

We Were With Him on the Holy Mountain

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Date: 10 January 2016

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[0 : 00] Let's turn again for a little to the chapter we read in 2 Peter. And I want us to just look at this last section here.

We've looked at some of this earlier on at the Wednesday meeting, and then we looked at verse 10 there not so long ago. Verses 10 and 11, so really from verse 12.

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 is right as long as I am in this body to stir you up by way of reminder and so on.

Peter had a great sense of the Lord's calling and the Lord's burden that had been put upon his heart to strengthen his brothers and sisters in the Lord.

It was one of the things that the Lord Jesus had said to him. Jesus said to him, if you remember, Peter, when you are converted, strengthen your brothers.

[1 : 13] Now, when the Lord said, when you are converted, he didn't mean in the sense that we often use the word converted when somebody comes to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We talk about, we ask, when were you converted? Or did you hear that so-and-so has been converted? Somebody has become a Christian. And while that is absolutely true, what is spoken of here is where Peter was converted, where he was turned round again, where he was restored, where he was brought back.

And this is part of what is so amazing, is that the Lord Jesus knew all about Peter. And he knew what Peter was going to do.

He knew that Peter was going to fail him desperately. He knew that Peter was going to make a public denial of him with oaths and with curses. And yet, Jesus is saying to Peter, before that happens, part of your ministry is to be strengthening your brothers.

And I often think how different that is to the way that we operate. Because if supposing there was somebody amongst us, one of our brothers, who we saw, it was with oaths and curses, denying, ever knowing the Lord Jesus, we would write that person off.

[2 : 47] And very likely we would say, well, that's that person finished. They have no more place. And even if they got place back, we would say, well, who's going to listen to them?

But you notice how different the Lord is. He is so amazingly gracious. And the Lord knows that our fall and our failure is not the end.

He is in the work of restoring. And it's a lesson the church has to learn. And of course, it is by way of repentance, because we read about how Peter, of course, was so graciously restored by the Lord. And we read about that in John chapter 21. So Peter was aware of this part of his ministry, which was strengthening his brothers, strengthening the church.

And so Peter is coming to the end of his life. He's aware of that. And one of the things that Peter is desperate to have his readers and the churches aware of is to focus upon the things that he's told them.

[4 : 00] Because you'll notice verses 12, 13, and 15, that Peter says the same things, that he's wanting to remind them, to stir up within them.

See, in verse 12, therefore I intend always to remind you. Verse 13, to stir up by way of reminder. In verse 15, and I will make every effort so that after my departure, you may be able at any time to recall these things.

Now, Peter isn't thinking that these are wayward Christians, or that they're Christians who've lost their way, or that there's things glaringly wrong with them.

In fact, it's the very opposite. He knows that they're good folk, and he knows that they're already established in the truth. He says that in verse 12, therefore I intend always to remind you of these

qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth.

I think this is something that's very, very important for us to understand. Just as in teaching, so in the ministry, it is important to reinforce, to go over and over and over things again.

[5 : 17] Because we can know things, we can hear things, we can accept things, but they have never become part of our lives. They kind of, they go into our ear, but they don't go into our heart.

They don't affect us. There are loads and loads of gospel truths, and aspects of the teachings and scripture, that we could repeat, that we could tell to people.

But they've never become an essential part of our own lives. And we may be aware of that. And that is why it is so important, that we come under the same truth, over and over and over again.

In everyday teaching, it's part of teaching, is to reinforce things that we've already learned. And it's the same in the work of the ministry, the same in the work of teaching, under the word at whatever level, is reinforcing.

You know yourself, there are times, things that you've already heard, things you already know, and yet you've heard it again, and you said, you know, I've said it, I needed to hear that.

[6 : 28] It wasn't something new, something you had heard over and over again. But you needed to hear it again on that particular day. It was something the Lord is saying, I've got to remind you of this.

Things are not right with you. And you know this, but I'm having to tell you again and again. And that's one of the things, and that's what Peter is doing here.

He says to them, I know you know all these things. I know that you're being established in these things. But I still want to stir you up in remembrance of them.

You see, it's great when we discover new truths, or we discover a new angle to the truth, or we see something we hadn't seen before. We love that. But we can never put that aside, and say, or think, I must always be getting something new.

Let us always delight. This is part of the beauty of God's Word, is that old things, things that we're familiar with, are still new. They're new every morning.

[7 : 35] You see, it's just like food. This is one of the things about God's Word. It's food. And we may eat the same things every day, but we need, yesterday's food doesn't do us for today. We have to eat again each day.

And so it is with the Word of God. So this is what Peter is talking about here. And then Peter, of course, he's saying to them that his own times, that he's coming to die.

That's what he tells us in verses 14 and 15. Since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon. You know, there's a wonderful composure about Peter.

Here's this man, and you can just see the grace that's in him. You know, when you read Peter's letters, they're kind of very different to the Peter that we're used to in the Gospels.

The man of fire, the man who's always running around, the man who always acted before he thought. He spoke before he, he seemed to be one of these people that there was very little filter between his brain and his mouth.

[8 : 41] You know, just, he was out with it. And he did it, often without really thinking. Well, there seems to be just this kind of, he's much quieter, he's mature, there's a composure about him.

And here he is, he's facing death, he's going to be executed. And he knew that, he knew that, remember how Jesus had told him, that it's when he would be old that he would get the martyr's crown.

And it's very interesting, you remember when Herod took Peter and put him in prison, he had killed James with a sword, and he was going to do the same to Peter.

And the night before his impending execution, we find that Peter was sleeping like a baby, just sound asleep. And he was so deep in sleep that when the angel came to release him, he had to shake Peter awake.

And you might say to yourself, how was Peter sleeping so soundly when he was going to be taken out the next morning to be executed? Well, we believe that Peter was sleeping on the promise of Jesus.

[9 : 49] Because Jesus had said to him, Peter, when you are old, and Peter knew that this was a promise and a prophecy, and he knew, knew Jesus, and he knew that whatever, however dark the situation looked, however clear it appeared that he was going to be executed, he knew he wasn't then.

And so Peter went to sleep, sound asleep, and of course he was delivered. But he knows now, he's an old man, and he knows now that the time is coming. And it's interesting that the word that Peter uses, he uses two words about his death.

He uses it, the putting off of my body, which is very, which shows us very clearly that death does not end our life.

It ends our physical life, but it doesn't end our life. It is just the body that is being put off. And in verse 15, he talks about his death by way of departure.

And I will make every effort so that after my departure, now notice, it's depart, I'm departing, I am leaving. When we talk about departure, we talk about going from one place to another.

[11:10] I'm departing from here to wherever. Well, that's exactly what Peter is saying. That's what I'm doing. Death, yes, but it's putting off of my body.

It's a departure. I am going out from here. It's not the end. People talk about death as the end. Death is not the end. People talk about grave, the finality of the grave.

Even the grave is not the end. Because the graves will all open. The Bible makes that absolutely clear. And it's quite interesting that Peter, when he talks about this, I will make, excuse me, this going out, this departure.

Because in verse 11, see what he says, for in this way there will be richly provided for you, an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

So Peter is contrasting here the going out and the going in. Two things happen at death. There is a going out of the body and there is a going in to the kingdom.

[12:26] In one sense, we come into the kingdom the moment we're born again. But here is this amazing transition that will take place where we will come out of the body, where the body will be left there.

And that's why there is that awful stillness in death. And death is such an awful thing. But as we say, it's not the end. There is a departure, there is a going out of and the going into.

And this word that Peter uses here, this departure, this going out of, he then develops that with regard to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because Peter then goes on to talk about the transfiguration, which we read there in Luke chapter 6. Because Jesus, remember on the mountain when we read that, and the most amazing thing happened with regard to the Lord Jesus.

Where he changed. It wasn't that his body became some other body. But this incredible thing happened to him.

[13:39] Where the glory, this amazing sort of transcendent glory overtook him and filled him so that he shone brighter, dazzling with the glory that really is God's glory.

And the transfiguration was something that Peter would never forget because he was a witness to it. And it tells us there that it was when Jesus began to pray that this occurred.

You know, we can never be in the presence of the Lord without something of the Lord coming in us and upon us. You cannot be long in the presence of God without it being evident.

Remember when Moses went up into the mountain to get, to be with the Lord, to get the table of the Lord. He was 40 days and 40 nights up. And you know, when he came back, Moses didn't realize it. But his face was shining. It was too bright. The Israelites couldn't look on Moses. He had to get a veil to put on his face. Now, Moses wasn't aware when he came down that his face was radiant, that it was shining.

[14:58] But having spent so much time in the presence of the Lord, something of the glory of the Lord became evident in Moses' life and became even a physical thing.

And it's true for ourselves as well that the more time that you spend with the Lord in the presence of the Lord, that more of something of the Lord will impact your life, where you will resemble more and more the Lord Jesus.

Remember Stephen when they were going to stone him. And Stephen, who had witnessed to the Lord and had lived in the presence of the Lord, it tells us this.

Stephen, before he was stone, tells us he was full of the Holy Spirit and says this, all that sat in the council looked steadfastly on him and they saw his face as if it had been the face of an angel.

But here we have the Lord Jesus on the mount and as we say this incredible glory. And then two characters appeared with him on the mountain and that was Moses and Elijah.

[16:17] Very significant. Moses who represented the law and Elijah who represented the prophets. Moses who was a lawgiver, Elijah who was a law restorer.

And they spoke to the Lord Jesus about his exodus, about his departure. Same word, the Greek is exodus. It is the going out.

That's what they spoke to Jesus about. You know, there's a lot of conversations in the Bible I would love to have been part of. I would love to have been able to listen into. Well, this is one. I would love to have been able to listen to that conversation between Moses and Elijah and Jesus.

But they spoke about his departure. And remember that all that Moses and Elijah signified and typified about the law and the prophets is all about Jesus.

The whole Old Testament really is pointing to Jesus. I know when you go through the whole sacrificial law and all the sacrifices and all the rituals, a lot of it seems so heavy and difficult.

[17:27] But you know, every little strand you can dissect it and you can see something of Jesus in it. Because it was all pointing to him. And so, what was it pointing to?

Was it his life? No, it was his death. It was his sacrifice for sin. His going out, his final work, his supreme work. And this is what they were talking about.

It must have been a wonderful, wonderful conversation. And then Peter says, you know, we were there. We were, we were actually there.

And so there was this, and Peter, Peter not only saw, but Peter heard. Because the Father spoke from heaven.

And he said, this is my beloved son. You know, when Jesus, at his baptism, the Father acknowledged the son. This is my beloved son.

[18:25] Hear him. In this moment where the glow, where Jesus shone with all the heavenly glory, the Father again acknowledged, this is my beloved son.

Hear him. But there came a time when heaven was silent. The supreme moment of the son's work in this world.

You would think the Father would speak then from heaven and say, this is my beloved son. But no, there wasn't a solitary word. Because Jesus was there plunged into the darkness.

And I do not know because it is not, we cannot enter into the heart of God. But how the Father was at that moment, as he looked upon his son, and as he dealt with his son, the one thing we can see is the Father and son's love to us.

their commitment to us. You know, it's beyond words. It's beyond any understanding. When you think of that moment there, of the son suffering beyond anything, experiencing all the pains of hell, and the Father looking down upon him, and the Father punishing him, then you say to yourself, what love?

[19:53] Because that was for me. It was for you. And so, Peter was somebody who had been so privileged to be on the mountain. Now, just before we move from that, just one thing to say.

You know, people say, will we know one another in heaven? And I would say 100%. Because here's two men who have gone.

One never died. Elijah was carried. But Moses died. Nobody knows where he was buried. The Lord buried him. But here are two people who have left the scene of time hundreds and hundreds of years before.

And here they are, they're walking and talking in this world. And Peter, James, and John recognized them. They knew this was Moses and Elijah.

How? I don't know. But what I do know is that it would have been revealed to them by the Spirit of God. And I believe that if Moses and Elijah are recognized here by Peter, James, and John, who are sinners, how much more when we are in a world of absolute perfection where there is no hint or stain of sin, but that where the revelation will be full and complete, of course we're going to know one another.

[21:10] And it's in this world that our togetherness enhances our fellowship in the gospel. You and I, when we look back over our Christian lives, a lot of our development, a lot of our coming to know the Lord has been in fellowship with other believers.

And it's a reflection, I believe, of what part of glory itself will be, we will know one another. I'm persuaded of it. That's by the way. But then, Peter, as he says, look, he says, I was an eyewitness to this.

I saw myself. I not only saw, I heard the voice of God, but he said, I'm going to tell you something. You can take my word for it.

I was there. I saw the transfigured Jesus. I beheld the glory. I heard the voice of the glory. You can take my word for it, but I'm going to tell you there's an even surer word.

And you know what that surer word is? God's word. That's what Peter is saying. He goes on to highlight that very thing for us. In verse 19, he says, and we have something more sure, even more sure than what I'm telling you as a witness.

[22 : 25] We have something more sure, the prophetic word, which you will do well to pay attention as a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your heart.

Into this dark world. Remember, God made this world beautiful, and he made a beautiful garden that was full of light. Sin came in, and that garden turned into a dark wilderness.

And so it has remained. And the only light that shines into it is the light of this word. The word is a lamp. That's what we sang about, that the word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

And Jesus is saying, this is it. This is your moral compass. This is your way of salvation. There is no other way to go in this world but by the word, by the light.

It is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him. And then Peter goes on. Sorry. And he talks about the morning star rising in your heart until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your heart.

[23 : 45] The morning star, just before the dawn comes into its fullness. There you see that star shining bright. There it is. And it's kind of almost like saying, here's the day, it's just coming.

You know, if we have the Lord Jesus Christ within our heart, we know we have him. And it is a, it's a signal, it's a, sort of an assurance that the fullness of the light that has begun to shine in us is going to go on shining and shining ever brighter until we're brought in to his glorious presence forever and ever.

And we see here that the Holy Scripture tells us in verse 20, knowing this, first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.

We don't make this up. You know, some people have strange ideas about the Bible. The Bible, it's very clear to us how it has come about. because we read this, 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.

Just in the same way as a sailing boat is carried along by the wind. That's how the Holy Spirit carried along and brought this truth to bear.

[25 : 11] This is God's Word. and it's timeless. It's unchanging like the Lord himself. You know, we live in a world that's obsessed with change.

Everything changes. I suppose that's part of the success of fashion because a lot of people will say, you know, it's amazing. Everything just goes round and round. Everything. If you live, people say, if you live long enough, same thing will come back round in a different way.

That's part of its success. That's why people make money but they're always having to change. You have to change. You have to change. You have to change. Why? I don't know. But this is part of the obsession of it.

And we've got to be careful because we live in a world that's obsessed with changing everything.

Well, we don't have to change everything. We have to change some things. But it's ridiculous this obsession with changing everything.

And we have to be careful that we don't have to start thinking about it with regard to the Word because there are people who are trying to change God's Word. You cannot. God says, this is my Word.

[26 : 15] It is unchanging. I am unchanging. He's unchanging in his being in every aspect of his being. And his Word is unchanging. And the last thing I would say here is that knowing this, first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.

Now, some people think misguidedly that we're not to have private study of God's Word and bring it out. That's not what it's saying. You know, the beautiful thing about God's Word is it interprets itself. That's one of the things that over the years that, and particularly as a young Christian, there was many, and it's, I don't understand everything in God's Word. I believe it all, but that doesn't mean I understand everything.

But you know, one of the wonderful things is that as time goes on, you'll read something and you'll say, you know this, now I see it. Scripture shines light on Scripture.

It's got a wonderful way of bringing it all together. As we conclude, I've got to ask this question because Peter keeps talking here about his life, his departure, his entrance into glory, our entrance, and Peter's really saying, it's not long.

[27 : 39] I don't have long. You don't have long. The Lord is coming back. This letter, as if I hadn't intended working like this, who knows what, but if we went through this, it's one of the things that Peter is so aware of is the return of the Lord.

And he's talking about the kind of the end days and it's going to be full of mockers and scoffers, people laughing at such a thing as the return of the Lord. He said, it's going to come all of a sudden. I want to ask you this question because I think it'll kind of tell you where you are. If the Lord were to return today, would that fill you with dread or would it fill you with joy?

Would you be saying as they say in Revelation, even so come Lord Jesus. Or would you be calling on the rocks and the hills as it says in Revelation to cover you, to hide you from the wrath of the Lamb.

Because that will explain to you very clearly where you stand. Because if you're able to say, Lord, wow, it'd be amazing if you came today. I would love that.

[28 : 49] Or are you here saying, oh no, I'm not ready for that. If you're not ready, then ask the Lord Jesus today to make you ready. Let us pray.

Oh Lord, oh God, we pray that you will indeed bless us and we give thanks for your word that it is the only rule given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy you.

We pray to guide us and keep us and bless the cup of tea and coffee in the hall after. And we pray that your peace may be in our hearts, that you will take us to our home safely and forgive us, Lord, our every sin.

In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen. Amen. Our concluding singing is from Psalm 16 from Sing Psalms. Psalm 16 and the tune is Golden Hill. And we're going to sing the last four verses from verse 8 to the end.

[30 : 00] Before me constantly I set the Lord alone because he is at my right hand I'll not be overthrown. Therefore my heart is glad my tongue with joy will sing my body too will rest secure in hope unwavering.

For you will not allow my soul and death to stay nor will you leave your Holy One to see the tombs decay. Psalm 16 from verse 8 to the end.

Golden Hill. Amen. Before me constantly I set the Lord alone because he is at my right hand I'll not be overthrown.

Therefore my heart is glad my tongue with joy will sing my body too my body too will rest secure in hope unwavering.

for you will not allow my soul and death to stay your soul and death to stay or will you leave your Holy One to see the tombs decay your heart made your heart made known to me the path of life divine will shine will shine my love and you right hand joy from you peace will shine

[32 : 41] Now may the grace and mercy and peace of God the Father Son and Holy Spirit rest and abide upon each one of you now and forevermore. Amen. Amen.