

INTRODUCTION

Read vs. 12-15

1. How's your memory? Is it good or leaky?
 - a. Do you remember details of all kinds of things for a long time; or is your memory **selective**?
 - b. Are you a **whiz** at *Trivial Pursuit* or do people **forfeit** when you're put on their team?
 - c. Have you been banned from even **watching** Jeopardy!?
2. Whether your memory is good or not so good, there are **some things everyone must remember**.
3. As followers of Jesus, **Truth** is crucial to us.
 - a. But there are **some truths**, some things we **have to hold on to**.
 - b. As Peter has spoken in the previous vs about the promises of God, he now emphasizes the critical role they play in the life of faith.

Vs. 12-15

¹² For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. ¹³ Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, ¹⁴ knowing that shortly I **must** put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me.

1. Though we don't know the exact situation Peter was in, he knows his last days are upon him.
 - a. Most likely the Emperor Nero has arrested Peter & holds him in prison in Rome.
 - b. Nero delighted in tormenting, then executing Christians.
 - c. So Peter knew the chances of his getting out of prison this time were slim.
2. Years before in Jerusalem, he'd been busted out of prison by an angel.
 - a. Herod killed James & when he saw it amped up the Jewish leaders, he arrested Peter.
 - b. The night before he was to be executed, Peter slept between 2 guards when an angel appeared, unlocked his chains & escorted him out of his cell & the prison.
 - c. Peter then made his way to the special prayer meeting that had been called on his behalf.
3. What's fun about that story is that **Peter was sleeping** when the angel arrived to bust him out.
 - a. **SLEEPING!**
 - b. If it was **your** last night & you knew you were going to get a haircut at the neck the next day, would you be able to sleep?
 - c. Peter slept because he knew he **wasn't** going to be executed on the morrow.
 - d. He knew it because Jesus had told him he was going to die an old man, in the same fashion Jesus had been killed – on a cross.
 - 1) He **wasn't** an old man at that time.
 - 2) And Herod didn't crucify people.
 - e. Peter had a Promise from Jesus; a Word from God.
 - f. And if Peter had learned anything, it was that the Word of God is sure.
 - g. So he slept like a baby till the angel arrived and set him free.
4. I don't know what trial you're facing today; what keeps you up at night.
 - a. What steals the sleep from your eyes; what anxieties wake you in a cold sweat.
 - b. What I **do know** is that the promises of God are as applicable to you as they were to Peter.

Phil 4:19 • My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Psa 37:4 • Delight yourself in the LORD; and He shall give you the desires of your heart.

Rom 8:28 • We know that all things work together for those who love God & are called according to his purpose.

Heb 13:5 • "I will never leave you nor forsake you," says the Lord.

1 Pet 5:7 • Cast all your care upon God; for He cares for you.

5. Peter, **now** an old man in Rome where Nero **has been** crucifying Christians, knows his time is short.
6. Wanting to be faithful to Jesus to the end, he does what he knows all good teachers must do
 - a. Not scramble around for some **new thing** to tell them,
 - b. But to make sure they **remember** the important & main things.

7. Whether you're a S/S teacher, youth-worker, a parent, or anyone else who wants to be used by God, this is an important point.

- a. The key to effective teaching is reminding people of things they've already **heard**.
- b. You **keep** reminding them until they **learn** them.
- c. Like everything else, our minds have been affected by sin.
 - 1) We forget the things we should remember
 - 2) While remembering things we should forget.
- d. So my task as a pastor & yours if you're a parent, is to **say the same things over & over** until those in our charge are **established** in them.
- e. It's not how **much** we know that counts. It's how **well** we know it.

8. Peter ends this thought with . . .

¹⁵ Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.

9. That reminder was **this** letter which he knew was inspired by the Spirit.

10. **Because** it was inspired, Peter knew it would be copied & used by the Church far & wide.

11. But it's his use of the word "decease" that's interesting.

- a. He means his death, but he doesn't call it that. The word is **exodus**; Exit.
- b. The word means to go **out of** a place so you can **enter** another.

12. Death for Peter wasn't **THE** end –Period! It was **AN** end to one thing so that something much better could begin.

13. Like the Exodus of the Jews from slavery in Egypt meant entering the Promised Land, free.

14. Now we get to some of the things we have to remember . . .

Vs. 16-18

¹⁶ For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

1. It's crucial in the truth-denying, Post-Modernity in which we live we never lose sight of the fact that our faith is **more than words**.

- a. What we believe isn't merely the philosophical rant of some gnarled & sun-burnt old man living in a cave in the desert.
- b. It's not the product of too many hallucinogenics, or a hunger-induced trance.

c. Ours is not a comic-book faith in caped superheroes.

d. We don't believe in astral signs & tabloid headlines.

2. Our faith is firmly rooted in **real historical events**.

- a. There was a man named Jesus of Nazareth who was born of a virgin named Mary.
- b. He performed astounding miracles & broke the thick crust of hypocrisy off the religion of His day.
- c. Out of jealousy because He was popular with the common people, the religious & political leaders falsely accused & executed Him on a Roman Cross.
- d. But death could not hold the Lord of Life and He rose from the grave 3 days later.

3. Peter thinks of something **specific** to anchor our Faith to; something **he experienced personally**.

4. It's pointed to there at the end of v. 16 when he says he was an eyewitness of Jesus' majesty.

5. He explains . . .

¹⁷ For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." ¹⁸ And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

6. Peter refers to the **Transfiguration**, when Jesus' divine glory was revealed to Peter, James & John on a mountain somewhere in Northern Galilee.

7. You've heard of a glow in the dark Jesus figurine?

8. This was the actual figure of the real Jesus, blazing like the sun in the middle of the day.

9. I imagine every believer at some time thinks how amazing, how faith-building it would be to have an encounter like this.

- a. To **see** Jesus, to **hear** His voice. If not Jesus, maybe just an **angel**.
- b. Oh! To witness a miracle; one so obvious there's no way of dismissing it as a coincidence.

10. What's stunning is that **after** Peter refers to the privilege **he had** of seeing the Transfiguration, he mentions

something even better we **all** have access to . . .

Vs. 19-21

- ¹⁹ And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;
1. If someone offered **you** the choice of either
 - a. Being on the Mount of Transfiguration with Jesus, Moses & Elijah, & hearing a voice from heaven announcing Jesus as God's beloved Son . . .
 - b. Or having the Old Testament,
 - c. Which would you choose?
 2. Most would choose the **Mountain Jesus Experience**. Sounds like a special excursion.
 3. Peter would choose the Scriptures.
 4. And he'd choose them because **experiences fade**, but the **Word endures**.
 5. Moses came down from Mt. Sinai with God's Word & a glowing face.
 - a. The glow faded.
 - b. But God's Word is still shining 3500 yrs later.
 6. Experiences with God are good & proper. God WANTS us to experience Him.
 - a. He wants our knowledge of Him to be practical & experiential.
 - b. But He doesn't want it to be **only** there.
 - c. He wants us to move beyond the experiences into an abiding **trust in & dependence on** Him.
 - d. It's His Word that builds the foundation & platform for that abiding faith.
 - e. As Paul says in Romans 10 – Faith comes by HEARING God's Word.
 7. An illustration might help.
 - a. I love my wife. I want her to **know** I love her, so I tell her, often > To **remind** her, as Peter says in vs. 12-15 we need to **remember** God's promises.
 - b. I want Lynn to trust the declaration of my love for her.
 - c. To **prove** I love her, I do things that **verify** the claim. They prove my words aren't hollow.
 - d. Let's say, I buy her flowers. Coming home and seeing them in a vase on the counter, smelling their fragrance fill the house, she **experiences** my love.
 - e. Those flowers are going to fade and have to be tossed out.
 - f. Imagine my distress if I came home to find her weeping, in despair that I don't love her anymore because there's no vase of flowers on the counter.
 - g. I love her no less but she wrongly assumes it's only **when there are flowers** that I love her.
 8. We must never think it's only when there are flowers that God loves us.
 - a. Experiences are the flowers.
 - b. The **problem** with experiences is that they can produce a **craving** for more.
 - c. We see this in the people of Israel during the Exodus.
 - d. They had **more** experiences than any others, but were never satisfied.
 - d. As many flowers as God sent, they demanded more!
 - 1) They saw God part the Red Sea.
 - 2) They collected daily miracle bread called manna.
 - 3) They drank the sweetest water in the middle of the desert.
 - 4) For goodness sake, all they had to do to SEE the presence of God was to look at the pillar of fire going before them or the cloud above them.
 - 5) But their whining & complaining never stopped.
 9. All because they **refused** to honor & believe God's Word.
 10. I've been following Jesus for a while now so I can say this with all honesty . . .
 - a. I would rather hear a great Bible study and be fed from God's Word than see a bunch of people having amazing experiences.
 - b. Don't get me wrong! God still heals & still performs miracles. He's the **God of Amazing Things!**
 - c. But the longer I've walked with the Lord, the more I come to realize **experiences fade**; even the wondrous ones.
 - d. Only God's Word endures.
 11. **Because** it endures, Peter says we do well to heed it.

12. As the world gets **darker**, the Word shines **brighter**.
- ²⁰ knowing this first,
13. Set this down as a foundational rule for understanding the Bible that no prophecy [= inspired utterance from God] of Scripture is of any private interpretation,
14. No one has an exclusive corner on Truth.
- a. What God has to say in Scripture, He says to all.
 - b. **Billy Jean** can't run off to some corner of Piru, get out her Bible & come up with a whole new take on salvation.
 - c. **Fred** can't find a new timetable for end time events by comparing Job with Joshua.
15. Human beings are suckers for the new & novel.
- a. So there always **have** been & always **will** be religious hucksters who seek to make a profit off of this by claiming they've found something **new** in the Bible.
 - b. People who claim special revelation & experiences meant to fill out our understanding of God & His ways.
16. Friends, be careful with those who claim that they've got some **new message** from on high.
17. BECAUSE "No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation."
18. One of the great tests of **Basic Christian Doctrine** is that it doesn't depend on a single word, phrase or passage.
- a. The Great Truths of the Faith are themes that run throughout the Bible.
 - b. This puts a **check** on the tens of thousands of goofy ideas that have surfaced over the generations.
 - c. Because while someone might point to 1 verse to support their new idea, there are 10 or 20 other passages that nuke it.
19. This is why we're absolutely committed at CC to going through the entire Bible.
20. Peter finishes . . .
- ²¹ for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.
21. Scripture was penned by godly men all moved by the same Author; the Holy Spirit.
22. Because the writers were **different**, we ought to expect their vocabulary & styles to be different, and they are.
23. But because they're all **inspired** by the same Spirit, there's a **consistency** that **unites** it all.
24. We could say it this way: **HOW** they wrote is different to each. **WHAT** they wrote is shared by all.
25. Proof the Bible is the inspired Word of God is made clear by fulfilled prophecy.
26. The OT foretold over 300 specific details about the birth, life, death & resurrection of Jesus.
27. Some years ago a college Math professor named **Peter Stoner** did a probability analysis that a single person could fulfill the prophecies given for the Messiah.
- a. He took just 8 & determined that the chance was 1 in 10^{28} .
 - b. To give you an idea how big this # is, cover TX in silver dollars 2' deep.
 - c. Mark only 1 of them with a Red Sharpie.
 - d. Blindfold a friend and let him roam the state in search of that 1 marked coin.
 - e. The chance he'd select it at random is 1 in 10^{28} .
 - f. And that's for 8 prophecies of the Messiah. Jesus fulfilled over 300!
28. Fulfilled prophecy is a powerful proof for the inspiration of Scripture.
- a. No other of the so-called holy books of the world's religions can boast that record.
 - b. Only THIS Book!
29. As Isaiah 40:8 says -
- The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.