

1 & 2 Peter
Lesson 19 – Notes
2 Peter 1:12-21

The things that the Lord has given us never change. J MacArthur

‘We are to remember’, that is Peter’s passionate plea in this passage, "Wherefore, I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things." He is making an emphatic statement, *I will always stand ready to remind you...* at this point in his ministry, he is not sure how much longer he will be around, but he seems compelled, until that moment, to keep teaching, so that after he is gone, the Christians would remember what they had been taught. That passion should draw each of us to share the truth of the Word of God, not watered down, but bold truth.

In verse 12 we have the key that unlocks the chapter. “These things”...“What things?” The things before this verse and the things after this verse; the whole chapter is a list of things that we are never to forget. Though we already know them and are already established in them, unless we continue to exercise our minds and exercise our wills in those things, they will slip from our grasp.

The word "wherefore" is at the beginning takes us back to the things he's just mentioned.

- First of all, the reality of salvation, verses 1-2, that we have obtained a like precious faith through the righteousness of God and the Savior the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Secondly, the riches of our salvation, that we have all things that pertain to life and godliness. That we have received the divine nature and escaped the corruption of the world. Verses 3-4
- And then the responsibility of our salvation, that we are to add to our faith virtue and knowledge and self-control and patience and godliness and brotherly kindness and love. Verses 5-7
- And then the fruit, or the result of our salvation, that we're not to be barren or unfruitful, the assurance that we are His. Verses 9-11

Peter wants us 'not to be blind' to the fact that we're saved, we must remember our salvation and what it requires and what God wants it to produce. And when we see the fruit, then we'll know we're redeemed. When we don't see the fruit, we won't know. We'll be blind and become filled with self doubt. That is not to say that we are not saved, but we will be known by the fruit that the Spirit produces.

"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" (2 Pet 1:16). The main issue among the people to whom Peter is writing is the Second Coming. False teachers have come in and were saying there's no Second Coming, Christ won't return, it won't be the way you say, there never will be a Second Coming, there never will be a judgment of the earth. 2 Peter 3:3 tells us that "Scoffers walking after their own lust saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming? All things continue as they were from the creation,'" nothing is ever going to change. Why do you want to believe that?" Peter then moves into his theme right here and says, "When we have said unto you things concerning the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, we have not followed some philosophy, some humanly devised deceitful false story. We are telling you about the Second Coming because we have seen it with our own eyes."

To understand Peter's declaration here about having been an eye witness to something that had not happened yet, let's look at Matthew 16:24-28, Let's read that. Jesus is very urgent in what He says here to His disciples. He wants them to be committed to Him, so He says, "I want you to deny yourself, take up your cross, follow Me." If you're going to try to just preserve your life, pad your own chair, make yourself comfortable in this world, you're going to lose it. But if you're willing to lose your life for My sake, you'll find it. If you just want to gain the whole world, you'll lose your soul. If you're willing to lose the world, you'll gain your soul forever. In other words, get your spiritual priorities in order.

Why? Verse 27: "Because the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels and then He shall reward every man according to his works." In other words, He says get your life in order because Jesus is going to come back and reward you. Be ready to receive a reward rather than judgment.

And verse 27 also introduces the Second Coming. "For the son of man is coming in His Father's glory, What does that mean? John 1:14, tells us, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." What is that? The glory of the Father is the fullness of deity, it's that simple. God is God and God is God manifest in glory. And it's simply saying that Christ is the glory of God, which glory now in His humanness is veiled, otherwise we couldn't look upon Him. But someday He will come in full blazing glory. Later on in Matthew 24 and 25 it tells us about this, how He comes in full blazing glory. There's coming a day when He pulls the veil of His flesh aside and no more humiliation but glorification.

And then Jesus made a statement that must have seemed unbelievable. He said, "There are some standing here who shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." Some of you aren't even going to die before you see Christ in Second Coming glory.

That is one statement that is often taken out of context to prove that Christians are waiting for nothing. It didn't happen, all of those within hearing distance at that time died, and the promise wasn't fulfilled. But let's go to Matthew, chapter 17 vs 1-7. NOTE: all three synoptic gospels, Matthew 17:5, Mark 9:7 and Luke 9:35, have this same text as verses 27 and 28, and all three follow it with the same incident that's in chapter 17, showing that without doubt this is the fulfillment of that statement in verse 28. Six days later, and none of them had died in those six days. Peter, James and his brother John, we read "Jesus took and brought them into a high mountain privately."

James, why? The first to shed his blood for Christ. John and Peter, the key to the develop of the gospel in the first twelve chapters of Acts, the foundation of the Jerusalem church, key people, that needed to bear witness to this transformation. He took them into a high mountain and what did they see? Verse 2, "And Jesus was transfigured." He was transformed, He was changed, He was altered before them, totally transformed. And how? "His face did shine like the sun."

We can imagine how very bright the sun is, you can't look into it very long without hurting your eyes, and there stood Christ and all of a sudden His face was like the sun. And His raiment was as white as the light. We can imagine that the disciples

witnessing this were awestruck, because at that moment the veil of flesh was drawn back, and there is the glory of God, too bright to look upon. All He did was pull open the veil of His flesh and blazing glory burst forth, for when God is made visible, it is as blazing, incomprehensible light. And so they were seeing not the Son in humiliation but the Son in glorification. He pulls open the veil of His flesh and they saw Him in full blazing glory, the kind of glory that He will manifest at His Second Coming. This is a preview, and indeed the fulfillment of verse 28. They saw the Son of Man in the essential glory that He would have when He comes in His kingdom.

And, behold, verse 3, "And there appeared with Him Moses and Elijah having a conversation. As Peter is rambling about building houses for each of them, "And while he yet spoke," vs 5, "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 very much afraid." All of a sudden Peter's joy turned to total fear when he heard the voice of God. We can't imagine what the voice of God would sound like, but knowing that His voice would send humans to the ground in fear and trembling, gives us some idea that we can't truly fathom His great holiness.

Vs 7, Jesus came and touched them and said, 'Arise, don't be afraid.' When they had lifted up their eyes they saw no man except Jesus only." It was over, just as fast as it had begun. But Peter had seen with his own eyes, James had seen with his own eyes, John had seen with his own eyes the power and the glory of Jesus in His Second Coming manifestation. And it was like a mini-kingdom. Just look at the individual elements. Christ is in glory, not humiliation. Moses in glory represents the redeemed who died; Elijah in glory, the redeemed who were translated. Peter, James and John, unglorified represent Israel in the flesh during the kingdom, and the multitudes at the foot of the mountain, perhaps, could be in reference to the multitudes who will come in and out to see Christ in His glory in the kingdom. But it's a mini picture of the whole kingdom, a personal, dazzling preview of Second Coming glory.

Now we understand how Peter says we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We were eyewitnesses of His majesty. "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.'" Interesting that we see this at the beginning of Jesus Ministry and near the end of His life. Although the disciples didn't witness the first time, they did witness the 2nd time, and there were many witnesses the first time. Hearing God speak the 2nd time bore out the witnesses of that first time, that this is truly the Son of God and God is glorifying Him.

Verses 16 to 18 could be called the revelations of our salvation, and were looking at present and future.

Peter says, I will remember the revelation of God in my life. He is challenging us to remember how God has revealed Himself to us, but more importantly, we know the source of all that we are to remember and verse 19 tells us that "We have a more sure(certain) word," more sure than experience, it is the Word of God. Verse 20, "It is the Scripture." Don't forget the Word of God. We have a more sure... more sure than a personal manifestation of God, more sure than a transfiguration on a mountain. Why? Because you cannot always trust your senses. And you cannot always recall your experiences. And your experiences have to be qualified by biblical truth. And if you want to know there is a Second Coming, a better proof of it is that the Bible says so. We have a more sure word of prophecy, and here he's talking about the prophecy of the Second Coming.

Remember the Word, Peter says. The Bible is the issue. Don't listen to false prophets. Don't listen to these people who want to deny the truth. You go right to the Word of God. You can believe God is alive and at work because you've experienced Him; more than that, you know it because His Word says it.

Verse 19 is a tremendous statement. The word "sure" there is the word for certain, the word for firm, the word for strong, the word that is used earlier in the chapter to refer to strong, firm roots. If you're going to defend the Second Coming, or any other truth, you'll defend it out of the Word of God. That's the best place. The Bible says it.

And then I love this part of the verse, you should listen to the Bible "as a light shining in a dark place until the day dawn and the day star arise." You know what the day dawn is? That's the Kingdom of Christ. You know who the day star is? That's Christ Himself. Revelation 22:16 tells us that. And so he's saying this:

Until the day dawns, until the dawning of the millennial day, the day when Christ comes, you must look to the Word as a man in pitch blackness looks to a light. There's darkness all around us and the only light is the Word. And so you do well to take heed as you would to a light shining in a pitch black place. And you will continue to take heed to the Word until the day dawns. And when the millennial kingdom comes and the day star arises and we enter into the eternal kingdom of Jesus Christ, we'll no longer need the Word of God because we will know as we are known. We'll have the fullness of knowledge.

Peter says you can take confidence in this more sure word, verse 20, when you know this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture — is of any private origination. He's not talking about how you interpret the Scripture. He's talking about the source of it. For the prophecy came not at any time by the will of man, or of a man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

Remember the Word of God, which is the most sure word. Run to it as you would to a light in the midst of darkness and have confidence because you know that it didn't come from any private origination, or initiation. It wasn't the invention of any man, "but holy men of God spoke as they were born along." Why should you run to the Word? Because it's authored by God's Spirit.

Peter will continue in later passages to warn about false teachers and prophets, you know how to tell a false prophet? They either deny parts of the Word of God, or they add something to it, you don't need either, so Peter is saying remember the Word. That's what Jesus said in John 15, remember the Word I said unto you. This is the greatest thing to remember. This is the source, the resource of everything. If you want to remember the reality of your salvation, you'll find it in the Word: The riches in the Word, the responsibility in the Word, the results in the Word, the rest in the Word. And your revelations and manifestations of God must be that which coincide with the Word.

Grace to You – John McArthur
John Piper