Remembering God's Word

Printed Text · 2 Peter 1:12-19

Aim for Change

By the end of this lesson, we will ANALYZE the importance of consistently remembering and reinforcing God's word, APPRECIATE the steadfastness and faithfulness of God's word, and RESOLVE to share our personal experiences of God's faithfulness with others.

In Focus

"I love listening to Tommy Cash, he always has a good word," Breana said one day to her mentor, Selena.

"When was the last time you actually went to a church in person, Breana?" asked Selena thoughtfully.

"Oh, I don't know. But I just signed up for the angelic prophetic yoga class through Tommy Cash Ministries. It was only a few hundred dollars for 2 sessions!"

Selena was shocked. "Breana, don't you think you should get back around some other believers who can help support you and a pastor that can actually know you?"

"Why would I do that when I can master unlocking the spirit of dominion and money activation within me through Cash Ministries?" Breana replied.

"Breana, I don't think that's in line with what the Bible teaches. See this is why we need to be part of a church, a real community of faith where people can help us stay accountable. Following Jesus is about serving God and loving people, not just learning spiritual prosperity techniques."

"You know that reminds me of that mission trip we took to Uganda. Those believers didn't have a lot of money and had suffered a lot. But they were powerful and loving witnesses for Christ. Maybe you're right."

Why is it important to have a community of believers to help us stay true to our faith?

Keep In Mind

"Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth" (2 Peter 1:12, KJV).

Words You Should Know

A. Remember (2 Peter 1:12) hypomimnēskō (Gk.)—call attention to, warn, remind
B. Fable (2 Peter 1:16) mythos (Gk.)—a true or false story, word

Say It Correctly

Potentate. **PO**-ten-tate
Aegean. uh-**GEE**-an
Gnostic. **NOSS**-tic

KJV 2 PETER 1:12–19

12 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.

13 Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;

14 Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

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

16 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.

17 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.

18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

19 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:

NLT 2 PETER 1:12–19

12 Therefore, I will always remind you about these things—even though you already know them and are standing firm in the truth you have been taught.

13 And it is only right that I should keep on reminding you as long as I live.

14 For our Lord Jesus Christ has shown me that I must soon leave this earthly life,

15 so I will work hard to make sure you always remember these things after I am gone.

16 For we were not making up clever stories when we told you about the powerful coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We saw his majestic splendor with our own eyes

17 when he received honor and glory from God the Father. The voice from the majestic glory of God said to him, “This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy.”

18 We ourselves heard that voice from heaven when we were with him on the holy mountain.

19 Because of that experience, we have even greater confidence in the message proclaimed by the prophets. You must pay close attention to what they wrote, for their words are like a lamp shining in a dark place—until the Day dawns, and Christ the Morning Star shines in your hearts.

The People, Places, and Times

Called and Chosen. The Apostle Peter wrote that those hearing his letter should work hard to show they were among God's called and chosen. This has become an important Christian doctrine for those in Reformed Christian communities. To be called and chosen was to acknowledge that the Church, or called out ones, had responded to God's call to be followers of Jesus Christ and represent redeemed humanity. Peter says disciples should work to make sure that how we live reflects our relationship with God as His holy people redeemed from sin.

Background

2 Peter is written by the Apostle Peter most likely toward the end of his life while he is in prison in Rome. He has been a faithful leader in the early Church for years since Jesus died and resurrected. As a result he had experienced multiple times in jail, being run out of cities, being subject to violence, hatred, and abandonment.

Peter was well aware of suffering for His faith and sharing God's truth. His goal was to remain faithful to Jesus Christ until the end of his life. He writes this letter to encourage believers to continue maturing in the faith, resisting sin and false teachings, and to always be prepared for Christ's return. Peter shares virtues that mark our spiritual growth as we grow in faith and knowledge of Jesus Christ. If we continue to grow in Christ, we will be useful for His ministry in the world. But if we do not remember to grow, we are like people who forget they have received Salvation at all. He also assures disciples of Jesus that they will receive God's promises of eternal life in God's Kingdom if they remain faithful.

At-A-Glance

1. Call to Remember Christ (2 Peter 1:12–13)
2. Call to Remember Peter (vv. 14–15)
3. Call to Remember Revelation (vv. 16–19)

In Depth

1. Call to Remember Christ (2 Peter 1:12–13)

Verse 12 opens with a conjunction, "Wherefore," connecting the content in verse 12 to the previous verse. Peter says, "I will not be negligent." In other words, Peter says he will not ignore the mandate before him to put them "in remembrance of these things." This verse does not specify what "these things" are, but these can be found in verses 5-7 ("goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, and mutual affection) and are necessary for the believer to live a fruitful life in Christ. Peter continues that the believers "know" these things. Therefore, it is not a new revelation.

Verse 13 continues with the phrase "I think it is meet" to show that Peter is convinced that it is necessary to remind the people of the qualities of a believer. He says, "As long as I am in this tabernacle"—"tabernacle" here refers to Peter's body. The phrase "as long as I am in" indicates that Peter intends to keep reminding the people of the tenants of faith while he is in the land of the living.

Have you ever found yourself doing something wrong, although you know better? Why do we sometimes do the opposite of what we know is right?

2. Call to Remember Peter (2 Peter 1:14–15)

The phrase "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle" in verse 14 refers to Peter's life's end, and that it is soon to come. This knowledge has come to Peter because the "Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed" it to him. Since this comes from the Lord, Peter knows that his death is a certainty, since Jesus Christ cannot lie. When Jesus asked, "Who do men say I am?" Peter confessed that Jesus is the Messiah, and Jesus told him that this revelation was not from Peter's mind but from God, His Father. (Matthew 16:17). The pronouncement of one's death is also not unusual. Hezekiah was told that he would die but asked for more time (Isaiah 38:1). God told Moses that he would die (Deuteronomy 31:14). God famously judged the firstborn of Egypt, killing them on the Passover night (Exodus 12:12). Peter continues to say that he wants the people to remember these words even after "my decease"—this further emphasizes the importance and timelessness of his letter.

Have you ever received wisdom from someone who was close to death? What was that wisdom?

3. Call to Remember Revelation (2 Peter 1:16–19)

Verse 16 records that Peter and his fellow believers did not follow "cunningly devised fables"—the fables likely referred to Gnosticism teaching, which refuted the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and emphasized the value of knowledge. Instead, they are eyewitnesses—individuals who can personally testify to their experiences. Peter also points to the divinity of Christ when referring to the "power," "coming of our Lord Jesus Christ," and "majesty." In verse 17, Peter states, "There came such a voice to him from the excellent glory." The "excellent glory" is God. Peter heard God Himself testify about who Christ is. The Father proclaims that Jesus is "my beloved Son," confirming that Jesus comes from Him and "I am well pleased." The Father's declaration confirms God's pleasure and affirmation of Jesus Christ. This verse recalls Mathew 3:16- 17 after Jesus' baptism, and God speaks from heaven concerning His pleasure with Jesus. Verse 18 repeats, "this voice which came from heaven," emphasizing that Peter is giving an eyewitness account.

Peter even specified his location, saying they were on the "holy mount." Verse 19 declares that this is a "sure word of prophecy" and that "ye do well that ye take heed." The emphasis on "sure word" and "take heed" draws attention to the fact that these words they are being reminded of are not vain, empty words but commands to be followed—even after the death of Peter. Peter then repeats phrases that emphasize light and day, "unto a light that shineth in a dark place," "the day dawn," and "the day star arise." The references to light would have caught the attention of those who believed in Gnosticism. Gnostics believe that the Creator God is flawed. But Peter refers to the perfect Jesus, the light that triumphs over a dark place.

Why is it important to believe in the testimony of Jesus Christ and not in fables or made up stories about Him?

Search the Scriptures

1. What does Peter mean when he says he will leave this earthly tabernacle?
2. What did Peter witness that gives him confidence in Christ's return?

Discuss the Meaning

1. How are disciples of Jesus called to live in ways today that prepare them for eternal life with Christ?
2. Do you take time to consider what legacy you want to leave when you are gone from the earth? Why or why not?

Liberating Lesson
We are living in a time when it feels like the world is chaotic. There are false teachings, fake news, deception, and distractions constantly targeted to us thanks to the abuse of AI. There are also real people's lives being impacted by hatred, division, abuse, and violence across the country and around the world. How can we hold onto the reminder that we are promised eternity with God while also seeking to show God's love and justice in the world today? Take some time to pray and gather with other believers to consider ways to encourage and support each other in being faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ in an unfaithful world.

Application for Activation
Many of us have experiences with God that help to ground us and motivate us to grow and remain steadfast in our faith. Peter was able to see the transfiguration of Christ in person and hear God's voice from heaven which kept him stable in his faith during times of persecution and uncertainty. While we may not have experiences that dramatic, it is important for us to remember times God has revealed Himself to us in ways that keep us encouraged. Take some time to pray and journal about one of those moments for you when you had a revelation of God that helps you stay faithful in times of difficulty.

Follow the Spirit
What God wants me to do:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Remember Your Thoughts
Special insights I have learned:

_____
_____
_____
_____

More Light on the Text

2 Peter 1:12–19, KJV
12 Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.

In verse 12, the Greek word for "remembrance" is **hoop-om-im-nace'-ko**, which communicates the idea of bringing something to mind to know and act on what is known. It is the same word used in Luke 22:61 when Peter remembers that the Lord said he would deny him three times before the cock crowed. It occurs in John 14:26 to describe the role of the Holy Spirit in bringing remembrance of the teachings of Jesus Christ, and in 2 Timothy 2:14, Paul commands Timothy to remind the believers of what they were taught. The word "know" in the phrase "though ye know" is from the Greek word i'-do and can communicate the idea of understanding. Consequently, the believers already know the virtues of their faith, which differ from the tenets of Gnosticism.

13 Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; 14 Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

In verse 13, the word tabernacle is from the Greek word skynoma, **skay'-no-mah** and can also be understood as "one's earthly body." This word is rarely used in the New Testament, occurring only three times. The English phrase "to stir up" is *diegiro,* **dee-eg-i'-ro**, which is the same word used in 2 Timothy 1:6 when Paul tells Timothy to "stir up" the gift of God. Peter intends to continually motivate the people to respond to live as believers in Christ. Verse 14 repeats the use of "tabernacle," but here Peter is not referring to him being "in" the body and so living, but points to a time when he has to "take off " (Greek apothesis**, ap-oth'-es-is**) the body and therefore die.

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

In verse 15, Peter once again refers to his death, but this time not with metaphors of putting on and taking off a tabernacle but by referring to his death as an exodus Greek **ex'-od-os,** which can be translated as "departure," and points to his transition from the earthly to the heavenly realm.

16 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.

The Greek word for "fables" is **moo'-thos** and communicates an untrue or false narrative. This is where we get our English word "myth." Peter tells the community of believers that they have not followed a false narrative but are "eyewitnesses." The Greek word epotes **ep-op'- tace**, for "eyewitness" is in the New Testament just this once.

17 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. 18 And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. 19 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:

The Greek word for light is luknos, **lookh'- nos**. This word is used about a candle that provides light to darkness (Lk 8:16). The eye is called the light of the body (Lk 11:34), and Jesus is called the Light (John 5:35). The Greek word for "day star" is phosphoros, f**oce-for'-os** occurs only once and possibly points to the illumination that comes to the believer from their obedience to Jesus Christ.

Daily Bible Readings

MONDAY
Confirming One’s Calling and Election
2 Peter 1:3-11

TUESDAY
Eyewitnesses of Christ’s Majesty on the Holy Mountain
2 Peter 1:16–18

WEDNESDAY
The Totally Reliable Prophetic Message
2 Peter 1:19-21

THURSDAY
God's Word as a Lamp to our Feet
Psalm 119:105–112

FRIDAY
The Account of the Transfiguration
Luke 9:28–36

SATURDAY
Continuing in the Sacred Writings
2 Timothy 3:14–17

SUNDAY
Prophecy of Scripture
2 Peter 1:12–19