

The Faithful Testimony of Christ's Glory

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2 Peter 1:16-18

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So to get us caught up on where we've been, and in case you've missed out on any of the messages, by the way, if you have, you can always go on our website or our YouTube page, and our sermons are always categorized by a series, so you can find those series and listen back through. There's some great series that have passed here at the church from lots of different guys, great stuff to go and listen to, so you can avail yourself of those. But we want to take a look back at Peter's purpose for writing this letter, and we want to survey a little bit of the progress that we've already made up to this point.

So imagine yourself in the first century, the apostle Peter, I'm sorry, yeah, I get Paul and Peter confused in my brain. Sorry about that. If that happens, sorry about that, Peter, the apostle Peter, is in prison. He knows that he will soon be put to death for his witness and his ministry. So this is a letter, the final letter that he is writing, sending out, we would call this a death row epistle. There's another one of these in the New Testament, Paul wrote one, and it's called 2 Timothy, the last letter that Paul would write. And similar to this one, these words tend to carry a special weight of significance. Many biblical scholars, especially liberal theologians, will tell you 2 Peter is irrelevant. It's unnecessary. It's kind of an obscure little weird corner we can't really attest to its authenticity, and we don't really know who wrote it. Bunk. The Holy Spirit told us who wrote it right at the beginning of the letter, and I trust the testimony of the Holy Spirit over the testimony of theologians who are trying to malign the word of God.

So we believe that this letter was written by Peter because the Spirit attests to that. And Peter's then final words, his final sermon in those first few verses and his final exhalations are of paramount importance. And why would I say that for you? Well, because Peter wrote this letter for you if you are a Christian. We learned several times ago that this letter was written to all Christians for all time, rather than some other letters which are written to a particular church in a particular place, and then that letter is circulated, and we read that, and we can glean from that and learn lots from those, but they are not written directly to us as the original recipients. Peter wrote his audience to a timeless or wrote his letter to a timeless audience. He tells us at the beginning of the letter in verse 1, this letter is written to all who, as he says, "have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours." Unless you think that means you have to be an apostle to read this letter, we learned that Peter is simply saying, anyone who has come to faith in Jesus Christ the way that I did, which was I repented of my sins, I submitted my heart to Christ, I trust him for my salvation, and I follow him as my Lord. And if that is you, then my friend, Peter, has written a letter directly for you, and so Peter sends you his greetings, Christian. He encourages you in the full grace and peace granted to you in Christ. He encourages you to be secure in the knowledge of God and of his word. He expresses that God's word has everything you need to

live a life of godliness before the Father. He reminds you that you have been granted precious and very great promises because of your salvation in Christ and your adoption into His family. He exhorts you because of Christ to make every effort to live your life in honor of Him. Because Christ made every effort to save you, you are to make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue and knowledge and self-control and steadfastness and godliness and brotherly affection and love. Why? Does Peter say we need to do those things to earn God's favor? No, not to earn our salvation, not even to augment our salvation, but simply to reflect the work that Christ has already done, that the Spirit has already done, our salvation, our sanctification, and so that we can show off the glory of Christ to the world around us and lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven.

He goes on to remind us that we will remain effective for these goals if and only if we pursue these supplements of Christian character. If not, we will, in our natural human state, be ineffective for gospel ministry. We remember that we have been made alive in Christ and cleansed from our former sins. Our certificate of debt has been canceled and nailed to the cross. Our divine death sentence has been commuted all because of Christ, and Peter calls us to then be all the more diligent to confirm the work that God is doing in our lives by submitting our hearts to the will of the Spirit so that the world around us can see the testimony of God's transforming power at work in our lives, and we will see the rich rewards of God provided richly for us by God by his faithfulness to us. Peter then expresses his true heart as a shepherd by saying that he would spend his final breaths making every effort so that after his martyrdom, after he was gone, that you would be able to recall all of these things. And we learned that the Holy Spirit prospered Peter's mission, his desire to have this letter preserved, this sermon preserved for us, and the Holy Spirit preserved that in this letter, canonized for all time so that you, the actual recipient of this letter, every Christian, can read and learn and remember these things and be faithful to Christ.

And so, as we approach our text now for today, 2 Peter 1:16-18, I hope you find yourself encouraged. I hope you find yourself equipped, equipped to spend your strength for a life that pleases God, and I want you to remember that God is not simply barking commands at you from heaven like some tyrant, not expecting you to understand His mission, just commanding you to row the boat. That's not God. God is indeed a God of grace and blessing. And as I said before, He doesn't want to just tell you the how to obey, He wants to tell you the why of your obedience. And Peter is about to share with us in this section of the letter, as we move from his final sermon to this incredible little section here, Peter begins the why of our worship for Jesus with an apology. Now you might think he's apologizing for something like he's saying, sorry. No, this is a classical rhetoric term that means to make a defense. He's going to defend the reason why he is calling us to faithfulness, a defense here of the reason of why he's asking his readers to do so much in faithfulness to Christ and really answer the question, why would he care? He's in prison. He's about to die. You'd think he'd be worried about his own head, right? You think he'd be worried about the pain he's about to endure or what's going to happen to his wife after he dies, but what he realizes and what we will realize from this text is that Peter knows that there's a life

beyond this life for all of us. And in that moment that you and I cross over from life through the grave into the presence of God, we will be faced with the reality of what we will learn from this text. And the question is, will this subject save you or will it destroy you? You see Peter now moves on to the explaining the why of his letter because this why matters. It matters for our eternal state.

Peter's not just some crazy maniacal cult leader who's demanding your obedience to little tasks here and there just so he can feel better about himself. No, he knows what truly matters. And so he expresses for us today his reason for caring about his audience beyond his own life, for caring about the church at large, for caring about you, and that reason is the eternal and majestic glory of Christ. Peter here gives a faithful testimony of the glory of Christ, and yet, even though that is his motivation, the glory of Christ to tell us that that is our motivation, we will learn this time and next time as well that even his personal experience of seeing the glorified Christ has less weight and less significance for us than those pages of scripture sitting on your lap. Those pages that teach us forever about the glory of Christ. And so Peter, to follow his opening sermon, is going to give us a defense of his own faithful eyewitness of the glory of Christ as contrasted against the false accounts of false teachers who were encroaching into the church in his day and who we know are encroaching into the church today. We're going to see those eyewitness testimony events outlined in the three components of your outline. And Peter will give us a faithful testimony expressing his purpose for calling us to a life of belief in Jesus, submission to Jesus as the only worthy Lord for our lives and obedience to God's plan for holy lives before Him.

So with that purpose, we're going to read together 2 Peter 1, verses 16 to 21. Now our section is 16 to 18. The next couple of verses will finish out the section. We'll cover those in a couple of weeks, but if you're able, please stand for the reading of God's word. If you're new with us, we stand out of reverence for God's word because it's perfect, and they are by far the most important words that you will hear today. So 2 Peter 1 verse 16 and following say this. "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. 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,' we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." That is God's word. You may be seated. As you are, please pray with me for our time in the word.

Father, we are faced with the glory of Christ in this text. This is a monumental study. We don't want to miss it. We don't want to minimize it. The glory of Christ is what makes Him worthy of our worship, and I pray Lord that you would make this clear, that you would teach us from your

word what it is that you need us to know, what you want us to know, and Lord that we would honor you and glorify you more because of it. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

And so as we jump back into the text for today, we're moving into a portion that may seem kind of less applicable, at least in its immediate fashion, right? There's no exhortations in here. There's no direct commands for godly living in here. And that's true in a sense, right, that this is going to be a little bit different of a section, but this and the next three verses I want to impress on you are going to be some of the most important in this letter because Peter's purpose is put on full display. We can spend all day exhorting you to live in a manner, a certain manner, to do certain things, but the ultimate question is why? What is the motivation? And his purpose, Peter's purpose, is to expound the incomparable glory of Christ who is worthy of our worship, thus worthy of our obedience. Why do we do all the stuff that came in verses 1 to 15? Because of the glory we study in these three verses. And following this, Peter's going to make another thing clear, that even a divine glorious experience, like he had, is far less useful than God's own complete and perfect revelation given to us in the pages of scripture. But nonetheless, this section sums up for us both a why of our worship and a comparison that we need to see so that after Peter is gone, Christians will remember the value of Christ, the worth of Christ, the glory of Christ, and also the incomparable value of His word in comparison to our own human experience.

So as we get into our outline, I want to show you three components of this passage that will fulfill Peter's intent and his heart for the why behind our worship of Jesus. Okay? And point number 1 is portrayed in verse 16 and that is **1) Peter portrayed a truthful witness of Jesus coming glory, a truthful witness**. And the truth in verse 16 is set up in contrast against the false teachers that we will meet in chapter 2 and for sure against the false teachers that his church people were already meeting in that first century who are by no doubt going around and maligning Peter's testimony and his character and telling people that he was a liar. Peter makes it clear, though, his tenacity, his dedication, and his determination do not come from his own mind. The apostle's making a very strong point here in verse 16 where he writes, "For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ." First thing we want to notice is the transition.

This section begins with the word "For." This word is used to pull us from one section into another. And so what happened before is all of this exhortation, this pastoral wisdom, that was given in the form of a sermon, and now Peter is focusing on giving the reasonable argumentation for why obedience to those things should matter. And so we might ask the question, why would Peter care? He's going to die soon, guy's in prison, like, can we move on to something else? That might be the heart's temptation. Christ is not here presently. Peter's not here. The apostles are not here. Why should we care? We might be tempted to ask that because the flesh is so self-oriented and interested, but Peter makes his motivation very, very clear. It's a motivation that he saw with his eyes and heard with his ears, and he felt in his flesh, and it's a motivation that drove him to speak plainly and truthfully about the glory of Christ. See, unlike false teachers who were

invading his church and who invade the churches in America, Peter's message was not a man-made myth. It wasn't deceit. False teachers rely on deceit. Like their father, the devil, who is the deceiver of mankind, they invent stories of their own imagination to draw interest to themselves. They invent enticing and entertaining fables in order to tease the ears of the listener into following their lies. There may even be some truth sprinkled into what they say, but these are cleverly devised myths as Peter calls them. Paul calls them the same thing in 1 Timothy, where he says to Timothy, "Teach the leadership. Tell them not to teach us different doctrine. As well, don't devote yourselves to myths and endless genealogies." Which by the way, here's the dichotomy, "promote speculation over stewardship." See that? Which promotes speculations rather than stewardship from God, which is by faith.

So this is why we don't get pulled into those things, into endless theological debates, into endless musings about existence because they pull us away from our stewardship of the gospel. We have the truth. We have the good news. We need not dwell on men's made-up myths and stories about what they think God is. Peter has just spent the entire opening of his letter giving a stewardship of ministry to the church. He's telling them, do not follow endless speculations of false teachers. Don't be enticed by these kind of interesting philosophical ideas that are going to pull you away from Christ. Instead he says, be excited about the gospel, be excited about God's word, about the truth, about the knowledge of God. And so he defends his purpose here. His apology is built on truth. He says, Church, I didn't make this up. I didn't follow cleverly devised myths. I'm not telling you lies just to get you to follow me. I am making known to you the truth of the glory of Christ. See, false teachers will malign Christ, and they'll veil their slander of Christ in a thin veil of truth, and we have to be wise. We have to be able to understand what they're doing and understand God's word enough to be able to peel back that thin veneer of truth and see the lies about Christ that they're pushing and be able to push back and say, No, I know the risen Christ from scripture. So that's what we need to do.

And Peter continues his point by making sure that his readers know that he didn't commission himself. False teachers commissioned himself, right? I am a self-appointed apostle. You must follow me. Oh really? Because that's not how any of the other apostles became apostles. Peter's ministry was not a self-appointed ministry, and we recall here that in this particular place in 2 Peter, we're seeing a very familiar scene being described and that's a scene from the gospels. So if you want to turn with me, you can, over to Luke, Chapter 9. We're going to look at a scene. If you want to stay here, you can just listen along. But Luke 29 and following portray for us a unique historical event that actually happened. It's not some form of additional language that liberal scholars would have us believe Jesus' story was just all natural and human, and they had to add in all the supernatural stuff to make it more interesting because that's what Roman writers did, right? Stories about their gods and their demi-gods, they had to throw in all this myth and all this legend in order to make it interesting. Let me tell you something. The God of the universe doesn't need myth to make himself interesting. This story happened.

So Peter and James and John were commissioned out of the disciples to come to the mountain and be eyewitnesses. They were taken up onto the mountain for a very specific event. And this mountain location is not known to us. We don't know for sure if it was Mount Tabor or Mount Herman or another mountain in the holy land. It doesn't really matter what the location was, what matters is the event that happened. And this event took them into a place of prayer with Jesus. We read Luke 9:28 and following to see what happens here. It says this. "Now about eight days after these sayings, he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure which he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem. Now, Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep." Peter didn't mention that in his letter, "but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, 'Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.' - not knowing what he had said. And as he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud saying, 'This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!' And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen."

This is a pretty spectacular event, probably very similar to what Moses experienced, but a once in a lifetime, once in a generation, once in a thousand years opportunity, and comparing what we just read to what we see here, we want to understand what Peter is actually saying. He says, "We were eyewitnesses of his majesty." See, Peter is summing up his experience on the holy mountain with the singular most important phrase that he needs to say about Jesus, and that is that Jesus possesses divine majesty. Jesus is God. No one else is referred to in this majestic language in all of scripture, and so it was necessary for Peter to be an eyewitness of this, so he could attest to it. He was invited to be so, and he was commissioned to be so even out of the 12. And lastly about this verse, this event was also not unattested. It was not an unattested truth. Peter claims here, plurality. We saw this, we were eyewitnesses. He's speaking on behalf of James and John as the kind of mouthpiece of the apostles as witnesses, so we have these three human witnesses who were invited up. We have the Holy Spirit attesting to this event by the pens of Matthew, Mark, and John. That is six faithful witnesses inspired by God to prove the truthfulness of this claim. Interestingly enough, this claim comes eight days after Jesus expressed in Matthew 16, "Some here standing with me will not taste death until they see me coming in my kingdom." So what does this mean? Did Jesus' kingdom come before all of the apostles or before any of the apostles were dead? No. But what event did come eight days later? The transfiguration.

Many theologians, and I agree with them, believe this statement of Jesus was directly fulfilled as the apostles witnessed the glorified Christ shown to them on this holy mountain. Why do I say that? Because the kingdom preview is going to preview the most important, the most magnificent element to the apostles that could be shown, and that is the glory of God. This language is used

to show that the most important and the most magnificent feature of this coming future kingdom of Jesus, it says that Jesus was revealed in his glory on the mountain. The disciples saw a preview, a first fruits of this coming kingdom.

And so we have Peter portraying for us a faithful witness of Jesus' coming glory. He will get back to that in 2 Peter 3, when he's saying, Ignore the false teachers who tell you Jesus isn't coming back. I've seen the glorified Christ. I know he's coming back. You must trust his word. But Peter saw this glory personified in Christ on this mountain in his divine glory, and in the next verse, we see the 2nd component given to us by Peter to instill in us why he is worthy of our worship. And that is that **2) Peter heard a divine pronouncement of Jesus honor and glory.** God said it audibly.

Verse 17 says this loudly and clearly, literally a voice booming from heaven, and we have three kind of historical elements we want to see, you don't have to write these down. Just the apostles presence, the Father's pronouncement and the Son's prize. Okay? In order to have any credence as an eyewitness sharing this story, it's not a myth, right? It's not a made-up legend. Peter had to have credibility as an eyewitness. So it's important that we see the apostle saying in verse 16 and 17 that I was there. We were there. I was watching this whole thing. And verse 17 is this critical piece of information that he was there watching. He was commissioned, invited by this God the Son to witness this divine event. And with this attestation of James and John, the other apostles, disciples who were with him, legally in the Jewish world, that would account for a credible witness before a court.

So the fact that this information comes in verse 17 is important, and it shows that it can be trusted because it was witnessed by the apostles' personal presence. But the substance of verse 17 comes in the Father's divine pronouncement. Okay? This is no small thing by the way. I know we can kinda get, we can gloss over these things in scripture, and we've read the account of Jesus' baptism, and a dove came down and, "This is my beloved Son." And it's such a nice scene. I want to break that in your brain. I want that gone from your brain. The Father in heaven descended in a cloud in the presence of earthly witnesses and declared that His Son, Jesus Christ, had incurred the Father's pleasure. Verse 17 says, "For when he received honor and glory from the Father and the voice was born to him by the Majestic Glory, 'This is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased.'" You see it is no small matter for the God of heaven to give His glory to another. In fact, scripture tells us He never will, but have you ever heard people claim, well, Jesus never claimed to be God. But God does not give His glory to another. God is a jealous God, jealous of His own glory, jealous of His own worship, jealous of His own praise. Why? Because when humanity gives it to somebody else, it is disaster, and it is always bad for us. God says of Himself in Isaiah 42:8, "I am Yahweh. That is my name and my glory I will give to no other." And yet Peter expresses here that Jesus, the Son, received honor and glory from the Father, so it was given. The Father who just declared that He would not share his glory with another. So what's going on here? Well, for those who carefully read the gospel of John, John Chapter 8, when Jesus is arguing with the people proving his truthfulness of his claims, He says,

"Before Abraham was, I am." And you know what they did? They picked up stones to kill him for blasphemy because they knew exactly what he said, which was, "I am the Father. I am Yahweh." But if that's not clear enough for you, John 10:30, He declares this. "I and the Father are one." Yet another expression of equality with the Father in heaven, and this public spectacle of the transfiguration put Jesus' divine glory on full display, visible display, showing all the witnesses that Jesus was not just some man, but He was indeed fully God, one with Yahweh, God in the flesh, Emmanuel, God with us. And of course that is the Son's prize given from the mouth of the Father, honor and glory and praise in a small preview of what we see broadcast in Daniel and Revelation of the coming kingdom of Christ. "This is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased."

We compare that testimony with what we see in the gospels. We see kind of some different snippets that give us a full picture. Mark says, "This is my son whom I love. Listen to him." Luke says, "This is my son whom I've chosen. Listen to him." Matthew says, "This is my son whom I love and with whom I am well pleased. Listen to him." And so just like we do with the words of Jesus on the cross, across the four gospels, we compile them together to get a full picture. God from heaven declared this. "This is my beloved son, whom I love, whom I have chosen, with whom I am well pleased. Listen to him." And in this proclamation, God the Father attested to the Son's equality with Him, Jesus' preeminence in His mission, His trustworthiness, and His fulfillment of all of the Old Testament prophecies to come and to be the one who would be the servant of Yahweh and the Messiah of Israel and the Savior of all of the world. God bestowed upon Him glory, glory that only belongs to God. And just to be clear, the glory of God, if you're not impressed, with whom God shared, by the way, with only one other individual in this manner in scripture, someone of His own essence, Jesus, the Son in Trinitarian perfection, the glory of God is the most treasured possession of God and the most valuable possession that could ever be. The glory of God is what makes God worthy of our worship glory. The glory of God is His perfect essence, it is His total nature, His complete holiness, His perfect righteousness, His omniscience, His omnipotence, His omnipresence, His incalculable beauty and light, His transcendent holiness, His immeasurable love, His saving power, His universal reign. All of these things wrapped together in His Trinitarian perfection and nature make Him the most glorious and divine being who is worthy of our praise and all glory.

Jonathan Edwards, the most preeminent theologian in American history, dedicated his life in theology to the study of this one topic, the glory of God. How often have we dedicated any of our time thinking about the glory of God? Jonathan Edwards' life thesis came to a publication in one of his last works entitled *The End For Which God Created the World*, and in all of his studies, Jonathan Edwards discovered that the chief end of God, that is God's ultimate purpose, is to showcase His glory. And the chief end of man is to experience and give that glory back to God with his life in obedience and submission to Him. His thesis was also picked up by John Piper in his book *God's Passion For His Glory*.

So doesn't it stand a reason that if God's glory is the most treasured thing by God, of all things, that Him sharing His glory with Jesus is a little bit of a big deal? Like something we ought to note something we ought to think about and praise God over. Peter and James and John were witnesses of a small picture of the coming kingdom of Christ. Christ in His kingdom glory. When at the culmination of all things, one like the Son of Man, one like the lamb who was slain would approach the throne of the Father and be given glory and dominion and power and strength and all glory and honor and praise, and He would rule and reign for all time from this time forth and forevermore. And Peter, Peter saw a preview of that kingdom glory, the first fruits, and He fulfilled, Jesus fulfilled what He said in Matthew 16. "I will show you what my kingdom is." Of course the most worthy element of that to showcase is the glory of God.

And so Peter is mesmerized with the physical manifestation of the glory of the Son of God. He is overwhelmed by the audible voice of the Father showering audibly honor and praise and glory onto the Son, expressing to the witnesses on that mountain that Jesus was to be believed, He was to be followed, and He was to be like His Father in heaven, worshiped. And Peter would bolster the case for this truth with the 3rd, component of this faithful testimony of Christ's glory, and that is that **3) Peter possessed a personal account of this divine glory.** Now, how is this different from the first point? It was truthful, but could I could say something truthful that I did not personally see and witness. It's important that he's a personal eyewitness. He didn't learn this from an angel, he didn't learn this from a book, or he didn't learn this from secondhand testimony about the event. Peter was there. We learned of his personal account, and we're going to see, again, three more facets of it in this verse. We'll go through them real quick, and you don't have to write them down but that is that this account is a tested by three witnesses, experienced by human senses, and given by divine providence.

Verse 18 says, "For we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven for we were with him on the holy mountain." So again, as we already saw, Peter witnessed this with James and John, and it was attested by all three of them. No person at that time would look at Peter and say, I don't believe you because you don't have enough witnesses. He had the legal limit of witnesses as we'll see. In Deuteronomy 19:15, "According to two or three witnesses, a matter shall stand." That's how the Jewish society worked. They understood that men of renown, men of faith would not lie about these things, and in the same principle, we apply in Matthew 18 and in the hearing accusations against an elder, we don't listen to those except on the account of two or three witnesses for the same reason. We want to attest the truthfulness of something. And so it's interesting to me, and it's so gracious of Jesus, that He went to the full extent of the Mosaic law to eliminate any kind of human objection to the veracity of this account. He invited three of the disciples, none of whom, by the way, ever walked down that mountain or any time in their life, walking around, I saw the risen Christ. I'm going to start a ministry, and you should follow me, and you should give me all your money. Right? If anything, being there on the holy mountain, humbled them, it broke them. Standing in the glory of God should crush any human into humility, not puff him up with pride or give him bragging rights.

Second, this personal account was attained through the experience of human senses. Peter saw, he heard, he felt, he experienced, and yet the more we read 2 Peter, Peter never, ever placed his hope of the gospel in his personal experience, did he? Nor did he command you to go looking for personal experience. You'd think if Peter, you know if I were Peter, that's probably what I would do. I'd walk around being like, Man, I saw the risen Christ. I saw the glorified Christ. You better follow. You better. I got this. And instead, like Paul in Philippians, he puts no confidence in the flesh. He puts no confidence in his own experience or even his own brain's interpretation of that experience. In fact, more than 15 times in this letter, he exhorts you to grow in the knowledge of God and to trust in His perfect word, and so that's what we do.

Lastly, this personal account was given by divine providence. Nonetheless, despite that experience is faulty, God allowed Peter to experience this with his sense. Why? Well, I think that's a grace of God. Somebody had to so he could tell the rest of us that the word of God was better. He wants to express to us that he saw the glorified Christ, yes, but what is better? We have the prophetic word made more sure to which you do well to pay attention. Yes, we can marvel with Peter at this snapshot of human history and seeing the glorified Christ and rejoice with him that he got to do that and that he can instill confidence in us in chapter 3 of the fulfilled promises of Christ's return, but don't place our hope there. He never tells us place our hope in his experience. He tells us to place our hope in the trustworthy word of God. That is concrete. And we indeed have a valuable testimony. How often do we ignore it? Does it sit on the shelf unopened? This is a testimony that has altered millions of lives over 2000 years. It has the power to save. Romans 10:17 says, "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by this word, the word of God." We'll learn more about that next time.

So what do we take away from a passage like this? No, exhortation, no commands, no indicatives even. This is how you should live. No, this is just information, but it's glorious information, is it not? So we want to take a couple of things home, just to kind of remember about a passage like this. Number one, trust the Bible. We have the prophetic word made more sure to which you do well to pay attention. Trust the Bible, read it, imbibe it, know it, live it. It will give you everything you need for a life of godliness, and it will never disappoint.

Number two, believe the apostles. Believe their testimony. It was granted by God, affirmed by God, attested by a plurality of witnesses, all of whom had independent versions that came together in perfect form that we have in our scripture. So we can believe the fact that Peter was on that mountain, that James was on that mountain, that John was on that mountain seeing the glorified Christ. We can believe that when God declares that Jesus is His equal, that Jesus is in fact God and is divine and is worthy of our worship, and that Peter's testimony is trustworthy.

Number three, don't put too much stock in human experience. Boy, this one's rubber meets the road, right? The apostle is about to teach us next time that even though he was the privileged recipient of an eyewitness account to one of the greatest events in human history, that we have something greater. Why would we look for something lesser? We have something more trustworthy than Peter had. By the way, human experience like Peter had is pretty unreliable.

Unless, like Peter's had divine guidance to tell him exactly what was going on, our experiences can be interpreted in any infinite number of ways and none of them, none of them have any credence when they disagree with scripture. None of them have any explanation outside of God's sovereign plan which we find in scripture. So don't trust your experience. The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. Who can know it? It will lie to you. Trust the word of God.

Lastly, and most importantly, Jesus is worthy. Jesus is worthy of all glory, of all honor, of all praise, of all trust, of all worship, of all submission, and of all of our obedience. Jesus was not some ineffectual prophet. He was not some Jewish insurrectionist or a self-proclaimed holy man saying, I have something from God that you need. He was God in the flesh. God manifests for us to see. Jesus is the one Isaiah prophesied who would be called Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. Jesus declared in this passage by the Father to be equal to the Father in all respects, deserves your fealty.

So have you given it to him? That's the most important question you can ask yourself ever. You walk out of here, nothing else matters if you haven't addressed that question. Have you bowed the knee to Jesus in submission to Him as your Lord? Have you recognized your sin and need for divine pardon? Have you confessed your sin and been made clean? Have you trusted that Jesus Christ's life, perfect life, death, and resurrection was given for your healing and your salvation? Do you follow him as your Lord and Savior in submission in every aspect of your life, not holding anything back saying, I'm going to keep this? Jesus is my Lord. If not my friend today, God is calling you to repentance from dead works, repentance from sin and rebellion and submission to his Lordship. If you do this, He will heal you, He will restore you, He will grant you spiritual life, He will give you new eyes to see His holiness and His righteousness. He will forgive your sins, He will grant you pardon from your divine death sentence, He will lift you up, He will adopt you into His family and bless you with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and He will show you the glory of Christ in your life through His word and promise partaking in His glory in your physical death in His future kingdom when He raises you to life just like He did Jesus. You can believe it. It's God's testimony, and it's true. No other testimony even comes close. Don't leave here today without talking to one of us about the gospel. Every last Christian in this room is an unworthy recipient of the grace of God, and I invite you to become an unworthy recipient with us. Amen.

Let's pray. Father, what an incredible time today studying the grace and glory of Christ. What a privilege to have this letter from Peter written directly to us preserved for the ages so that we can learn and remember the glory of Christ, His worthiness, and the reasons why we give Him our obedience. May you take what we've learned today and cause it to take deep root in the hearts of all of your people. And for any in this room who do not yet know you, may you use today to break them of their sin, bring them to repentance and faith in Christ, and count them among yours as the redeemed. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.