

Our Need to Remember

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[0 : 00] Yes, Yes, Yes Yes Yes Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

I think it right as long as I am in this body to stir you up by way of reminder, since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as the Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me.

[2 : 47] Thank you.

This is God's Word.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[7 : 03] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. to reminding you of these qualities, of these things the NIV says.

So why is it? Why is Peter concerned that his original audience be reminded about these things, though they knew them and they were established in them?

I think Peter's concern was that they might forget. And he knew that it was too important for them to forget the things that they needed to remember.

[8 : 36] This is why Peter's concerned for them. Peter's concerned for them because he realizes they can forget even what they know and even what they're established in. And what they know and what they're established in is so important.

Peter says, I am going to give. Here he is. He's staring death in the face. And he says, I'm going to give the rest of my waking days to make sure you don't forget this. But you can always recall this. Brothers and sisters, the concern that Peter had for his original audience is the same concern for us this morning. He wants us to remember.

He wants us to continue to remember the things that we have come to believe. And again, his main concern is the reality of the existence of false teachers who had arisen among the people of God.

And the primary error that these false teachers were teaching was that Christ was not going to return. That there is no return of Jesus Christ.

[9 : 45] They were spiritualizing it. But they were saying he's not literally returning. And so what we're going to see in this letter from this point on, Peter in chapter 2 is going to really describe these false teachers and help us to be able to recognize them, how they conduct themselves.

And then in chapter 3, he is going to dedicate that entire chapter to stressing the truth that Christ is going to return. Brothers and sisters, this is so important for us this morning.

It's important for us because even though you may be thinking, well, I don't have any active false teacher in my life saying Christ is not going to return. The reality is that when you even observe the landscape in the church, we live as if Christ is not going to return.

In Peter's day, there were those who were mocking and they were saying, where's the sign of his coming? He's not coming. Things are remaining just as they always were. And Peter said they were mocking.

You see, we don't mock with our mouths in that way, but we can mock with our lives when we live as if Christ is not going to return. And we're going to see how Peter is saying that if we really believe that Christ is going to return, we need to be waiting for him.

[11 : 13] That's the larger concern that Peter has in this letter about the effect of the false teachers.

Look at what he says in chapter 3, starting in verse 10. Peter writes, What sort of people are you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn.

But according to his promise, we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

And then he says in verse 14, Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish and at peace.

Peter understood that if God's people accepted the lie that Christ is not going to return, they will not live in anticipation of his return.

[13:01] What sense would it make to do what Peter says? Why would we then seek to live lives of holiness and godliness if we truly don't believe Christ is going to return? And this was the potential effect, and in some cases the effect of the false teachers teaching, that some people who bought the lie that Christ is not going to return ceased to live in anticipation of his return.

And instead of putting on restraint, they threw off restraint. Instead of seeking to supplement their faith with these qualities, it didn't matter. They just gave themselves to whatever they wanted to give themselves to.

And brothers and sisters, the effect on our lives is the same. Whether we outrightly deny the return of Christ, or we do not live actively aware of the return of Christ, it will affect how we live.

And so this is the danger that Peter's original audience faced. And it's the danger that we faced.

False teaching that denies the return of Christ will result in us not living for Christ.

And that's Peter's concern. So, why do we need to be reminded of what we already know? There are two very obvious reasons.

[14:26] In our remaining time, I want to consider them. The first is, deception is real. The first reason we need to be reminded of what we already know is, deception is real.

And the Apostle Peter knows it all too well. He knows it. And what I want you to think about is, I want you to think about yourself as an adult.

And you're talking to someone who doesn't have the experience that you have, but you can see they're deceived. You can see they don't understand something they're engaged in, and you want to do all within your power to help them to see reality for what it is.

That's kind of like where the Apostle Peter is. He recognizes the deception is real. And so, it was not good enough for him that the people knew, and were established in truth that they had.

Peter knew something else. He also knew that what we know, we can forget. Knowing something is not lasting evidence that we will always know it.

[15:47] That's part of the human condition. Part of the human condition is we forget. I'm sure that we can all identify with that.

Things we knew so well over time, if we don't keep it before us, we forget. Think about some of those math equations you used to be able to solve.

And you no longer can solve them because you have forgotten. We forget because it's part of the human condition. So, what Peter says in verse 12 is, Therefore, I intend always to remind you of these qualities.

Though you know them, and you are established in the truth that you have. And sometimes it's not totally forgetting. We don't need to totally forget something.

We can partially forget something, and that's enough for that thing to not be of any value to us. We may remember 90% of it, but the 10% that we don't remember makes that thing of no functional value in our lives.

[16:53] And then sometimes we don't really forget. We just aren't up on it as quickly as we used to be. So, if given time, we can kind of take it off the shelf of our minds, and we can figure it out and all that kind of stuff.

But that kind of truth doesn't affect our lives. It doesn't benefit us in a functional way because it's tucked away somewhere in the back of our minds. This is what Peter is aware of.

And I think we have all experienced it. Peter wants his hearers to remember that our profession of faith needs to be accompanied by virtues and qualities that are marks of genuine conversion.

The reason is because when we forget, when we forget that truth, when we forget that our lives or our profession of faith, we can't have a naked profession of faith and say, I'm a Christian, and

there's no evidence to support that.

If we forget this truth that Peter is teaching, that we need to make every effort to add to our faith these virtues, these qualities, then we are going to live absent these virtues and qualities.

[18 : 21] And the effect is, we will not have the assurance of our salvation. We will not have this abiding conviction that we belong to Christ and we have been genuinely converted. We looked last week at how, at the end of the Sermon on the Mount, when Jesus talks about those who will come on the day of judgment and they will say, Lord, Lord, did we not, did we not, did we not?

And Jesus will say, I never knew you, depart from me. We don't want to be living with a false assurance of faith.

When it comes to remembering the things we have been taught, the things of the faith that we have been taught, it's especially important in light of the reality of false teachers.

So here are the two concerns that would be in front of Peter. The first is our tendency to forget. But added to that, the presence of false teachers who will take advantage of our tendency to forget.

So these are the two reasons that are underlying Peter's conviction that he needs to remind us, that he needs to use the rest of his days, that he knew he would be on this earth, to remind us that we don't forget these things because we do forget.

[19 : 43] And that false teachers are present to take advantage of our forgetfulness, to tell us lies.

Look at what he says in the whole of that first section in verses 12 through 15. He says, Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have.

I think it right as long as I am in this body to 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.

And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things. I want to ask this morning, how aware are you of your need to be reminded of the truth that you already know?

Are you aware that you need to be reminded of the truth that you really know? Are you mindful of the reality of deception and how we are in danger of being deceived when we forget the truth that we know?

[21 : 06] And how aware are you of the different ways available to us to be reminded of the truth that we already know?

So that we can hear those truths again and again and again. And are you availing yourself of them? For example, are you spending personal time in God's Word recognizing that as you do that, as you do that, what you're doing is you're reminding yourself of what you know.

Are you memorizing it? Are you meditating upon God's Word? you place a priority on times like this when we gather in God's house, when we sit under the preaching of God's Word and sometimes we're hearing the same thing again and again and again and again.

And part of the human condition is sinfulness in us could cause us to want to hear new things. when the reality is that our faith is an old thing.

It's an old story. It's not a new story. It's not rooted in the present and in what is modern. It is rooted in the past and what is ancient.

[22 : 35] And part of the strategy of false teachers is to offer what is new, offer what is novel because it appeals to the sinful condition of our heart where we don't want to stay within the boundaries that God has given to us and that which is tried and proven and that which has been delivered to us by the saints.

Those who have gone before and we have itching ears and we want to drift into other things and explore new ideas. And so we come together on mornings like this and we hear the old story repeated again whether we're singing it in songs or whether it's coming forth in God's word.

And brothers and sisters, it is for our good that we are reminded of the again. It is for our good that we are told what we know again and again and again because we will forget though we think I don't need to hear that because I already know it.

No, we need to hear it because we will forget it. and then the reality is that false teachers are all around.

And so we need to place priority on the means that God has given to us to hear again and again the truth that we have personal devotion in times like this that David rightly highlighted our Discipleship Foundation class.

[24 : 06] another opportunity to hear again that pounding of the truth that we already know.

Hear groups another opportunity for us to hear the truth. And one area I want to mention this morning that we tend to minimize is the area of fellowship, the area of biblical fellowship. You see, our relationship with one another is based on our relationship with Jesus Christ.

and because our relationship with one another is based on our relationship with Christ, our relationship with Christ should affect how we meet together.

Our conversation, our interaction and it should strengthen us, it should encourage us. We should walk away from conversations being reminded I'm not alone in this journey.

We should walk away from conversations being strengthened. and sometimes it may just be it may not be anything explicit that one may say about that. You know, keep on, continue to serve the Lord.

[25 : 12] It may not be that, but just the fact that you talk to this brother, this sister who shares the same values, you walk away and in your heart you know I'm not alone in serving the Lord.

Biblical fellowship has a way of reminding us and strengthening us in the truth that we are ready to know. And brothers and sisters, see this concern for us needs to be our concern for ourselves.

We demonstrate wisdom when we come to the place where we say you know what, I need to hear again what I know. I need to hear it again and again.

Do I know it? I need to hear it because otherwise I will drift. Otherwise I will forget. And otherwise I will be open to deception.

And any person who believes that he or she is exempt from deception is already vulnerable to deception. that kind of bravado, that kind of exemption that you give yourself just makes you vulnerable to deception because one of the things that tends to happen when we don't respect something, we play it closer than we should.

[26 : 35] When we respect things, we keep our distance and we recognize our neediness, we recognize our dependency until we stay close to the God and we do the things that he says we need to do so that we can remember and so that we're not led astray.

So that's the first reason that we need to remember the truth that we have. Deception is real. The second reason is this.

the prophecy is true. The prophecy is true. This is essentially what Peter is saying in verses 16 through 21.

Specifically he says the prophecy you've received about Christ's return is true. It's true.

Now coupled with that, there were false teachers who were undermining that so Peter recognized they needed to be reminded of that truth that is true.

[27 : 46] They needed to be established in that prophecy about Christ's return. And first he says, look at how Peter makes the overall argument.

He's arguing and saying to them, this prophecy about Christ's return is true. and let's look at how he makes his case for that. In verse 16, he says that he and the other apostles were eyewitnesses and therefore he says, when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus, we didn't follow cleverly devised myths.

In other words, it was not a once upon a time story. It was not a fable. Peter says, we told you that which we knew. And see, I want you to think about the setting of all of it.

Here's a man who was going to die. And there's a great possibility that he knew how he was going to die. And we're told that the way he did die was he was executed upside down.

So here's a man who was so convinced and so persuaded about this faith that he believes that he's given himself for in his life and now he's willing to die for it.

[29 : 20] And he's saying to his charis, he's saying, listen, we didn't tell you some cleverly devised fable, some myth. Because we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

We were eyewitnesses of his majesty. And here, Peter's not talking so much about the whole life of Christ. He makes it very clear that he's talking about this moment in the life of Christ where they saw his majestic glory, where he was transfigured before their very eyes.

And where they heard God himself speak and affirm Jesus as his beloved son. My students who have done BJC and BGCSC, you should remember the account of the transfiguration, how Jesus became translucent.

And how before the others were Moses and Elijah and Jesus and Peter wanted to build tents. And a crowd came over them.

When the crowd lifted, there was only Jesus standing. Peter is saying, we saw his majestic glory. Now, why does Peter, in making the case for the truth of the prophecy of Christ's return, why does he talk about the transfiguration?

[30 : 59] why does he start there? In defending the prophecy of Christ's return against the false teaching of the false teachers.

Because his point is that the same way that the majesty and the glory of Jesus was seen in the transfiguration, it will be seen when he comes again in power and glory.

Evidently, what Peter had done in the other apostles, when they talked about the coming of Jesus, here they're talking about this one who walked on the earth just like everybody else.

And they're saying he is going to come back in majesty and power. And one could say, come on, that doesn't make sense. He was just like one of us.

And Peter says, no, no, no. We saw his majestic glory. and his majestic transfiguration foreshadows his coming in glory.

[32 : 08] Listen to how past and theology professor Tom Schreiner insightfully answers that question about why Peter appeals to the transfiguration to make the case for the return of Christ.

This is what he writes. The transfiguration seems at first glance to be a strange event to verify the truth of Christ's future coming.

We should note, however, that in all three of the synoptic gospels, the synoptic gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, we should note that in all three of the synoptic gospels, the transfiguration immediately follows the declaration that God's kingdom will come in power.

And there are the references for the three transfiguration accounts in the gospels. trident then goes on to say this, the transfiguration then is a manifestation of the coming of the kingdom.

Peter recalled the event because it anticipates Christ's glory when he returns. Amazing connection.

[33 : 36] And one, we can't begin to fathom what those three disciples saw on that mountain.

When Peter was trying to confuse Moses and Elijah with Jesus, God had them to be removed from their sight and there remained only Jesus in resplendent majesty and glory that is indescribable that Jesus told them not to say anything about.

Peter says that's a foreshadow. He's sentries what he's making the case. We think that is a foreshadow of the glory and power in which he is going to come.

In essence, he's saying to his ears, don't think it's strange that this one who walked among us as Jesus of Nazareth cannot come back in that kind of majestic power and glory that he told you he will come back with.

We have already seen the foreshadowing of that on the Mount of Transfiguration. He's saying to them. But Peter goes further.

He goes further to give them evidence as to why they must believe the prophecy of Christ's return. Look at what he says in verses 19 and 20.

[34 : 58] He writes, And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will 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.

Now when Peter refers to the prophetic word in verse 19, and prophecy of scripture in verse 20, he's referring to Old Testament prophecies that prophesies the coming day of judgment, the coming day of the Lord.

And if you are halfway familiar with the Old Testament, you will read these many prophecies of the day of the Lord, the day of judgment, the day of salvation, the day of judgment, filled in the Old Testament.

And so when Peter makes these two references, that's what he's talking about. The prophetic word in verse 19 and prophecy of scripture in verse 20.

He's referring collectively to this, we call it judgment day, the day that God will return to judge the living and the dead.

[36 : 20] God's verse 20. Now, let me try to elaborate on what Peter is saying in these two verses.

And I want to read verbatim as I try to wrap my mind around it to grasp what Peter was saying in these two verses. I want to read verbatim the way I thought about it.

Here's what Peter is saying. He's saying we, the apostles who saw Christ's majesty and glory and amount of transfiguration have the Old Testament prophecy of the Old Testament prophecy of the

day of judgment and salvation.

we have it more fully confirmed through Christ's transfiguration. He's saying that these prophecies of the Old Testament, they have been more fully confirmed by the transfiguration of Jesus Christ where they saw his majestic glory.

They saw his affirmation by God the Father. This is my son in whom I am well pleased. Peter is saying that event of the transfiguration more fully confirmed and assured these Old Testament prophecies.

[37 : 51] And then he says this. He says, so you would do well to pay attention to it because our interpretation that Christ's transfiguration more fully confirms his future coming and power and glory to judge the world will function for you like a lamp shining in a dark place until the day when the awaited light, the greater light, the morning star, who is Christ himself, shall appear.

And the lesser light of the lamp of the prophecy of Christ's coming will be lost in the greater and more glorious light of his actual coming in the fulfillment of that prophecy.

That's the thought that Peter is communicating to these people in the church who were at risk of forgetting, at risk of buying into the lie of the false teachers that Christ is not going to return.

Peter is saying to them, listen, the prophecies of the Old Testament, prophesying the day of the Lord, prophesying the coming of the Lord in judgment, he says, it's been more fully confirmed by Christ's transfiguration.

He says, and so, and here's what's happening, here's what's happening, and you see this in scripture, in New Testament scripture we see this a good bit. In the New Testament, sometimes we see the apostles interpreting Old Testament scripture.

[39 : 30] in a way that is to function for God's people in the New Testament. God anointed them to do that, enabled them to do that, so they would cast light on particular scriptures to give us an understanding of it.

And that is what is happening here. They are linking the transfiguration of Jesus Christ to these prophecies in the Old Testament about the coming of the Lord and the day of judgment.

Peter says this, it is not stated as a warning, but it is a subtle warning in a sense, when he says to them, you would do well to pay attention to it.

You would do well to pay attention to it. Why? He says, because it functions like a lamp shining in a dark place until the day when the awaited light, that greater light, the morning star, who is Christ himself, shall appear, and the lesser light of the lamp of the prophecy of Christ's coming will be lost in the greater and more glorious light of his actual coming in fulfillment of the prophecy.

prophecy. That's what Peter is saying to them. We would do well, as well, to pay attention to this confirmed word of prophecy about the return of Jesus Christ.

[41 : 14] It's almost as if, though we have these prophecies of Christ's return, of the end of the world, of the judgment of God, the day of salvation in the Old Testament, and the kindness of God, through the transfiguration, through this interpretation of the apostles, we have this more confirmed.

Peter says, it's more surely confirmed. And he says, you could hold on to this interpretation of it and let it function for you as a light in a dark place and hold on to it until the day, the dawning of that day, when the morning star, and this is reference to the morning star as Christ himself, that the morning star would arise and then that prophecy would have been of his return.

would have been those days. Some theologians believe that this reference to the morning star is a reference to a verse of Scripture in Numbers 24, verse 17.

And it is interesting in the sense that it is part of one of Balaam's prophecies. Balaam had been hired by Balak to curse the children of God, the children of Israel and God put a word in his mouth to bless them.

And in verse 17, it says, Balaam says this, Balaam says, I see him. He's prophesying. He says, I see him, but not now.

[42 : 58] I behold him, but not near. A star shall come out of Jacob and a scepter shall rise out of Israel.

It will crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheol. This is prophetic language. Prophetic language. He's seeing in the distance in history.

This star, as it were, certainly a person coming out of the lineage of Jacob. The scepter referring to authority and kingdom and kingship.

And then he talks about this person crushing his enemies, dealing with the enemies of the people of God. That's all prophetic language.

But that's not all that Peter says to remind his hearers that the prophecy of Christ's return is true. In verse 20, after urging his hearers to hold on to the confirmation of the prophetic word as a lamp shining in a dark place, Peter points out the error of the false teachers.

[44 : 14] He points out why they were in error. They were not holding to the prophecy of scripture. They were treating it as personal preference. And part of the reason I think they may have been doing that is a lot of the Old Testament you have dreams and you have visions that people had and experiences that people had.

And just sinfulness in us, we can say, well, that's just their dreams and that's just their visions and that's just their experiences. But those dreams and visions and experiences are recorded in scripture.

And you have heard people do this today. I've heard people say things like, oh, that's Paul. Paul had a thing against women. He didn't like women. So he said women couldn't teach.

That's just Paul. And evidently, the false teachers had this very selective approach to scripture where they did not embrace scripture as being inspired by God.

But in verses 20 and 21, Peter makes the case for the divine inspiration of scripture. And when he was referring to scripture at this point, remember scripture would have only been the Old Testament scripture.

[45 : 35] It wouldn't have been the New Testament yet, which was just being written at that point. So when they were talking about scripture, you'd have been talking about the Old Testament scripture. And Peter is making the case for the divine inspiration of scripture.

He tells us that no part of scripture was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God. Notice how he says that in verse 21. For no prophecy, was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God.

They weren't speaking from themselves. They're not speaking their own ideas. Men spoke from God. So the way we need to think about scripture is this way.

Scripture has two authors. Scripture has a human author and a divine author. The accent is on the divine author because the human authors speak from God.

[46 : 54] And further, we are told that they spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

And the picture here is one of a sailboat needing wind to move it. And if there's no wind, the sailboat doesn't move.

You realize that? That a sailboat, and I sound like someone who knows love of the waters. I don't. I just know this. Without the wind, a sailboat, it doesn't matter how big the sails are, how good the sails are, if there is no wind, that boat doesn't move.

And the whole idea was not only were they speaking from God, they were being carried along by the Holy Spirit. They didn't carry themselves along.

The Spirit moved, moved upon them. And so what we have is we have in Scripture, we have this multiplicity of authors, human authors, but there's the one divine author.

[48 : 08] And this multiplicity of authors were all moved upon in the same way by the Holy Spirit, who carried them along. God spoke to them, and they spoke on behalf of God in the writing of Scripture.

And this was the problem with the false teachers. The false teachers did not view Scripture as from God, and so they became very selective in terms of what they accepted. And so a legitimate question for us to consider this morning is, what is your view of Scripture?

How do you view Scripture? Do you view Scripture in a selective manner where you pick and choose where you believe this and you don't believe that? do you believe that it is the Word of God?

It has come to us through men, but from God. They speak from God to us, and they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

brothers and sisters, our belief that the Word of God is indeed the Word of God, cannot be rooted in our understanding.

[49 : 30] And here's why. We are finite in, and we don't understand it. So if you take the view when you approach God's Word that you will only believe what you understand, then you will probably

