

(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 the 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.

(16) For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with Whom I am well pleased," we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with Him on the holy mountain.

(19) 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. 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.

Think on these things:

- 1) Verse 12 builds on last week's study. Looking at verses 5-8, what were the qualities of the Christian life that Peter felt compelled to share with the Christian community? Again, when these life qualities are increasingly manifest in our walk with God, how do they help Christians?

The qualities of Christian living we are to add to our faith include: virtue (goodness); knowledge (of the Bible AND of God, intimately); self-control (personal yes/no choices); steadfastness (faithful reliability); godliness (God-likeness); brotherly affection (care for others in our church fellowships); and love (humble, selfless service). Developing these qualities increases our fruitfulness for God and results in a rich entrance into His Kingdom.

- 2) In v.12, Peter says it doesn't bother him to remind Christians of these things. What are some basic, but important, Christian truths that it's always good to remind one another of --- even though most Christians know them?

Personal responses that may include, "read your Bible", "go to church every week", "have faith", "pray regularly", "Jesus saves", "Jesus loves you", "cast all your cares upon Him", "God is with us to the very end", "God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted above what you are able to bear", "God can be trusted", "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble", "you can never out-give God", "God is still on the throne", "salvation is by faith", etc....

- 3) If you were on your death bed, what important things would you want to say to your family and the people who are closest to you?

VERY personal question. Look for honesty instead of glib answers. As life is passing, what are the truths we want to share with our loved ones...? (Not usually about money or work.)

- 4) Read Matthew 17:1-8. What event is reported here, and who were the “eyewitnesses” (v.16). What did Matthew record was their reaction to being with Jesus at this time?

This is the Transfiguration event for Jesus, witnessed by Peter, James and John. Jesus talked with Moses & Elijah, shining like the sun, and God the Father enveloped everyone in a bright cloud and spoke. The three disciples fell to the ground on their faces, terrified (Mt. 17:5-6).

- 5) Now let’s discuss a very important objection people have to the Bible. From verses 16 and 20-21, “who” is the author of the Bible? Consider that there are 66 books in the Protestant Bible.

The author of the entire Bible is the Holy Spirit, conveying God’s message through various prophets across the centuries. The prophets wrote God’s messages to them in their own literary styles as uneducated people or scholars. They didn’t “invent” clever stories to tell....

- 6) What objections can you list that people share in rejecting the Bible? **For example: It’s a book of fables and myths, not true events. There are many inconsistencies and contradictions. It can’t be proven. The stories are too impossible to believe. It wasn’t copied down correctly, but changed by the copiers --- accidentally or purposefully --- over all the years of time.**

- 7) From v.16, what did some people come to believe about the story of Jesus? (...that Peter refutes by saying, “No, I am an eyewitness that He was real, and I spent years with Him!”)

Some people came to the conclusion that the story of Jesus was a cleverly devised myth.

- 8) What is the role of men in biblical prophecy (vs. 20-21)?

Recording prophecy --- God’s forthtelling of a message --- was a sacred duty. It had to be exactly accurate. They did not “add” to God’s message but conveyed it explicitly.

- 9) What is Peter’s answer to, “Men just made this stuff up.”

V.16, we were “eyewitnesses” of Jesus’ majesty. We saw this on the mountain and we heard God the Father’s declaration about Jesus as His Son. You would do well to pay attention!

- 10) There is a caution, warning, about men (including preachers and teachers) who make up things and say, “This is what God says!” Read Deuteronomy 18:18-22. How can we know if God is speaking to us or a man is speaking on his own? Consider Revelation 22:18-19 and James 3:1.

If what a prophet says in the “Name of the Lord” doesn’t come to pass, the prophet has spoken wrongly and should not be listened to or followed (v.22). Revelation 22:18-19 warns people not to add or subtract from God’s prophecy or they will experience dire consequences. James 3:1 warns believers to be careful about becoming Christian teachers because God will hold them to a higher accountability for their many words.

People and situations I want to pray for this week: