

The Scrolls

Helping CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond

V26 N31

August 4, 2024

PEOPLE GET READY

"MythBusters" 2 Peter 1:16-21

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Jesus Christ

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

"The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven."

Hebrews 1:3





How can we be sure Jesus will return to reign?

Peter alludes to the transfiguration of Jesus in 2 Peter 1:16-18. In v. 16, he identifies himself along with James and John as "eyewitnesses of his majesty," and then goes on to explain: "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.' We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain" (vv. 17-18). Jesus' transfiguration is recorded in all three synoptic Gospels – Matthew (17:1-8), Mark (9:2-8), and Luke (9:28-36a) – the Christological significance of which is revealed in his transformation, the Father's words from heaven, the presence of Moses and Elijah, and perhaps the response of the disciples. The following verses lifted from Mark's Gospel focus on what happened to Jesus and what the Father said about him. First, what happened to him: "After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them" (Mk 9:2-3); and second, what the Father said about him: "Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: 'This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!"" (v. 7).

On the Christological significance of what happened to Jesus, one commentator writes: "Jesus was transfigured in the presence of the three disciples (cf. 2 Peter 1:16). 'Transfigured' (metemorphōthē, cf. Eng. 'metamorphosis') means 'to be changed into another form,' not merely a change in outward appearance (cf. Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18). For a brief time Jesus' human body was transformed (glorified) and the disciples saw Him as He will be when returns visibly in power and glory to establish His kingdom on earth (cf. Acts 15:14-18; 1 Cor. 15:20-28; Rev. 1:14-15; 19:15; 20:4-6). This was dramatically portrayed by the supra-earthly whiteness of His clothes—a comment unique to Mark, probably reflecting Peter's eyewitness report" (John D.

Grassmick, "Mark," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 142-43). In a nutshell, what happened to Jesus reveals complementary aspects of his sonship—the preexistent glory of the eternal Son and the future glory of the suffering Messianic Son.

On the Christological significance of what the Father said about him, the same author writes: "The **cloud** that **enveloped them** (Jesus, Moses, Elijah) signified God's awesome presence (cf. Ex. 16:10; 19:9) and from it came His commanding voice. Once again, as at Jesus' baptism, the Father placed His unqualified endorsement on His beloved **Son** (cf. comments on Mark 1:11). Jesus' sonship sets Him above all other men including Moses and Elijah. Listen to Him (pres. Imper.), actually means, 'Be obedient to Him.' This reflects the prophecy of Deuteronomy 18:15 (cf. Deut. 18:19, 22 also) and serves to identify Jesus as the new and final Mediator of God's rule in its present and future form (cf. Ps 2:4-7; 2 Peter 1:16-19). Jesus succeeded Moses and Elijah, who suddenly disappeared leaving no one except Jesus" (143).

Peter links the transfiguration to "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power" (2Pe 1:16), a connection implied by verses leading up to Mark's account. In 8:38 Jesus refers to his coming to reign in these words: "If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels" (cf. Mt 24:30-31). And in 9:1 he says: "Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see that the kingdom of God has come with power" (cf. "I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom" [Mt 16:28]) (see Douglas Moo, The NIV Application Commentary: 2 Peter and Jude, 74-75). In Peter's mind, the Christological revelation entailed in the transfiguration confirms the powerful return of Jesus to reign as "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (Rev 19:16).

EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

Read 2 Peter 1:16-21

16 For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 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."

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

19 We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, 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. 20 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. 21 For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Read in another translation

16 For we did not follow cleverly concocted fables when we made known to you the power and return of our Lord Jesus Christ; no, we were eyewitnesses of his grandeur. 17 For he received honor and glory from God the Father, when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory: "This is my dear Son, in whom I am delighted." 18 When this voice was conveyed from heaven, we ourselves heard it, for we were with him on the holy mountain. 19 Moreover, we possess the prophetic word as an altogether reliable thing. You do well if you pay attention to this as you would to a light shining in a murky place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. 20 Above all, you do well if you recognize this: No prophecy of scripture ever comes about by the prophet's own imagination, 21 for no prophecy was ever borne of human impulse; rather, men carried along by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. (NET)

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Circle "we" in v. 16.
- Bracket "cleverly devised stories" in v. 16.
- Box "but" indicating *contrast* in vv. 16, 21.
- Circle "majesty" in v. 16.
- Underline "honor" and "glory" in v. 17.
- Circle "sacred mountain" in v. 18.
- Circle "prophetic message" in v. 19.
- Box "as" indicating *comparison* in v. 19.
- Bracket "until the day . . . in your hearts" in v. 19.
- Bracket "the prophet's own interpretation" in v. 20.
- Circle "carried along" in v. 21.

What one word would you use to describe the **TONE** of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the **THEME** of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Read verse 16 carefully. What does it suggest to you? 2. When did Jesus receive "honor and glory," where did he receive it, and from whom? 3. To what does "glory" refer, and to what does "honor" refer? 4. A "voice" spoke to Jesus from "the Majestic Glory" (cf. Mk 9:7). To what does "the Majestic Glory" refer? 5. What two things did the "voice" confirm regarding Jesus? 6. Peter wasn't the only one who was with Jesus and who heard the voice. To whom does "we" (v. 18) refer? 7. The transfiguration confirms the "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power." What else does? 8. Explain the *comparison* in verse 19 ("as"). 9. Summarize the point of verses 20-21 by putting the meaning in your own words.

10. **Discussion:** Talk about the role of the Holy Spirit in the writing of the scriptures.

EXPLORE RESOURCES



Commentary On The Text

Peter's opening words in verse 16 of 2 Peter 1:16-21 sound defensive. "For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty." Apparently, there were those who accused the apostles of doing that very thing—fabricating an eschatology. One commentator explains: "His denial came because the false teachers were accusing the apostles of inventing the whole idea of the Parousia and the judgment it would bring" (Douglas Moo, The NIV Application Commentary: 2 Peter and Jude, 72). Apparently, they denied a future aspect of eschatology or else reinterpreted it so as to lose its intended meaning. Peter vehemently denied any such accusation based on the following: "We were eyewitnesses of his *majesty*," a reference to Jesus' power and glory, which will be visible to all at his coming. His claim raises the question: When was he an eyewitness to Jesus' majesty?

The answer to that question follows in verses 17 and 18, which clearly refer to the transfiguration recorded in all three Synoptic Gospels (see pg. 1). Peter, James, and John—hence "we were eyewitnesses" were led by Jesus "up a high mountain" (Mk 9:2), most likely Mount Hermon, where Jesus received "honor and glory from God" (2Pe 1:17). "Honor" appears to refer to the words of the heavenly voice, i.e., the Father's voice, who said, "This is my son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." Jesus is honored by being identified by the Father as the Messiah and the Servant of the LORD. "'This is my Son' alludes to the language of Psalm 2:7, in which God addresses the messianic King; and 'with whom I am well pleased' is language drawn from the first 'Suffering Servant' song in Isaiah (42:1). The voice from heaven, therefore, identifies Jesus as both Messiah and Suffering Servant. More important, perhaps, for Peter's purposes, are the implications of Jesus as Son of God . . . Jesus is, in some manner, identified with God the Father in a more essential, or even ontological, way see particularly John 10:30; 14:5-11)" (Moo, 73).

"Glory" appears to refer to the change in Jesus himself. Matthew writes: "There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light" (17:2). The change in Jesus' appearance came from the inside out. His body underwent a transformation, a *metamorphosis* if you will, revealing his essential divine glory as God incarnate, a glory that will be on display at his coming to reign (Mt 24:30). That change in

Jesus explains the change in the appearance of his garments. In a nutshell, "the Transfiguration reveals Jesus as the glorious King, and Peter was there to see it. He therefore has utter confidence that Jesus will return as the glorious King and establish his kingdom in its final and ultimate form" (Moo, 75).

Peter goes on to explain that the powerful coming of Jesus is confirmed not only by eyewitness testimony of apostles, but also by "the prophetic message as something completely reliable" (v. 19). The phrase "as something completely reliable" is more literally rendered "made more certain," the meaning of which is debated (see note). Peter is most likely arguing that the Old Testament in general but more specifically those prophecies regarding the coming kingdom are *confirmed* by the eyewitness report of the apostles. In other words, "the voice at the transfiguration makes even more certain the Old Testament prophecies about the coming of the Lord" (Michael Green, The Second Epistle of Peter and the Epistle of *Jude,* 97). As a result, believers are to pay ever so much attention to them until the blessed hope becomes blessed reality.

And then in verses 20 and 21, to bolster their confidence in "the prophetic message," Peter assures his readers of its *divine origin* – verses that have been interpreted in a variety of ways (see note). Since the apostle has authentication rather than interpretation on his mind, verse 20 most likely refers, as the NIV renders it, to the *origin* of prophecy. It did not come about through the prophet's own fallible and quite possibly mistaken notions. In the words of John Calvin, "They did not blab their inventions of their own accord or according to their own judgment" (cited by Green, 101). What's more, "no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (v. 21) – even as a sailboat is carried along by the wind. Put differently, prophecy was produced by the will of the Holy Spirit; he was the prime mover in its production. In this regard, now is the time to say that the scriptures were inspired but not dictated. Consider the difference reflected in the following definition of inspiration: God superintended (or carried along) the human authors of the Bible, so that, reflecting their own individuality, they composed and recorded without error his message to humanity in the words of their original writings.

Word Studies/Notes

- v. 16 we "The 'we' must refer to Peter and other apostles, since it was only they who were eyewitnesses of the Transfiguration" (Douglas J. Moo, *The NIV Application Commentary: 2 Peter and Jude,* 70). But not just "we" three who witnessed the transfiguration. "The apostles' testimony rested on historical events that they had observed personally. They had personally observed Jesus' 'power' in action during His first coming as God's anointed Messiah. Jesus Christ's 'majesty' appeared especially clearly on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-8) (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on 2 Peter," 2024 ed., 33, planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/2peter.pdf).
- v. 16 *cleverly devised stories* Cf. "cleverly concocted fables;" "cleverly devised myths" (ESV). "A Christian's faith does not rest on clever **stories** (*mythois*) as did the doctrines of the false teachers Peter attacked (2 Peter 2). Instead, true faith is founded on historical facts, which **eyewitnesses** corroborated" (Kenneth O. Gangel, "2 Peter," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 868, italics added). "The NT always uses *mythos* in a negative sense and in contrast to the truth of the gospel (1 Tim 1:4; 4:7; 2 Tim 4:4; Titus 1:14)" (Edwin A. Blum, "2 Peter," in *The Bible Expositor's Commentary*, vol. 12, 273).
- v. 16 *majesty* "'Majesty' translates a word (*megaleiotes*) that has divine association; and here, as the following two verses show, the reference is specifically to Christ's glorious appearance at the time of the Transfiguration" (Moo, 72). "Megaleiotēs, majesty, is a very rare New Testament word: in both its other occurrences it means the majesty of the Divine. So here it expresses the divine majesty as revealed in the transfiguration of Jesus" (Michael Green, *The Second Epistle of Peter and the Epistle of Jude*, TNTC, 93).
- v. 17 honor and glory "The 'honor' is the public acknowledgement of his sonship (cf. Ps 2:6-7; Matt 3:17; Luke 3:22), and the 'glory' is the transfiguration of the humiliated Son into his glorious splendor. On the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus' face 'shone like the sun,' his clothes 'became as white as the light' (Matt 17:1-9; Mark 9:2-10; Luke 9:28-36), a unique (toiasde, lit., 'such as this') voice sounded from a bright cloud that covered them and said, 'This is my Son, whom I love, with him I am well pleased.' The scene showed Jesus as Messiah and was a preview of his glory as King" (Blum, 273-74). "Although the terms honor and glory pair naturally, the transfiguration scene can be said to refer to honor bestowed by the divine voice on that occasion and to glory received from the Shekinah cloud which enveloped the person of Jesus on the mount (Mark 9:7)" (Norman Hillyer, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude, NIBC, 175).
- v. 18 *sacred mountain* "It was the Transfiguration that transformed the mountain from a common one into a 'sacred' (*hagios*) one. As for the place of the Transfiguration, Mount Hermon (over nine thousand feet high and near Caesarea Philippi, where the event that preceded the Transfiguration took place) or one of its spurs is the most likely choice. Traditionally,

Mount Tabor, a steep eminence in the Plain of Jezreel, is identified as the Mount of Transfiguration. But its modest height makes it a less likely site than Hermon" (Blum, 274).

- v. 19 prophetic message Cf. "And we have the word of the prophets made more certain" (NIV©1984). "The crucial word is bebaioteron, more certain. Does it mean that the Scriptures confirm the apostolic witness (AV, NEB mg.)? Or does it mean that the apostolic witness fulfils, and thus authenticates, Scripture (RV, RSV, NEB, NIV)? Most commentators follow the second alternative and take it that the voice at the transfiguration makes even more certain the Old Testament prophecies about the coming of the Lord" (Green, 97; cf. Moo, 76). "The 'prophetic word' is a collection of oral or written prophecies. Some think that Peter might have in mind the entire Old Testament [cf. Hillyer, 179] or even Old and New Testament prophecy. But the context suggests rather that he refers specifically to Old Testament prophecies about the kingdom to be established by the Messiah at the end of history. This, as we have seen, is the point at issue in 2 Peter" (Moo, 75).
- v. 19 *until the day* . . . The *precise* meaning of this temporal clause is difficult to discern (see Green, 98-99; Blum, 274-75). If the *dawning of the day* and the *rising of the morning star* (i.e., Venus) refer to "the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in power" (Green, 98-99), i.e., the eschatological climax of the age (Moo, 76), and *rising in your hearts* refers to "the effects of that climax in the life of the believer" (Moo, 76), then: "The clause must be a pictorial description of the way in which, at His Coming, Christ will dissipate the doubt and uncertainty by which their hearts are meanwhile beclouded, and will fill them with a marvelous illumination" (J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Epistles of Peter and Jude*, 323; cited by Moo, 76-77).
- v. 20 *prophet's own interpretation* This phrase has been interpreted in various ways (see Constable, 37-38; Blum, 275; Moo, 77-78). Verse 21 implies that it refers to the *origin* of the "prophecy of Scripture." "True prophecy never came about as a result of some individual's personal ideas: it **never had its origin in the will of man**" (Hillyer, 180; cf. Moo, 78).
- v. 21 *carried along*"Men spoke, but God so worked in them so that what they said was his word. It was not through a process of dictation or through a state of ecstasy that the writers of Scripture spoke but through the control of the Spirit of God—'as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit'" (Blum, 275). Using a maritime metaphor, *pheromenē* (cf. Ac 27:15, 17), Peter says "the prophets raised their sails, so to speak (they were obedient and receptive), and the Holy Spirit filled them and carried their craft along in the direction he wished. Men spoke; God spoke" (Green, 102)

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

The coming of the Lord in power is confirmed by the eyewitness testimony of the apostles and the written testimony of prophecy, which has its origin in God, working through the Holy Spirit.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The "Living Questions" are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

When I was a little girl, I was a voracious reader, often staying up late at night with a flashlight hidden under the sheets so I wouldn't get caught reading. I loved all books, but there was something about Nancy Drew mysteries that hooked me. I had dreams of being an amateur sleuth, smart and courageous like the teenage detective with the ability to pick locks with a bobby pin. Her aim was always to solve the mystery and discover the truth. The Nancy Drew of my day is radically different from today's version, and I can't say I'd recommend reading the books with a more modern twist. This is unfortunately true for most of the books in the kids' or young adult aisle of your local library and bookstore. You know what book hasn't changed, though? You guessed it—the *Holy Bible*. God's Word is absolutely true, trustworthy and unchanged. The characters from the Bible haven't morphed into more "socially acceptable" or "readable" characters and the stories haven't been altered with a more modern flair; they've stayed the same throughout the generations. Where some would suggest this makes the Bible an ancient book without relevance for today, I find comfort and trust in God's inerrant Word. Reading it daily gives me a guide to follow for godly living and a plumb line with which to measure truth. As we get ready for a new school year, make it a goal to dust off that Bible and read it daily. Involve your kids in your reading and disciple them as you seek God's truth. We're praying you hunger for God's Word!

What Does The Bible Say?

Read 2 Peter 1:16-21

- 1. What was Peter an eyewitness to?
- 2. What did God the Father say about Jesus?
- 3. Under what authority did prophets speak?

What Do You Think?

After reading 2 Peter 1:20-21 with the understanding that Peter is an eyewitness to Jesus' life, ministry, death and resurrection, on a scale of 1 (not true) to 10 (absolutely true) how would you rate the measure of truth of this letter?

What Do You Do?

Using your favorite stories from the Bible, make a game of True/ False to play as a family. How do we know the Bible is true?

CORE COMPETENCY: Jesus Christ

I believe Jesus Christ is fully God, perfectly man, and died for my sins.

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Peter 5:7

"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."

| KidPIXCOUPON | I completed my Bible Study | I memorized this week's verse | I brought my Bible to church | I brought a friend | I bro

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17) *I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.*

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15) *I choose to do the right things in my relation-ships with others*

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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OUR MISSION

Making God known by making disciples who are changed by God to change their world.