

2 Peter

Lesson 2 Chapter 1:12-21

Leader Guide

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Lesson 2

2 Peter 1:12-21

Remembering Christ's Transfiguration

We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 2 Peter 1:16

Prayers

Introduction

As we read 2 Peter, it is easy to picture Peter being sentenced and imprisoned for the testimony of his faith, awaiting his death from a dark cell in Rome. Of all the miracles he witnessed by Christ and through the Holy Spirit, healing, walking on water, feeding the 5000, raising the dead, Peter recounted Jesus' glory on the Mount of Transfiguration in his last days, a glory he would soon be sharing.

Peter's telling the account of the transfiguration is more than nostalgic sentimentality in facing his death. Think about the reasons Jesus took James, John, and Peter up the mountain as we read about the transfiguration and compare them to the purpose of Peter's letter.

Read Matthew 17:1-9, The Transfiguration

Mt 17:1 After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves [to pray ^{Lk 9:28}].

Mt 17:2 There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.

Mt 17:3 Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus [in glorious splendor. They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem. ^{Lk 9:31}].

Lk 9:32 Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him.

Mt 17:4 Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah."

Mk 9:6 (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)

Mt 17:5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!"

Mt 17:6 When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified.

Mt 17:7 But Jesus came and touched them. "Get up," he said. "Don't be afraid."

Mt 17:8 When [the voice had spoken ^{Lk 9:36}] they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

Mt 17:9 As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, "Don't tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead."

1. Jesus took James, John, and Peter up the mountain after telling the disciples he would go to Jerusalem to suffer, die, and be raised to life on the third day. What were the purposes of the transfiguration?

- a. Verse 1 To Pray

- b. Verse 2 **To witness Jesus' glory**
- c. Verse 3 **So that Moses and Elijah could minister to Jesus and give him encouragement in facing his suffering and death**
- d. Verse 5 **To hear the testimony of God**
- e. Verse 9 **So that they would be witnesses of Jesus' glory and tell others after his resurrection**

2. Besides encouraging Jesus as his suffering and death approached, what other purpose did Moses and Elijah serve on the mountain? See also the following verses:

Jn 8:17 **In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two men is valid.**

Jn 8:18 **I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me."**

Mt 5:17 **"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.**

Mal 4:4 **"Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel.**

Mal 4:5 **"See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes.**

Their presence gave testimony, along with God's, that Jesus was the Son of God. They also demonstrated the reality of eternal life – God is not the God of the dead, but the living.

Read Christ's Transfiguration, Prophecy of Scripture

2Pe 1:12 **So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have.**

2Pe 1:13 **I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body,**

2Pe 1:14 **because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.**

2Pe 1:15 **And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.**

2Pe 1:16 **We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.**

2Pe 1:17 **For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."**

2Pe 1:18 **We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.**

2Pe 1:19 **And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.**

2Pe 1:20 **Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation.**

2Pe 1:21 **For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.**

Discuss

3. In these verses, how is Peter faithful to his calling as an Apostle (one who is sent)?

Peter is giving his eyewitness testimony of what he saw and knows about Jesus to encourage the faith of others.

4. How is Peter's purpose for writing the same as Jesus' purpose for taking John, James, and Peter up the mountain?

Jesus wanted Peter (and James and John) to be eyewitnesses of his glory. Peter is writing his letter as an eyewitness so the believers would also know of Jesus' glory.

5. Interestingly, Peter describes his body as a tent in verse 13. How does he view his life?

Tents are made for traveling; you put them up and take them down. Peter's life was traveling for Christ, but he was always ready to be taken to his eternal home.

6. Quiz time! God's voice at the transfiguration is one of three times God speaks. Do you remember the other two?
 - a. ^{Mt 3:16} As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.
^{Mt 3:17} And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."
 - b. ^{Jn 12:28} **Father, glorify your name!** Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again."
^{Jn 12:29} The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.
^{Jn 12:30} Jesus said, **"This voice was for your benefit, not mine.**
^{Jn 12:31} **Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.**
^{Jn 12:32} **But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself."**

7. What is Peter's view of the scriptures?

Peter regarded the scriptures as spoken by men from God and through the Holy Spirit.

8. How are the views of Peter, Paul, John, and Jesus at odds with how many Christians view the Bible?

^{Isa 40:8} The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever."

^{Lk 16:16} **"The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the good news of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.**

^{Lk 16:17} **It is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for the least stroke of a pen to drop out of the Law.**

^{Jn 21:24} This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true.

^{Jn 21:25} Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.

^{2Ti 3:16} All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ^{2Ti 3:17} so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

^{1Th 2:13} And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.

The Gospel writers view the scriptures as the word of God, truth, and power to equip believers for works of service.

In a survey of 14,000 Americans, the American Society found that 80% of Americans view the Bible as a sacred book even if they don't read it. But that high percentage is misleading. The Barna Research Group found that only about 19% of Americans have a Biblical view, believing in the accuracy of the Bible, salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, and God as the creator and ruler of the universe. The Barna Research Group aims to understand how Americans view the Scriptures and how their faith shapes their moral and material views. Based on their findings, Americans can be divided into five faith groups:

- 6% Evangelical Christians**
- 23% Mainstream Denominational Christians**
- 42% Notional Christians**
- 23% Religious Skeptics, including Atheists**
- 6% Other Faiths**

Evangelicals believe in the total accuracy of the Bible, that God is the creator of the universe and still rules today, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and in salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Non-Evangelical Mainstream Christians share the belief of salvation through Jesus Christ and in God as the creator of the universe, but only about 55% view the Bible as accurate or that Jesus led a sinless life, and only 35% believe that Satan is real.

Notional Christians claim to be Christian but do not believe that faith in Jesus Christ is the way to eternal life. They believe salvation is earned through good works and personal goodness. They rarely read the Bible, attend church, or belong to any denomination.

Religious skeptics are the fastest-growing group in America. Since the 1980s, the number of Americans who claim to be agnostics or have no religious affiliation has grown from 9% to 23% (Some estimates are as high as 30%). Rather than being discontented Christians, they are more likely to be young and never affiliated with any denomination.

The percentage of other faiths in America is about 6% and has been fairly constant in America since the 1950s, with the largest increase in Islam. These faiths include Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, The Church of Latter-Day Saints, and Judaism.

9. Remembering, like Peter did in retelling the transfiguration, refreshes the soul. Peter encouraged the faith of others who had never met Jesus or witnessed his miracles. Remembering can also deepen healthy relationships and restore broken relationships. Jesus would later tell the churches in Asia Minor to remember the heights from which they had fallen. What are some of your remembrances of God's faithfulness to you?

Answers will vary. God has been faithful to me even during job failure, broken relationships, and sickness. Each failure has led to another, better opportunity. Losses have been restored my times over.

Closing Prayer