

A STUDY OF 2 PETER

The Firm Foundation of Faith (2 Peter 1:16-21)

Peter had previously encouraged his readers that they could live godly lives because of the great blessings provided to them in Christ. Their faith should grow as they bear fruit for Christ. Now Peter tells them that the Christian life is built upon a solid foundation. We live by faith, but our faith is not blind, it stands on multiple pillars of truth and evidence.

The first pillar of truth and evidence is the testimony of the apostles. Until verse 16, Peter had been using the singular “I” and now when speaking of seeing the power and coming of Christ, he uses the plural “we.” Peter was not the only eyewitness to the majesty of Jesus, but shared that great privilege with the other apostles. Elsewhere in Scripture, the coming of the Lord refers to the Second Coming and there is no reason to doubt the same is true here.¹

The apostles did not follow “*cleverly devised myths*” when relating the events surrounding the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The word translated as “*myths*” came from the “stories about Greek gods, the creation of the world, miraculous happening, etc.”²

1. What “myths” are still being pressed today regarding such things as “gods, creation, and miraculous happenings, etc.?”
2. Why is eyewitness testimony so valuable?
3. To what event does Peter refer in verses 17-18? (See Matthew 17:1-8.)
4. What do Moses and Elijah represent at the transfiguration?
5. How did Peter see the majesty of Christ?
6. How did the Father show honour and glory to Christ? (vs. 17)



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² Smith, James E. *Teacher's Commentary: General Epistles*. Lulu.com, 2010. p. 128.

7. Why does Peter refer to God as the Majestic Glory? (See Ex. 33:12-23; 34:29-35)

Peter testifies that we were “eyewitnesses” of his majesty in verse 16, in verse 18 the apostles “heard” the voice of God, and also in verse 18 Peter says “we were with him.” Here is the apostolic evidence: we were present, we saw, and we heard.

The second pillar of truth and evidence is the testimony from the Father. At the transfiguration God the Father speaks and says, “*This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.*” The Father looks with satisfaction at all that Jesus had said and done. The transfiguration used by Peter in this context shows that he looked at the event as a foreshadowing of the power and majesty of the Second Coming.³ (Peter deals specifically with those who doubt the Second Coming in 2 Peter 3:3-6.)

The third pillar of truth and evidence is the testimony of Scripture. The Old Testament prophecies add additional verification to the eyewitness testimony of the Apostles and the voice of God on the Mount of Transfiguration. Over three hundred Old Testament prophecies speak of the birth, life, death, resurrection, and Second Coming of Christ. The fulfilled prophecies stand as compelling confirmation of their trustworthiness. 2 Peter 3:15-17 makes clear that Peter also views the New Testament writings to be Scripture just like the Old Testament.



8. In verse 19, Peter makes it clear that Christians should pay attention to the Old Testament. Why is this so?

The words “dark place” in verse 19 do not refer to a place that is totally black, but rather a place that is dingy, dusky, or dirty. The light illuminates the dirt making it possible to be removed.⁴ The idea is that world in which we live is a dark place.

The day that will dawn refers to the Second Coming of Christ. The “morning star” is the planet Venus that is often visible in early morning and is a metaphor for Christ.⁵ (See Revelation 22:16; Numbers 24:17) What Peter is trying to show is that the Lord is coming again and Christians should give their attention to Scripture until the Second Coming. It was especially important for Peter’s first readers to know the Scripture because there were those who promoting false teaching among them.

Verses 20 and 21 teach the very important lesson that Scripture originates with the Holy Spirit and not man. From verses 19-21 we learn these lessons about Scripture: 1) Scripture is as reliable as eyewitness testimony. 2) Attention must be given to Scripture. 3) Scripture should reach into our hearts. 3) The Scripture can illuminate that which is dark. 4) Scripture must be studied and obeyed until Jesus comes again. 5) No Scripture ever originated with any man. 6) All Scripture is delivered to man from God’s Holy Spirit.

³ Coffman, *ibid.*

⁴ Smith, *ibid.* p. 131.

⁵ *ibid.*



As Christians our faith stands on a firm foundation with the pillars of the testimony of the apostles who were eyewitnesses to the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, the testimony of God the Father who gave honour and glory to the Son, and to the testimony of Scripture. The hundreds of fulfilled prophecies along with the testimony of the apostles and God the Father allow us to know that our faith is not blind, but real and enduring, and that it awaits a returning Lord.

9. How do the evidences discussed above help to strengthen your faith?