

“ Something MORE SURE, the Prophetic Word ” – Sermon – February 2-3, 2008 - Pastor Scott Hirssig

2 Peter 1:16-21 (ESV) ¹⁶ For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. ¹⁷ For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," ¹⁸ we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. ¹⁹ And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, ²⁰ knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. ²¹ For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

- It is good to be here – the Lord is Proclaimed – we are growing in the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus. -
I greet you with, grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Risen Lord and the Holy Spirit who lives within us as believers, and empowering us

We live in a society that puts a high premium on how you feel. We are told to get in touch with your inner self. Experience you own spirituality, your destiny from within. Tap into your spirit. Peter in our lesson today sweeps that all aside and says. " For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. " (1 Peter 1:16) This is not some clever story, a fable or a myth, a dream, something we made up. We have experienced the living Lord. We were there and we testify to you. We are talking about objective reality. What is real. They saw the reality of Jesus over and over again. Jesus demonstrates that He is God, in his character, in his works, in His miracles, and finally the demonstration of the resurrection, the foundation of our faith. We marvel at what they were able to see and experience. In fact, you have probably wondered what it would be like to carry on a conversation with Jesus face to face. We think if only we could see the miracles they saw, experience what they did, our faith would be so strong, and grow in leaps and bounds. But as wonderful as that experience was, Peter testifies there is something more. Something even better than experiencing first hand. He says " And we have something MORE SURE, the prophetic word, " (1 Peter 1:19) God's word is MORE SURE. You have today what is MORE SURE than Peter and the rest of these early disciples, that experienced Jesus first hand. Your Bible is MORE SURE than first hand experience. That is hard for us to comprehend. We have more than what they had. It is easy today to fail and see what we really have in God word. Oh, that we would embrace that word, experiencing Jesus as He reveals Himself to us through the word, that is MORE SURE.

Peter in our lesson today gives us three simple declarations about that MORE SURE word, three principles about the scripture, his compelling advice to us, ⁽¹⁾ first he says, " you will do well to pay attention " (2 Peter 1:19) another words pay attention to what the Bible says. ⁽²⁾ Second, he says, of the word it is like " a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, " (2 Peter 1:19) ⁽³⁾ And finally, " For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. " (1 Peter 1:21) Another words, the Bible is from the Holy Spirit. We are going to be talking about those three directives from Peter, in a message whose title is taken from the words of our lesson, "Something MORE SURE, the Prophetic Words"

Peter in our lesson testifies of his experience with Jesus on the holy mountain. Imagine for a moment, what it must have been like to be with Jesus that day. The day started like so many, but you are invited to travel with Jesus up the mountain. You probably think it is about prayer, since, " ⁵ ...Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed. " (Luke 5:16 NIV) (Mat 14:13; Mark 1:35; Mark 6:32; Luke 4:42) Luke tells us that as Jesus prayed on the mountain, the disciples being tired, begin to doze off. (Luke 9:29, 9:32 NIV) All that changed quickly. Jesus was transfigured. It is as if he unveiled the flesh so they could see Jesus as He really is in all His glory, blazing light, His face shining like the sun, the Shekinah glory. He talks with Moses and Elijah. Moses is the law giver representing the law, and Elijah the prophet representing the prophets, so between those two you have the Old Testament revelation, you have law and gospel. Luke tells us they talk about Jesus departure, (Luke 9:31 NIV) which is a reference to the coming sacrifice, resurrection and ascension. As you are gazing, a cloud moves and envelopes you, and if that was not enough, a voice thunders from heaven, proclaiming " ⁵ This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased, listen to him " (Matt 17:5 ESV) You and your friends are frightened and fall facedown on the ground. When they come down the mountain they are told not to tell what they saw until the Son of man is raised from the dead. If you experienced all of what Peter, James, and John experienced, your mind would be reeling, to see and experience what they did. Understandably, it would have been the greatest experience ever to happen to you. Yet Peter, who was there, makes that incredible statement in our lesson. He says, " we have something MORE SURE, the prophetic word " (1 Peter 1:19) The very Bible you have and can read

at will, is MORE SURE. In the Greek here, it literally reads, we have **MORE SURE** the prophetic word. As wonderful, as reliable, and as helpful as this experience was to Peter and his companions, the scripture is MORE SURE. Did you get that. The Bible you have is even MORE SURE. The Bible is where the truth is. This is the source, it is above science, above tradition, above personal preferences and cultural norms, in fact it is the very norm for all of life. Sadly our world has pushed the very word of God, the most sure, into place where it is not even worth my time to look at it. In fact most people search everywhere for answers except the Bible. They rest in feelings and the personal experience of trial and error which most of the time is unreliable. But for Peter and those early disciples of Jesus, it is the word of God that is most sure. Hopefully the word is your foundation and what you look to for answers, to Jesus the very creator and sustainer of our faith that comes to us through the sure word.

Peter then in our lesson goes on to give us three directives about that MORE SURE word. We begin with Peter's 1st point about that sure word. "You will do well to pay attention." (1 Peter 1:19) That simple command is exhorted in many ways in scripture. The very last words of the Father at the mount of transfiguration is "listen to Him" referring to Jesus. God did not spend 1500 years and over 40 writers for you and I to ignore what He says – we do that at our own peril. In Colossians it says "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ." (Colossians 2:8 (NIV)) The world's ideas are ready to take you captive and ruin your life. Don't go there. Peter when asked by Jesus if he too would leave like so many other disciples, he says, "... 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.'" (John 6:68 NIV) These words bring life. John the gospel writer declares the reason for the Bible, saying, "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." (John 20:31 NIV) The word is given so you would believe and be saved. We are all conceived with a fatal flaw, it is called sin, or simply not being perfect. God's standard for eternal life is perfection. Part of God's character is justice. Being just, He must punish all who sin, all who are not being perfect. Your only hope is that Jesus would take your place in judgment and recreate you so you are perfect. That happens as a gift. Paul told the Ephesians through the Holy Spirit, "8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." (Ephesians 2:8-10 NIV) Salvation is a gift by grace through faith and the it is Jesus who does good works through you. I hope and pray that you have come to Jesus for life and are now living that new life in Christ.

Secondly Peter tells us that, the word is like "... a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts," (2 Peter 1:19 NIV) The day dawns that Peter is speaking of, we believe is that final coming day when Jesus ushers in the new heavens and new earth, the home of righteousness, (2 Peter 3:13 NIV) the morning star being Jesus, who lives in your hearts as believers. This word is to be shining. The word is like a lamp and a light that is shining through you as a believer. Psalm 119 says, "105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path." (Psalm 119:105 NIV) Jesus in the sermon on the mount said, "16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16 NIV) Paul told the Corinthians, "For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:6 NIV) May you shine with the word and effect the people around you.

Finally, Peter says, "For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." (1 Peter 1:21) Another words this Bible is from the Holy Spirit. In Hebrews four, we hear about the word that says, "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12 NIV) This word is alive and brings life – oh that we would seek through the sure word. Paul told Timothy, "16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17 NIV) This sure word is useful for everyday life. Oh that we would seek through the sure word.

May you know that the prophetic word is MORE SURE then experience, may we ever rest in the word, not putting tradition, personal preferences, cultural norms, science or anything else ahead of the word of God, but be ready to pay attention, living as Jesus shines through you, knowing that the Holy Spirit brought this very living word for us to receive.

In His name we pray. AMEN May the peace of God that passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. AMEN