

The Transfiguration of our Lord
“Eyewitnesses of His majesty”

2 Peter 1:16

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Rev. Ed Weber

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, our text for the Transfiguration of our Lord is from
our Epistle reading, 1 Peter 1:16.

“For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.”

So far the text:

Who is the “we” of whom Peter speaks? Himself, James and John who were direct eyewitnesses of the majesty of Jesus when He was transfigured on the mountain top.

“17 For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” 18 And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.”

They heard. They saw the glory of Jesus – true man and also divine God. They saw His face shine like the sun and His clothes as white as light. They heard the Father’s voice tell them that Jesus was His beloved Son and that He was well pleased in Him who lived the perfect life of fulfilling the law on our behalf...not leaving out one jot or tittle...and well pleased in Him who was obedient to the will of His Father to come down from the mountain and go up to Jerusalem to His death on the cross for the sins of the world.

Peter, now much older, recounts this mountain top experience for the Christians in the diaspora of Asia minor, modern day Turkey. He most likely is writing from prison in Rome, telling the believers that his time is short and that he is going to put off his earthly tent soon in martyrdom.

“13 Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, 14 knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ

showed me. 15 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.” So Peter says in the opening verses of his 2nd letter.

Of course, Peter does not fear death and neither should any Christian. Peter, who cowered on the mountain top with James and John at the majesty of Jesus and the booming voice of the Father in a cloud, was quickly reassured by Jesus not to be afraid when Jesus touched him. And Peter has the prophetic word confirmed that Jesus is the Christ by His death and resurrection.

This word of God broadens the eyewitnesses of the majesty of Jesus. For Peter uses the word “we” to include all believers who by the power of the Holy Spirit, have seen Jesus with eyes of faith and believed in Him.

Peter is including you and me in the “we” , in the “us” of those who have the mountain top experience of knowing Jesus as one’s Lord and Savior.

“To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, 3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue...

We have the precious faith, the precious promises that make us partakers of the divine nature. Yes, God lives in us and assures us that we have escaped the corruption that is in this world. There is no reason to fear death, Peter reminds them. For all believers will join the company of saints in heaven with Moses and Elijah.

For this reason Peter makes it a point to remind the Christians that though they were not physically on the mountain top to view the transfiguration of Jesus, they have the sure Word of God, that is not compromised or altered.

God's word is not man-made fables, but divinely inspired by God the Holy Spirit Himself.

“19 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; 20 knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, 21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

There is no private interpretation of God's word, but only one true literal intended sense of God's Word. And that one intended sense is the light of the Gospel that shines in the darkness of our sin. It is the Morning Star, Jesus, rising in your hearts as you hear His gracious promises of salvation won by Jesus and your freedom from sin death and the devil.

It is your mountain top experience that you live daily as a believer in Jesus. It is your eyewitness of His mercy and grace to you in your baptism and in the receiving of His very body and blood.

This is love – God's love for you. For God is love. He is the source of love and graciously gives us His love to show to one another.

“7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”

Valentines day may be over and the ½ off sales can be found, but God's love never ends. John and Peter remind us that as we wait for our entrance into heaven, there is much love to give to one another – His sacrificial, agape, servant love.

That's how Peter begins his epistle. **“Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ,”**

And then he tells us, who are part of the “we” of the eyewitness of Jesus through faith in Him:

“5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.”

These things of the Spirit, His many spiritual gifts are yours to live and abound in as eyewitnesses of His Majesty! Amen

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)