

Transfiguration

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2 Peter 1:16-21

The Prophetic Word about Jesus is More Certain.

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Dear friends in Christ Jesus,

How was your week? Was it free of stress and pressure? Were you able avoid sin, and all the cares about the things of this world that try your patience? I thought not. In the midst of it all you strove to avoid “being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ,” as Peter earlier addressed his readers in this letter. We remained effective and productive in our knowledge because we did that not forget that God has cleansed us from our past sins In Christ.

In that forgiveness, we made every effort to add to our faith goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. Peter reminded his readers about all of this as he prepared to die. The apostle wrote, “I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me.”

Peter did not want to leave behind a “Chicken Little Church.” He wanted his Christians to be brave and bold and benevolent. As they faced the corruption of this world, and the many destructive heresies to come, Peter wanted them never to forget “the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” This was the Word he had shared with them during his life.

What did Peter want them to know about that Word, the Word we have about the day Jesus will come again, not in lowliness but in power; not in humility but in majesty? **The Prophetic Word about Jesus is More Certain.** The Father leaves no room for doubt. The Holy Spirit leaves no room for doubt.

Like Peter, other servants of God’s Word have told you over the years that Jesus is going to come again. He is going to appear suddenly and in the full display of his divine power and majesty shared with his human nature and body. Jesus’ power will destroy the universe as we know it, raise the dead in a single resurrection, and create a new heaven and new earth for his church. His majesty is his sublime, magnificent appearance blinding in its radiance.

Jesus gave the world a preview of this great day. This is his Transfiguration soon before he went to Jerusalem to suffer and die as the sacrifice that paid for the guilt and punishment of our sins. Jesus appearance in his glory strengthened him for the work. It strengthened his disciples to watch him suffer and die. After Jesus’ resurrection, they would remember it and share their eyewitness experience with others. This is what Peter had done for the Christians to whom he wrote his epistles.

Thus Peter reminded the Christians, “We did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Peter was there. He saw Jesus glory. He heard the Father’s voice; a voice that leaves no room for doubt, “This is my Son whom I love. With him I am well pleased. Listen to him.” What Peter saw and heard fulfilled what the prophets had written about the coming Savior. What they had written about Jesus was not a myth, a story, a fabrication.

What Peter and the other apostles have shared with us are none of these things. Christians may rely on Peter’s words because they are an eyewitness account. They are the heralding of the Father’s own voice that dispels all doubt about Jesus. What was true of the prophetic word, it is

more certain, in the Old Testament also is true of the New Testament. In both, the Holy Spirit leaves no room for doubt.

Peter's concern for those early Christians is so applicable today. We can understand why so many Christians and others are confused about the Bible because of the destructive heresy that the Bible is a cleverly invented myth, or mere human stories. Why trust it they say when there are hidden messages, or confusing teachings that change with the times, they say.

How blessed we are to trust Peter's words about the inspiration of the Bible. We trust that what we follow are God's very words the Holy Spirit put into the hearts and on the pens of the writers. We know Jesus is our Savior and he is coming again in power and glory because the Holy Spirit leaves no room for doubt. Just as no one believes in Jesus by their own will, so no writer of the Bible decided to write or wrote his own words and ideas as Holy Scripture. Peter wrote, "Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. 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."

The prophetic Word about Jesus is more certain. It is more certain than any myth or story or creative writing from the thoughts and philosophies of men. The Bible's accounts of Creation, man and woman, the Flood, the virgin birth, Jesus' physical resurrection from the dead, and his coming again in power and majesty are not myths. You do not have to look beyond the words of the Bible in order to discover the secret code or real meaning.

The Bible is the inspired Word of God. It is not a shadowy place of uncertainty with many hidden rooms. It is the light, a laser, shining out into the dark place of this world. It is the clear, reliable, changeless and powerful Word that changes hearts. Peter along with Moses, David, Jeremiah, and others knew that what they were recording was, "This is what the Lord says."

Because the Holy Spirit leaves no room for doubt in the Holy Scripture, we have the certainly of God's love in Christ. We have the knowledge that all things do work for our good. We have greater strength in the fight of faith. We have a more patient spirit even with our enemies.

The prophetic word about Jesus is more certain than even a vision. Peter saw and heard Jesus' glory on the mountain. The Father left no room for doubt as to whom Jesus is. Yet, Peter points Christians to the "more certain" Word. Peter trusted in the Scriptures as do we. We do not look for visions, or new revelations, or updated and redefined understandings of ancient truths.

Peter wanted his Christians to know that what he had told them about the power and coming of Jesus is true. This would enable them to endure in their faith and not hide in fear as if the sky were falling. It is true even now though it has not come as yet. But against those mockers who deny that truth simply because it has not happened, we have the more certain prophetic word that leaves no doubt.

The sky is not falling. One day Jesus, the living Word, will come from there in power and majesty. So we wait, relying on the word of the Father at Transfiguration, and the more certain word of the Holy Spirit in the inspired Holy Scriptures. Amen. <SDG?