

**TITLE:** AM I IN THE RIGHT PLACE? AUTHENTIC RELIGION; CONFIDENCE; THE PLACE TO BE

**TEXT:** 2 PETER 1:12-21

**THESIS:** To encourage the church to grow in faith, considering this is the true

**INTRO:** Have you ever put a lot of effort into a particular work/goal, then questioned the real benefit of the effort - if maybe you wasted your time? Do you ever have even the smallest doubts about Christianity? Maybe you've had a similar question as John the baptist in **Mt 11:3** "*Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?*"  
\*In 2 Pet 1:1-11, Peter gave the qualities Christians should strive for, *guaranteeing* the success of the mission if these goals were met. He could make this guarantee because of the authenticity of the mission. He proves this in v. 12-21, giving 3 evidences: the OT prophecies, his own eyewitness accounts, & *their* own faith.

### **I. THE IMPORTANCE OF REMEMBERING (v. 12-15):**

- A. (v. 12) Peter acknowledges their knowledge of the faith & of those virtues (v. 5-7) in which Christians must continually increase.
  - 1. "Though you know them and be established (stable, firmly set) in the truth"
  - 2. He says they still need to be reminded of these things...**and so do we!**
- B. (v. 13-15) As long as I'm alive, I think it's right to stir you up (arouse the mind, wake up, agitate) by reminding you of the things you already know.  
Peter anticipates his death, having been given info about it in advance by Christ (**John 21:18**). His concern however is for the brethren, that they won't forget their mission after he's gone. This is the emotion of every good preacher, teacher, evangelist, etc.

### **II. THE ASSURANCE OF AN EYEWITNESS (v. 16-18):**

- A. Peter references being an eyewitness of the transfiguration (**Mt 17**).
- B. (v. 16) WE SAW! We didn't just follow cunningly (skillfully, deceitfully) devised fables (myths, fiction).
  - 1. Pagan religions did (& still do) this very thing. There is no evidence for their gods & their religion. It's all based on fabrications & myths. Atheists accuse Christians of this today ("no evidence for your beliefs!"). But our faith *is* based on *evidence* (there is no such thing as *blind* faith). Christianity & the Bible don't need these lies. Science, history, archaeology, etc. all support and harmonize with the Bible's writings.
  - 2. And Peter says, "I SAW IT...! I know that He came. I witnessed His power! I witnessed His suffering (1 Pet 5:1)."
- C. (v. 17-18) WE HEARD! I *heard* the voice of God say "this is my son in whom I am well pleased!" Peter's saying, "Have you made the right decision to follow Christ? Are you in the right place? **You better believe it!**"
  - 1. **1 Peter 5:14** – "I have written briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand."
  - 2. **1 Jn 1:1-2** – "*That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, & our hands have handled, of the Word of life; for the life was manifested, & we have seen it, & bear witness*"
- D. God the Father Himself gave Christ honor & glory by **visually & audibly** choosing Christ over Moses (law) & Elijah (prophets)!
- E. This is the assurance of an eyewitness who was an apostle, who could perform miracles to confirm his words!

### **III. THE SURETY OF THE WORD (v. 19-21):**

- A. And, what Peter witnessed in Christ confirmed the prophets.
- B. (v. 19) And we have a more sure (confirmed, established) prophetic word.
  - 1. The prophecies of Christ are even more sure, more confirmed, more established now, because of their fulfillment by Jesus.
  - 2. You do well to take heed (pay attention) to them. They tell of this Jesus we follow, a light shining in a dark place...
- C. (v. 20-21) Further verification of the OT prophecies – they were from God!
  - 1. (v. 20) *No prophecy of scripture is of any private ("one's own") interpretation* (origination).
    - a. This is about the source of scripture, not about each person today having his own personal interpretation (of course, the Scriptures are not subject to each person's private interpretation. God is not a respecter of persons.)
    - b. The writers were carried along by the Holy Spirit. This is affirmation of verbal inspiration.
  - 2. In the context, this is referring to the OT. But since the NT is also "scripture" (**2 Pet 3:16**), this truth applies to it as well.
  - 3. (v. 21) "*For...*" - Here he explains what he means in v. 20.
    - a. Prophecy didn't come from (source) the will (determination, desire) of man.  
So many today claim that the Bible is:
      - All from men (the world's biggest hoax)
      - Partially from men (if so, which parts are from men & which are from God?)
      - All from God, but only the thought or idea – the writers were allowed to write it however they wanted (this allows them to pick and choose what they want)
    - b. These holy men of God spoke (& wrote) as they were moved (carried; taken from point A to B) by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit took them where He wanted them to be (i.e., what they said and wrote came directly from God)!

**CONCLUSION:** Peter is trying to encourage these brethren that, regardless of what issues they face in or out of the church, nothing should cause them to doubt that Jesus was the promised Messiah. They could be sure that He was the Christ (based on the apostles' eyewitness testimonies and the OT prophecies He fulfilled), and that Christianity is the real deal – the only ticket to Heaven. These were sufficient reasons for Peter to "put them always in remembrance of these things." There's danger in forgetting. Do not forget the reason for your decision to be a Christian – the authenticity of this religion!