

Peter is reminding his readers of the authenticity of the gospel of Jesus Christ, pointing out that he and the other apostles were eyewitnesses of Christ's glory as testified by God the Father Himself. Even more reliable than the eyewitness testimony of the apostles, he says, is the testimony of the scriptures.

In vs. 12-14 Peter tells his readers that he doesn't want to be negligent by not reminding them of the things he's discussing in this epistle because he's anticipating that he will die soon. Even though they already know these things he wants to remind them of these truths because they are too important to forget. For that reason he wants to use what time he has left to remind them again of these truths for once he's dead he will no longer be able to do so.

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<sup>15</sup> Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance.

Peter considers these truths (particularly the warning against false prophets) so important that he wants to make sure that even after his death they will be able to read this letter and again be reminded of them. His desire to remind them also benefits us today since his letter has been included in the Bible so that we can read it as a permanent reminder of these truths.

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<sup>16</sup> For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

**“For we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ”** - The story of Jesus Christ rising from the dead and His imminent return was not a narrative crafted after the pattern of the stories from Greek mythology depicting the acts of the gods. Nor is the story of Jesus Christ a clever but fictional narrative designed to deceive people into following the apostles. It was not a story passed along from person to person until the apostles heard it and decided to use it to gain followers.

**“but were eyewitnesses of his majesty [greatness; magnificence]”** - Instead they were giving testimony to things that they witnessed firsthand. They knew that Jesus Christ was the Son of God, not solely because they had formed an opinion after hearing His teaching and seeing Him perform miracles. There had been great teachers and prophets before, even some that had performed miracles (such as Elijah and Elisha). However, what compelled Peter and the other apostles to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth was that they had personally witnessed His greatness and magnificence. Peter gives us an example of when they saw Christ's majesty.

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<sup>17</sup> For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. <sup>18</sup> And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

**“For he received from God the Father honour and glory”** - Peter refers to what they witnessed at the Transfiguration, during which they caught a preview of Christ's glory that will be fully revealed when He returns to establish His kingdom. Christ received honor and glory directly from His Father.

**“when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”** - Oddly enough, Peter doesn't mention (at least specifically) the glory being manifested when Jesus' face and clothes shone like the sun or during the appearance of Moses and Elijah in glory. Instead he mentions the voice from heaven whereby the Father identifies Jesus as being His own beloved Son and that He was well pleased with Him. This testimony from the Father is how Peter says the Father gave honor and glory to Christ.

**“And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount”** - Peter again stresses the point that he and the others were not told about the voice later on but that they heard it firsthand while they were with Jesus on the mountain. Peter and the other apostles knew exactly what they were talking about.

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<sup>19</sup> We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

**“We have also a more sure [stable; firm] word of prophecy”** - Even better than the experience that Peter and the other apostles had on the mount, they also had the scriptures which predicted Christ's coming, power and majesty. Their experience merely confirmed what the scriptures already said, for any experience that does not agree with scripture is suspect or else misunderstood. We should always judge our experience by the word of God and never judge the word of God by our experience. Peter here is establishing the superiority of scripture over experience.

**“whereunto ye do well that ye take heed”** - It is better to listen to the word of God and its instruction rather than allow our experience to supersede what the Bible says. Satan is in the business of deception and will give us an experience to lead us away from the word of God if possible. Paul warns us in 2 Cor. 11:14 that Satan can disguise himself to appear as if he were from God: *“And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.”* Satan can give us an experience that seems real but if it contradicts scripture then we must reject it.

**“as unto a light that shineth in a dark place”** - We should look to scripture just as we would to a light shining in the dark, illuminating our way. This world is a dark place and we need the illumination of God's word to guide us in the way of truth.

**“until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts”** - Peter is using picturesque language to describe the return of Jesus Christ. We need to hold onto the word of God until Christ, the light of the world, returns and illuminates this world with His glory.

**John 1:4, 5, 9** *“<sup>4</sup> In him was life; and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. ... <sup>9</sup> That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”*

<sup>20</sup> Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. <sup>21</sup> For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

**“Knowing this first”** - Peter is about to state a fact about scripture that should take first place in our minds when reading it. This fact takes priority over our opinion, desires, or experience.

**“that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation [untying; loosening; unraveling]”** - The word for “interpretation” refers to the unraveling of truth, not to our interpretation of scripture. The fact that Peter wants us to always remember about scripture is that when the prophets wrote their prophecies, they were not writing their own private opinions of what the truth was or what should be written. Although God allowed their personalities to be reflected in their words, what was said was not the product of the writer’s imagination or intellect.

**“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man”** - The prophets (and other OT writers) did not write what they wanted to write, nor did they preach what they or any other human being wanted them to preach.

**“but holy men of God spake as they were moved [carried along] by the Holy Ghost”** - The source of the scriptures was the Spirit of God influencing men of God to speak (or to write) what God wanted them to say. Critics try to say that the Bible was written by men and contradicts itself because it is the work of about 40 men over the course of some 1,500 years. However, Peter is telling us that the scriptures are a work of God, Who used men to write what He wanted written.

**Heb. 1:1-2** <sup>1</sup> God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, <sup>2</sup> Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;”

**2 Tim. 3:16-17** <sup>16</sup> All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: <sup>17</sup> That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

Peter is establishing the reliability of the scriptures because he is about to warn them in the next chapter about false prophets who would be the exact opposite of the men that God used to write the scriptures. These false prophets speak their own ideas (or the ideas of other men) rather than the words of God. Their goals are self-serving rather than to benefit others.