripture when an adult cannot?