

Introduction:

- A. *Illus.*: I'm giving a final exam in my class at TEDS in two weeks. I tell my class everything that is on the exam, and nothing more. **Remember** those things and it is a sure A.

This week I saw a story about a professor at Anne Arundel Community College in Maryland who teaches freshman accounting. He teaches those young accountants to sweat the details. For their exam he told them they could bring a 3x5 card with anything they wanted on it to the test. Elijah Bowen listened very closely. Double-checked the syllabus for the details. Then he brought a 3-foot-by-5-foot index card. He didn't want to forget anything. The prof checked his syllabus, too. Sure enough, he never specified 3x5 inches so he let Elijah use his card. No report yet on his grade. <https://www.today.com/news/college-student-s-giant-cheat-sheet-allowed-professor-t116623>



- B. Of course, the real test for my students will be later when they're counseling someone for real or for Elijah when he is trying to balance someone's books. Will they **remember** then?
- C. Turn to 2 Peter 1. In the first 11 verses of this chapter the Apostle Peter has summarized what he rightly calls our precious faith. He said in **v.3** that Christ's *divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life, through our knowledge of Christ and his very great and precious promises*. Then he told us, beginning in **v.5**, "*For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith*" virtues that grow out of faith like flowers in a garden. Without those our faith is *ineffective and unproductive*. **Vv.10-11...**

So there it is. Got it? Can you **remember** that? All that will be on the test. I mean it. You *will* be tested.

Peter's first 11 verses are a quick recap of our faith. Now listen to what Peter writes in **vv.12-15... What's the key idea there?**

Illus.: A friend of mine, Dr. Jeff Arthurs, wrote a paper for preachers a few years ago entitled, "The Lord's Remembrancers." He got that phrase from a 17th century British Bishop, Lancelot Andrewes. Jeff wrote, "*The office of The King's (or Queen's) Remembrancer is the oldest judicial position in continual existence in Great Britain, having been created in 1154 by Henry II. Today it is a ceremonial role, but for centuries the officer's role was to put the Lord Treasurer and the Barons of the Court in remembrance of pending business, taxes paid and unpaid, and other things that pertained to the benefit of the Crown.*"

I. GOD ENTRUSTS HIS GOSPEL TRUTH TO REMEMBRANCERS

- A. Remembering the gospel basics was such a pressing concern for Peter because the believers were being swayed by false teachers and theological liberals, who were undercutting the doctrine they'd been taught. He's going to devote the next two chapters to counter-attacking those teachers. Did you know that we face that threat as well?
- B. Notice in v.12 that all believers need reminders: "*So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have.*" Well, if you know them and are firmly established in them, why do you have to be reminded? **There is a kind of spiritual friction in life that erodes our inward hold on gospel basics.** We don't forget these things like we forget what bicameral government is. We forget the way someone forgets promises they've made, or the way a kid with his friends forgets who he is and what he values. **So we need fresh reminders not merely to refresh our memories but to refresh our faith.** Reminders like Miracle-Gro for faith.

Illus.: Right after we moved to our church in Pennsylvania there was an evangelistic crusade in our community. An evangelist introduces unbelievers to the basics of the Christian faith so I expected to get a little restless during the sermon. But hearing “*the old, old story*” refreshed me and gave me a joy. I *needed* the message of the evangelist not for salvation but for the reminder!

- C. We need reminders because our faith is diluted and dissipated by the world around us and by fuzzy or false teaching. As your pastor, I don’t worry too much about you getting caught up in a cult. But I am concerned that some of you are more familiar with Joel Osteen than you are the Bible. I’m very concerned for our young people. I’m not sure that you have a *love* for Jesus, or that you know and own the essential truths of our faith. I’m afraid you will be bowled over in college.
- D. Listening to remembrancers takes teachability and humility. Sometimes when I’m reading the Bible I feel like skipping over a part because I already know what it says. Same with a sermon I’m listening to, or a book I’m reading. *Oh, I’ve heard this lots of times. It takes a certain humility to welcome reminders of familiar things.* (Every husband knows that.) Always welcome God’s reminders. Like military drills. Over and over. Like treasured stories of our homeland. Over and over.

Illus.: In C. S. Lewis’s *The Silver Chair*. Aslan, the great Christlike lion, meets the headstrong Jill on a high cliff, far above Narnia. He says,

“... remember, remember, remember the signs. Say them to yourself when you wake in the morning and when you lie down at night, and when you wake in the middle of the night. And whatever strange things may happen to

you, let nothing turn your mind from following the signs. And secondly, I give you a warning. Here on the mountain I have spoken to you clearly: I will not often do so down in Narnia. Here on the mountain, the air is clear and your mind is clear; as you drop down into Narnia, the air will thicken. Take great care that it does not confuse your mind. ... Remember the signs and believe the signs. Nothing else matters.”

One of the things the false teachers were challenging was Jesus’ second coming. They didn’t believe it. Chap. 3 says they scoffed at the very idea. *Where is he? We’ve been waiting and... no Jesus! Life has never worked that way. No one ever comes back! Jesus was great but this ‘coming again’ stuff is a very clever fable and you should have the good sense to forget it.*

It is very hard to prove that something is *going* to happen. How can you prove Christ will return? Listen to Peter in **vv.16-18**. He’s referring to Jesus’ transfiguration. ...

Paul said that without the resurrection our faith is useless. Peter uses that same approach, but about Christ’s second coming in power. *“You can’t give up this ground!”* Peter says, *“If Jesus isn’t coming back in the flesh why persevere? But I have eyewitness proof.”*

II. ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IS COMING AGAIN IN POWER (1:16-18)

- A. Peter’s argument here is that he was given an eyewitness preview of Christ’s majesty, leaving no doubt whatsoever that the glorious Christ he saw then will most certainly come again.
- B. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all give very similar accounts of Jesus’ transfiguration. Mark’s is probably the closest to the way Peter himself told the story, but Luke gives us a little

more detail, so let's turn to **Luke 9**. To grasp the full significance of what happened we need to start before the actual transfiguration. **9:18, 20b, 22, 23, 26...** Four great truths: 1) Jesus is God's Messiah. 2) He is going to be killed and rise again. 3) His followers must deny themselves and take up their crosses to follow him. 4) He will come again in astonishing glory.

Now this strange statement in v.27... The very first Bible question I ever asked a pastor was, "What does that mean?" The answer is in what happens next. Q & A.

Vv.28-29.... Who did not taste death before seeing the kingdom of God? Peter, James and John. This story of Jesus' transfiguration is also the story of three eyewitnesses getting a preview of the kingdom of God, all against the backdrop of Christ's death and resurrection, and the self-denial and cross-bearing of his disciples.

Look again at Christ in this picture in v.29, "*the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning.*" Matthew says, "*his face shone like the sun.*" Could you try to imagine that for a moment? Look! This light isn't *from* the sun or lightning shining on him. It is *from* Jesus. What they saw was *glory*—actual glory—and they had trouble thinking of anything that compared to it. Peter calls it *majesty*, using a Greek word that means something like **mega-worship-worthy**. It would never apply to any human being; only to deity.

Vv.30-33... Peter doesn't mention Moses and Elijah in his letter but did you notice that they, too, appear in *glorious splendor*. These citizens of God's kingdom did not look like ordinary humans because they were now adorned in kingdom glory, as we shall be one day. Notice that they talked with Jesus about his **departure**. The word used is

exodus. Moses, who lead Israel's *exodus* from Egypt and Elijah, whose own *exodus* was deathless, being taken from this world in a chariot of fire. Jesus' *exodus* would leave slavery and death behind, ascending into heaven in a cloud.

Vv.34-36... This was no ordinary cloud. No mist particles. No fog. This cloud was heavy with the glory of God. The *shekinah*, the dwelling or presence of God. It was like this when God's presence met Moses on Mt. Sinai, and when God's glory filled the newly built temple with such glory that the priests were driven out of the building. This cloud that enveloped them carried the palpable sense of God the Father's presence. In his letter Peter doesn't even call it a cloud. **He calls it "the Majestic Glory." The mega-worship-worthy glory.** Being afraid was the only sensible response!

Then the voice of God the Father, as near as that cloud all around them, a voice such as they had never heard before. According to 2 Peter God the Father said, "*This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.*" The Son of God, beloved by God, completely satisfying all God asked of him. Never minimize the Lord Jesus Christ!

Every Christmas we marvel at the miracle of the incarnation, God become man in the form of a baby, but this is sort of the opposite. Instead of God taking on flesh, it is man taking on the glory of divinity. This is what Jesus Christ is really like *now*. He will come back, "*in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels,*" at the trumpet call of God, gathering his people into the air, our King establishing the Kingdom of God. Lk 9:26

- C. Now back to 2 Pet. 1. Remember, according to **v.16**, Peter's real focus is the *second* coming of Christ in power, "*but we were eyewitness of his majesty.*" *We have seen the*

future! Then after his brief recounting of the experience he says again in v.18, “We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.”

The false teachers menacing the church were saying that the apostles like Peter made up cleverly-devised fables. Here you can almost sense the old fisherman pounding the table, his eyes flashing, his voice thundering, “*What we saw was no fable! We saw the majesty of God the Son. We heard him receiving glory and honor from the voice of God the Father as we stood trembling in the cloud of his Majestic Glory. And this same Jesus is coming back! There is no way he will not keep his promise; no way he will not burst again into this world and bring to completion every line of every promise about our hope. And if you make your calling and election sure through godly living ‘You will certainly receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.’*”

And don’t you ever forget it!