



diligently waiting

Pay Attention to God's Word

2 Peter 1:16-21

Main Point: Trust in what God said rather than new things that people say.

The New Testament comes from eyewitness accounts of Jesus (16-18).

- *The Apostles were eyewitnesses of the honor and glory of Jesus (16).*
- *They saw with their eyes and heard with their ears the truth about Jesus (17-18).*

As Peter shifted from the introduction to the purpose of his letter, he started by reminding the believers of the reliability and authority of apostolic testimony about Jesus. Peter and the other apostles didn't come to these early believers with some well-crafted stories that were made up to capture the imagination and pull on heartstrings. They didn't share things that were myths and never actually happened. They came to the believers with their testimony about the very things that they themselves had witnessed! Peter, James, and John were on the mountain with Jesus when he was transfigured right before their eyes. They saw a glimpse of the honor and glory of Jesus revealed, and they saw Moses and Elijah standing with the Lord. They heard with their own ears the voice of the Father speaking from heaven, declaring that Jesus was his beloved Son. The apostles' authority came from their eyewitness status. The veracity of their testimony came from the consistency of their witness in what they saw and heard about Jesus. Peter's point was that in the face of those teaching something new and different, the believers needed to consider the source. They needed to trust the testimony from eyewitness accounts of Jesus.

1. What is a myth? What are some common myths that are still popular today? How are myths often cleverly devised?
2. Why is the story of Jesus considered testimony and not a myth? What's the evidence that Jesus isn't a myth? How would you share the historicity of the New Testament with someone who is seeking and asking questions?
3. Do you know someone who believes in myths? How can you pray for them? How can you share your testimony with them as a witness of Jesus? Will you?

Pay attention to Scripture because it is the word of God and not of men (19-21).

- *Jesus' first coming confirmed much Old Testament prophecy (19).*
- *Pay attention to the prophecy of Christ's second coming (19)!*
- *Scripture's meaning is only found in the meaning that God himself intended (20-21).*

Peter then set the stage for the real issue connected to his letter and to false teaching connected to Jesus. These early believers needed to pay attention to the Scriptures. For one reason, the prophecies in Scripture at that time were more fulfilled than during the time of the Old Testament. All of the Scriptures related to the first coming of the Messiah were fulfilled. Every prophecy that pointed to the redemptive work of the Messiah in his death and

resurrection was accomplished. The faith of New Testament believers is grounded in the evidence of so much history and eyewitness testimony about the risen Jesus Christ. Peter reminded the believers of all the prophecy that was fulfilled in order to encourage the believers to continue to pay attention to the prophecy of Scripture that was yet to be fulfilled. The Scriptures are the light in the darkness of this world until the return of Jesus Christ, who is the true and bright morning star that all will see! Peter also wanted the believers to understand that the Scriptures couldn't be twisted and turned for anyone and everyone's interpretation. No prophecy – from Old Testament to New – came from the will of man, “but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet. 1:21). In other words, the Scriptures aren't open for man's own interpretation. What the Scriptures mean isn't a moving target that people can modify and adjust as the times and their needs change. The Scriptures are the very words of God, as men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit! This means that God has spoken. What he said he meant, and since God doesn't change, what he meant he still means. Peter himself, carried along by the Holy Spirit in these very words, was speaking from God! These verses aren't from Peter's will, but they are from the Lord. These verses don't find their meaning in Peter's own interpretation, but in the Lord's intended meaning in what he said. So pay attention to the Scriptures!

1. What's meant by “we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed” (2 Pet. 1:19)? How is the prophetic word of Scripture even further confirmed today?
2. Use www.blueletterbible.org to study the word that's translated “pay attention” in the ESV. What is the Lord calling believers to do when it comes to the Scriptures? Are you paying attention to God's Word? How do we do this?
3. What's meant by “until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your heart” in verse 19? Using www.blueletterbible.org, do a word study on “morning star” in the Bible. Who is this connected to in Scripture? Who is it connected to in this verse? Why?
4. How do verses 20-21 impact your view of Scripture? How do these verses influence the way you think about interpreting Scripture? What's more important: What the text means to someone, or what God means in the text? How do we study God's Word to get to the meaning that God intended in the text?