

A Weathered Soldier Speaks: 2 Peter 1:12-18

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[0:00] Amen. You may be seated, and good morning to you. I don't know whether it is stress or age, regardless or a combination of the two, but I find that in my memory, I'm able to recall less than I used to be able to recall.

I think those in Peter's day, if you're a guest with us, we've been walking through the book of 2 Peter. So if you have a copy of God's Word with you, or you can pick up a pew Bible in front of you, we're looking at the book of 2 Peter.

To find that book, you can turn to the last book of the New Testament, Revelation, and turn back a few, and you will find yourself quickly at 2 Peter. 2 Peter has this concern, and apparently there is something in the culture that is minimizing or teaching falsely things about the second coming of Christ.

What I appreciate about Christendom, no matter what denomination, as long as you're in Protestant Christianity, likely we are all in agreement on this very fact that the Lord will return.

Where there is disagreement is the timing of that, what will happen first, second, third, fourth. There is some disagreement on the details of that, but everyone is in agreement, yes, the Lord will return.

[1:29] And Peter today is going to remind his listeners, his audience, hey, the second coming of Christ is true.

Don't forget it. There is value and importance here. So let me recall it to your memory. I'm going to quickly, so if you've noticed, look with me in verse 12. I'm not going to read the entire passage yet, but if you notice with me in verse 12 really quick, so it's 2 Peter 1, verse 12.

It says there's a portion of the verse that says this. Look how he tries to remind them of something. We don't know yet what the content of the reminding is of yet, but notice in verse 12.

Therefore, I intend always to remind you. Look with me in verse 13. To stir up by way of reminder. He says, I'm going to try to remind you.

And then the very next verse, verse 14. You may be able to at any time recall these things. I want to remind you. I say this as a way of reminder. I want you to be able to recall these things.

[2:34] Three times in different verses, really in quick succession order. He says, remember, remember, remember. And the content of what he wants you to remember in his audience is that the second coming of Christ is true.

He's going to return. So let me try to help build that case for today. I want to try to share the context with you.

Notice in verse 12. In verse 12, we say, therefore, I intend always to remind you of these qualities. Now, what is he referring to when he says of these qualities? So yes, we get it. He's trying to remind them. But what are these qualities? So let me go back.

We're going to rehearse three sermons really quickly. So if you were here the last three Sundays, this would be a reminder. Verse 3 begins with saying to his listeners, hey, audience, my intended audience through this letter, his divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness.

[3:51] So believers in Jesus, you have God's divine power. The power that raised Jesus from the dead is the same divine power that now is in us, and it's been granted to you.

It's a past event with present consequence and active in your life. It's active in your life, this divine power, and it's pertaining, this divine power has been given to you for life and for godliness.

Then Peter says, okay, then now add to your faith. This was Pastor Jay's sermon last week. Be sure to add to your faith, verse 5, for this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith. So work hard at adding to your faith these virtues, virtue, knowledge, knowledge, self-control, self-control, steadfastness, steadfastness, brotherly affection, brotherly affection, add love.

So add to this divine power that has been given to you. Add to your faith now these things, and to what result?

[5:00] Verse 10, Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election. If you practice these qualities, you will never fall. So, as you have this divine power that's working in you for life and godliness, add these virtues to your life.

Adding these virtues to life confirms and affirms to everyone that you are indeed in the Lord. And then, verse 11, To what end? For this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Oh, and then, if one does that, you have this grand entrance into the kingdom that awaits you.

Okay, all of that is important to understand in the background to give us understanding.

Okay, all of that culminates to this grand entrance at the coming of his kingdom. So then, verse 12, he says, Therefore, I intend always to remind you of these qualities.

That's what he's speaking to. I want you to have this grand entrance to the kingdom. So, what we're going to do today is look at three things that Peter is calling for them to remember concerning the Lord's return.

[6:20] So, this grand entrance into his kingdom is going to be accompanied by his return, and he's going to say, Don't forget it. And there's three reasons why he says, Don't forget it. And number one, so these three reasons, real quick, are just to say simply, and then we can take notes, but it's to buttress our godliness.

What does remembering the Lord's return do? It buttresses our godliness. Number two, it stirs our passion. And then number three, it bolsters our readiness. But let's first consider it buttresses our godliness.

Look with me one more time at verse two. Therefore, I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have.

We've already talked about what these qualities are because it's in context, the whole chapter. But I want to pay attention to the word established. The verb established means to firmly establish, to strengthen like a buttress.

This is why I'm using the word buttress. In Europe, you can go all over Europe and in these grand cathedrals, you'll have on the outside of these grand cathedrals these flying buttresses is what they're called.

[7:31] And they're to help carry the load so that the cathedral can have an open floor plan and they could have this open floor plan in part because the flying buttresses are carrying the load to allow this grand cathedral to be built like that.

But what is it that supports, like buttresses, our godliness? He says, I want you to remember it's by remembering the Lord's return, these things, His return, that will be like a buttress to your godliness. That there's something about the Lord's return that will strengthen our godliness. Think with me for a minute. What if we didn't believe the Lord's going to return?

How would you live? You're not going to answer to Him. He's not going to judge you in the last days. I imagine, if I thought, truly, the Lord's never going to return, that would have an effect on my life.

And Peter is saying, don't, don't, don't do that. I'm seeking to remind you that this is true, that grand entrance into His kingdom awaits, so don't forget it. Remember, it buttresses your godliness.

[8:38] Number two, it stirs your passion. It stirs your passion. Look with me in verses 13 and 14. I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir up, stir you up by way of reminder, since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me.

In these two verses, well, there was a man, an artist, whose name is Frederick Barnard. he, in 1921, coined the phrase, a picture paints a thousand words.

Well, I believe in our text today that the opposite is true, that a word can paint a thousand pictures as well. In this passage, he references his body twice, in verse 13 and 14.

He says, I think it right as long as I am in this body, and then in verse 14, since I know that putting off of my body will be soon, that word for body that we get there could also be translated tent.

He thinks of his body as a tent. This is merely the housing for my soul that you see, and in a moment, I'm going to see the Lord, and this flesh and blood body is not going to go with me.

[10:02] It's just merely a tent to house my soul. And so, he is saying, and I think that's just a beautiful word picture. And so, what is Peter doing?

He's reminding them that this life is fleeting because in verse, in verse 14, he says, since I know that putting off of my body will be soon, that he knows Nero is about to kill him. He is about, maybe he has a sentence already, perhaps he even has the day of his death already in mind. Perhaps somebody has already told him, hey, on Wednesday next week, Peter, is your execution day.

We don't know, but he knows for sure, and he's referring to his body as a temporary thing, and so he's just saying, I know my end is about to come, but how does he know it? Not because of what I just said.

It says, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. Somehow, the Lord, whether that be at the Sea of Galilee in that moving scene when Jesus fix a breakfast and he has words with Peter and he says, Peter, do you love me?

[11:16] Feed my sheep. Peter, do you love me? Feed my sheep. Peter, do you love me? Feed my sheep. Perhaps it was in that conversation that he knew, or we don't know, but maybe Jesus made it more specific in a special revelation of some kind to him, but Peter knows his days are numbered and his death is imminent, and he is saying, in a minute, folks, I'm going to be putting off this tent, and so then he says, I think it right in verse 13, as long as I'm in this body to stir up by way of reminder.

He is saying, I don't have much time left and I want to stir up. What is it to stir up something? It is to arouse, completely, thoroughly awaken, to stimulate, to agitate.

His whole point is saying, you've got to remember, the Lord's return is true, and this life is short, and as long as I am alive, I have to remind you, I want to remind you so badly, believe it, he's coming. This grand entrance awaits you. Awaken from any spiritual lethargy, drowsiness, spiritual sleep. And why would he even do that if it weren't possible to become a little spiritually sluggish?

Was there a day that you can remember when you actively loved the Lord more than you do today? Can you remember a day when the fruit of the Spirit was more evident in your life where love and joy and peace and patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, self-control dominated your life?

[13:04] It was evidence. You just oozed the fruit of the Spirit. Do you remember a day when gratitude filled your heart, but now you find yourself just complaining?

Was there a day where you were burdened for those without Christ more than you are burdened today?

Are you burdened for the nations to hear the gospel perhaps today more than you were yesterday? Or do you remember as a child perhaps you thought of that more often than you were burdened for that?

Was there a day when you spoke more readily when the Lord what the Lord was doing in your life and you hosted conversations more frequently than you do today?

Today are your spiritual conversations pretty shallow or non-existent? Perhaps perhaps today it should be good for us to be reminded that the Lord will return.

[14:09] There is a grand entrance for those who are aware that his divine power has been granted to us all things pertaining to life and godliness and for us to be reminded oh it is our joy and our privilege to add to our faith these things these virtues by which we are affirmed and confirmed that indeed we know the Lord look at this and for those who are faithful they have this grand entrance that awaits them perhaps we need a reminder of these truths as well.

last or our third reminder we see in verse 15 so it buttresses our godliness it stirs our passions in verse 15 we see here that it will bolster our readiness and I will make every effort we read in 2nd Peter and I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things Peter is he again here is saying my departure is soon I'm about to be martyred the Lord Jesus has told me so I am ready but as long as I am in this tent in this body I want to stir this up and I'm going to make every effort I can so that in my departure you too will be able to recall these things you won't have me to remind you but it will be on your mind all the time here notice Peter's intensity

I will make every effort what have you made every effort to before in your life that is a constant effort and he says I'm going to make every effort notice his burden it's as if he says I realize we as a bunch have this functional amnesia where we just keep forgetting that the Lord's return is true and it's going to happen and there's this grand entrance that awaits those in Christ and I think perhaps that's why as a church we observe it's such a gift for us to have two ordinances the Lord's Supper and baptism I think what does the Lord's Supper do we get to remember his death we get to remind

ourselves the cost of our sin that his perfect sacrifice made payment for sin and death and he took the wrath of God on our behalf and we received his righteousness and we're grateful for his resurrection overcoming sin and death perhaps we need these reminders to functionally partake and remind us of his body that was shed and the blood of his body that was broken his blood that was shed on our behalf and then we think of baptism and we have one coming up in a few weeks but what is baptism it's a declarative a person who is baptized gets to declare

I have believed in Christ death burial and resurrection for the forgiveness of sin and they portray that in the water his death his burial his resurrection for the forgiveness of sin so we get this visual picture and a reminder of what Christ has done for us we recall we call it is our call it is our responsibility to remember so remembering the Lord's return what does it do it buttresses our godliness it stirs our passion and it bolsters our readiness then Peter moves on after he moves on in his what he's making is an argument and he's saying how certain am I because he's saying I'm going to remind you I'm going to make every effort I'm going to do this he says remember in three times in four verses he's recalling to our remembrance the Lord's return in this grand entrance into his kingdom and how certain should we take

Peter at his word and he says well I'll tell you two sources you can put your trust in and so that's what he's about to do and so let's read his first source that he's going to cite in 2 Peter verses 16 through 18 for we do not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ we were eyewitnesses of his majesty for when he received honor and glory from the Lord from God the Father and the voice was born to him by the majestic glory this is my beloved in whom I am well pleased with whom I am well pleased I'm sorry this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased verse 18 we ourselves heard this very voice born from heaven for we were with him on the holy mountain in the backdrop of this passage we need to remember an occurrence that happened in Peter's life the occurrence that happened in Peter's life we read in Matthew chapter 17 it's called the mount of transfiguration this was an unforgettable occurrence no one in this room if this were to happen to any of us would ever forget this moment imagine with me this was you but look what

[19:47] Peter's occurrence was in Matthew 17 1-8 we read this and after six days Jesus took with him Peter James and John his brother and led them to a high mountain by themselves and he was transfigured before him and his face shone like the sun and his clothing became white as light and behold there appeared to them Moses and Elijah talking with him and Peter said to Jesus Lord it is good that we are here if you wish I will make three tents here one with you and one for Moses and one for Elijah he was still speaking when behold a bright cloud overshadowed them and a voice from heaven said this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased listen to him when Peter I'm sorry when his disciples heard this they fell on his face and were terrified and Jesus came and touched them saying rise and have no fear and when he lifted their eyes they saw no one but Jesus only and so

Peter remembers this it you can't not remember an occasion like this you are led with three of the most the disciples who it seems are closest to Jesus Peter James and John they're led to this high mountain and they while up there Jesus transfigures himself he if you will they see Jesus for who he really is fully divine and they see him in that way and they are undone and Peter he thinks well let me just make three tents because he says it is good for us to be here well wouldn't you think so let's just dwell in the presence of the Lord all day and all night so let's just stay here why don't we and I'll just make some tents for you guys that's his offer that he puts on the table we would all be ecstatic to do that very same thing and I love it when it says and while he was still speaking Jesus they heard a voice Peter was still talking and and then they hear this voice this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased and and dear Peter in the person of Moses Jesus is superior to the law the law of Moses so the law is represented perhaps in Moses and Jesus is superior to the law of Moses he is also superior to all the prophets in the person of Elijah he's superior to that so when Jesus touches them and he looks up only Jesus is there he's superior to Moses and Elijah he is fully divine fully God and that occurrence marked Peter and you think what does this have to do with 2 Peter I want to read that passage one more time it says verse 16 we do not follow cleverly devised fables so what is he saying listen to his audience again he's saying listen you need to remember the Lord's return because it is oh so true how do I know let me give you two sources one is me

I am one of those sources I am one of those apostolic witnesses I've seen the resurrected Christ and I was there on the mountain you should trust me I was an eyewitness so then that's his argument that he says when we received honor verse 17 and glory when God the father and the voice was born to him by the majestic glory look what he we ourselves heard this very voice born from heaven and we speaking of James John and Peter we were with him on that holy mountain and so what does he say hey you can take it for granted that the Lord is going to return and your grand entrance into his kingdom is made available because I got a glimpse It's like I got a peek behind the curtain I saw him it's true trust me now you say Scott how do you know that that was the point of the mount of transfiguration because in the book of Matthew the very verse before we get to chapter 17 is the last verse in verse 16 and I'm going to read it to you now it says this truly there Jesus is speaking to his disciples and he says truly there is some standing here who will not taste death until they see the son of man coming in his kingdom okay there are some of you disciples standing here that won't taste death until you see the son of man me in my kingdom so then six days later he takes him to the high mountain transfigures himself so what is the mount of transfiguration for it's a peek into what the!

[24:52] is these virtues and you confirm that you are saved a grand entrance will be reserved for you in Christ when he comes in his kingdom so he's arguing why is it so important if you need a source to know that this is true take it from me I saw I got a peek behind the curtain it's real and then it's as if he knows his audience and some may say well Peter I appreciate who you are but is there a better witness is there a better source so then Peter says yes there is a second source and I would love to provide that for you as well and that's what he does in verses 19 through 21 and verse 19 through 21 reads this and when we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed to which you will do well to pay attention as a lamp shining in the 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 Peter is saying if my apostolic word and witness is not sufficient for you let me show you a truer more perfect witness and source for you and it's the word of God because he says well we'll get to that notice with me in verse 19 he says this prophetic word more fully confirmed this kind of a cumbersome language in the ESV translation but you could read it as the prophetic word made more sure so if you're looking for a more sure testimony than my own witness let me tell you another witness that is more sure than my own personal testimony that is because I am fallible the one that is infallible is the very word of

God because people were moved by God to write things down and for Peter he is speaking only of the Old Testament that is what has been written down and he says you can bank your dollars on the fact that the Lord is going to return merely and purely on the Old Testament it is the inerrant infallible all sufficient source word of God and this word is spoken of in three ways in verse 19 it says the prophetic word in verse 20 it says prophecy of scripture and then verse 21 it reads prophecy you can trust this word we don't notice with me how we should how deeply we should pay attention to these things in verse 19 it says and we have this!

prophetic word more fully confirmed to which you would do well to pay attention as a lamp shining in a dark place we today take light almost for granted I thought about this this week today I could push a button and the lights would go off in this building and but in the first century if the sun had set and it was a the moon was dark below the horizon to produce light took a lot of effort you had to tend to that source of light all the time you would have an oil lamp and you may have a wick but you would constantly be needing to fill the oil basin to always have a light you may also need to trim the wick from time to time so to produce light took constant and readied attention in order to have light it takes little attention

I just push a button in my house or flip a switch and I have light as long as I paid my bill so it requires nothing of us but back then it took a lot so now let's read this verse one more time with that concept in mind to which you would do well to pay attention as a lamp shining in the dark place putting the full verse together look what he is saying this you have this more sure perfect word of God that gives evidence to the return of Christ and you would do well to pay!

[29:55] attention! how much attention do you have to pay to it oh like you would have to pay attention to a lamp you're always going to need to return to it turn your attention to it see to it that it still remains lit it's constant until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts the

morning star is a reference the day dawns!

is his return and the morning star is the person of Jesus Christ because the morning star translated could read the light bringer rises in your hearts so at the return of the Lord he will rise in our hearts if you are this morning star this light bringer will rise in our hearts because we will see him as he is and then we are told why you can rely so deeply on scripture itself verse 20 knowing this first of all no prophecy of scripture comes from anyone's own interpretation but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit these people who authored God's word they didn't derive what they wrote just under their own thoughts they were inspired by God who moved them to write scripture next week

I've asked Pastor Jay to share with us how did we get our Bible and how can we trust God's word because this passage is a big passage on the inspiration of scripture and I want us to understand how qualitatively different this book is than any other book you'll ever read and how certain and true you could put your trust in this book that we have called the Bible God's word 66 books together so that will be next week so if you have questions about that or you know of a friend bring them next week for that message but in context I want you to see how Peter is making his argument remember the first part he's saying these things that we remember are so important we need to remember the Lord's return let me find it these things will buttress by remembering that the Lord will return! it! will buttress our godliness it will stir us up our passion for the Lord it will bolster our readiness to see him face to face and if you need two witnesses you have me I got a peek behind the curtain I was on the mountain I heard from the father this is my son in whom I'm pleased and it was a peek into the kingdom this grand entrance that is awaiting you you can take it on my word and if you need a more sure and perfect and true witness that bears to the truth and the reality of the Lord's return God's word it is more true and sure and that is the argument that Peter is making so what is there for us today I would say the very same thing that Peter is making the general argument for is the Lord will return everyone in Christendom admits that the details can be argued debated whatever but everyone agrees to that and knowing that ought to have a way of us living differently

I'll just give you a small example in my own life when I was single I would and while they were out on vacation and what's interesting is the day I knew they would return I would do things a little differently I wouldn't always run the dishwasher but on that day I wanted to make sure every dish was clean and put away I wouldn't always make sure that the dryer is empty of my clothes because I want to know when you come home from vacation they're going to want to use the laundry all the time so I need to make sure that everything is out I'm packed up I would dust I would always do that before but in clean vacuum make sure the mop the floor is mop I want to make sure their house is ready for their return I go out and get a bouquet of flowers put it on the counter so they have something beautiful to return to I just want to make sure that this family is ready they entrusted me with much their home I'm going to do this my point oh I would strip my bed of its clothing or the sheets and make the bed and all of that kind of stuff you do all those things right you know these things but here's the thing

[34:39] I behaved differently the day I knew they would return we ought to live differently knowing he could return at any moment it's true it's sure don't delay don't delay don't be lazy don't forget these things it's true and our lives ought to bear witness to that let me pray father thank you so much you are good lord I thank you that we have a certainty of your return found in your word lord I thank you that it is a more true a more sure witness than any other of any other instrument human or otherwise I thank you that it is infallible and you can be trusted lord I pray for all of us in this room that if there's areas in our life we know we should quit that relationship that it would be quit if we should overcome and not delay and if we have deceit in our heart in any way we would replace it with truth if we're complaining and riddled with worry we would allow your peace to flood our lives lord may we be diligent to just abide with you to love you all the more we thank you for this word today in your name we pray!

Amen