

Eyewitnesses of His Majesty

2 Peter 1:16-18

Thought for the Day. We can trust the writings of the Bible, and especially the Gospel of Jesus Christ, because they were given to us by men who were eyewitnesses of the events they recorded. These writings are not myths, fairytales, or legends; they are accurate, reliable, historical documents that reveal the truth concerning the Person and Work of Jesus Christ.

“Writing to Christians who were being inundated by false teachers spouting dangerous doctrines, Peter, the aged apostle, emphasized the importance of knowing (and living by) the truth. But how does one differentiate between the claims of one person and the claims of another? According to this passage, the Old Testament (and, by implication, the New Testament) Scriptures are completely authoritative and trustworthy for two reasons: they were certified by apostolic witnesses, and they were inspired not by human whims but by the miraculous leading of the Holy Spirit.” (*John MacArthur, 1 & 2 Peter, p. 77*)

The Transfiguration of Jesus Christ is recorded in Matthew 17:11-8; Mark 9:2-8; and Luke 9:28-36. Peter was there—he saw it, heard it, and experienced it firsthand!

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

- Peter switches from “I” to “we”.
 - Initially, the “we” refers to Peter, James and John.
 - But in the context of verses 16-21, when we get to verse 19, the “we” extends to and includes the whole Church. It includes you and me!
- Matthew’s account of the Transfiguration:
 - Matthew 16:16 – Peter’s Great Confession.
 - Matthew 16:22 – Peter’s Great Confusion.
 - Matthew 16:24-27 – Why should we respond to Jesus’ call to be His disciples?
 - 1) Vs. 24a – The Call to Discipleship – an open invitation.
 - 2) Vs. 24b – The Cost of Discipleship – self-denial / death to self.
 - 3) Vss. 25-26 – The Choice of Discipleship – saving vs. losing; the temporal world vs. eternal life in heaven.
 - 4) Vs. 27 – The Compensation of Discipleship – eternal reward according to our deeds.
 - 5) Vs. 28 – The Confirmation of Discipleship.
 - Matthew 17:1-8 – The Transfiguration of Jesus is the Confirmation, the proof, the validation, concerning the Person and Work of Jesus Christ.
 - The Transfiguration proves that Jesus was who He claimed to be (His Person), and that His death on the cross and resurrection from the dead are God’s means of providing for the salvation of the world (His Work).
 - The Transfiguration confirms that our commitment to follow Jesus Christ as the Savior of our soul and the Lord of our life is based on the truth.

17 For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," 18 we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain.

- Matthew 17:1-2
 - 1) Transfigured = *metamorphosis* = a transformation; a marked change in appearance.
 - 2) The Transfiguration was the fulfillment of Jesus' promise in Matthew 16:28.
 - 3) In the Transfiguration, the disciples *saw* Jesus in the glory of His kingdom; they *saw* a visible manifestation of His divine nature.
 - 4) Throughout His life on earth, Jesus' divine glory was always present, but it was veiled, it was concealed, by His humanity.
- Matthew 17:3
 - 1) Moses represented the O.T. Law; Elijah represented the O.T. Prophets.
 - 2) Luke 9:31 – They spoke with Jesus of his departure (*exodus* – cp. 2 Peter 1:15) which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. His death and resurrection.
 - 3) His death and resurrection satisfied the requirements of the Law and fulfilled the predictions of the Prophets. (Cp. Matthew 5:17; Luke 24:44-49)
- Matthew 17:4-8
 - 1) At the Transfiguration, the disciples *heard* the voice of God: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."
 - 2) Jesus Christ is the Living Word of God and today, we hear His voice and listen to Him through the Written Word of God, the Bible.

Therefore, Peter says...

16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths...

- The false teachers of Peter's day used "cleverly devised myths" to gain followers, power, and wealth.
- The false teachers of our day use "dreams and visions" and the health, wealth and prosperity gospel to gain followers, power, and wealth.
- The Gospel, the biblical message about Jesus Christ, is not a cleverly devised myth. It is not a fable, a fairytale, nor a manmade fabrication. It is a true, accurate, reliable, historical account of the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Paul's warning to Timothy – 2 Timothy 4:1-4. That time has come and is now here!

...we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

- An eyewitness is one who accurately tells what he / she has seen and heard. In the case of Peter and the other Apostles, they were willing to suffer and die rather than change their story. (Acts 4:17-20)
- Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1-5; John 1:14; 1 John 1:1-4; 4:13-16.
- The days of convenient, comfortable, cultural Christianity are coming to an end! Now is the time to get rooted and grounded in our faith. We need to be absolutely certain in our hearts and minds that these things are true; otherwise, we will bail and fail and deny the faith when persecution comes.