

The Trustworthy Prophetic Word

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. 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.

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.



Research: Only 17% of Christians Actually Have a Biblical Worldview



We hear so much stuff that is not true. There are supposed fact-checkers on Facebook and Twitter that are sorting the truth from fiction, but we have no reason to believe that anything that fact-checkers check is true. We've learned that they are political hacks who put their agenda into everything they "fact-check." They are not "fact checkers"; they are information controllers. Do you remember the website called "Snopes"? I remember putting some meme or statement out on Facebook, and people would check it out on Snopes and then shame me by saying something I said was false, according to Snopes. Snopes was pulled down from its opinion throne in 2015 when the couple that started Snopes went through a messy divorce. Their mudslinging included accusations of plagiarism, lying, and making stuff up to increase traffic to their site. This exposed the almighty Snopes for the phony source of info that it was. It appears Snopes was just another source of biased or stolen misinformation.

According to the Christian Post, less than half of all evangelicals believe the Bible is true.¹ And only 17% of Christians have a Biblical worldview.² So, how can we know that what we believe is true? Some people say there is no such thing as truth. Yet, how can they state that if that is an absolute statement? The beautiful thing about the Bible is that it makes factual claims of truth and has the evidence to back up those claims.

¹ <https://www.christianpost.com/news/fewer-than-half-of-evangelicals-believe-bible-is-literally-true.html>

² <https://relevantmagazine.com/faith/research-only-17-of-christians-actually-have-a-biblical-worldview/>

The Most Powerful Convincing Kinds of Evidence

These verses that we are studying tonight contain the words of a dying man telling us what he saw, heard, and read concerning this person named Jesus. Evidence is that which tends to prove or disprove something; ground for belief; proof. This is evidence that would be very important in a court of law.³

In law, some evidence is more likely to prove something than other evidence. Because of human experience and behavior, we have learned that several kinds of truth are highly credible: a dying declaration, corroborated seeing or hearing of an event, and lastly, written accounts of something that happened. Peter tells us in the most credible terms that Jesus came from heaven, sent by God, and that He truly is the light of the world that can shine darkness into each of our lives. Peter's summation of who Jesus is and what He did for you and me contains ALL OF THESE TYPES OF EVIDENCE.

He says we did not follow **μῦθος** myths (refers to like pagan mythology). The Bible is filled with verifiable events. We read of such pagan myths in ancient Greek or Irish mythology. They are wild non-historical events.

Corroborated Eye Witness Account and Hearing Evidence

Peter begins, "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."



Let's turn for a moment to Matthew chapter seventeen and read the account that Peter references. Peter is saying, "WE SAW IT HAPPEN ." This was not a myth or a fable of old like some ancient story such as "The Trojan Horse ." Most people believe that the Trojan horse existed, but scholars now say it probably never did, and it was all a myth.⁴ Remember that Jesus was transformed before Peter's eyes and before the eyes of two other disciples with Him up on Mount Hermon by the Temple of Pan worship in Caesarea Philippi. Peter was there when Jesus' face was transformed like the glowing sun.

Now, after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; ² and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. ³ And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him. ⁴ Then Peter answered and

³ <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/evidence>

⁴ <https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/arts-blog/did-trojan-horse-exist-classicist-tests-greek-myths>

said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if You wish, let us make here three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

⁵ While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!" ⁶ And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. ⁷ But Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid." ⁸ When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only. (Matthew 17:1-8)

There they were, up on the mountain, and a supernatural event occurred. Peter and the other disciples saw Jesus for Who He was. His face shone like the sun. That's pretty bright, and then the text tells us that Moses and Elijah showed up and they were speaking with Jesus. Peter got so overwhelmed, and as Peter usually did, he blurted something out when he was experiencing something he didn't understand. So he opened up his mouth and said, "It's good that we're here. Let's build three tabernacles For Elijah, Moses, and Jesus". Peter was not alone in seeing this; the gospels tell us that THEY ALL SAW WHAT HAPPENED. And they all heard it when the Father spoke from heaven saying, "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased."

Peter saw Jesus revealed in all of His majesty, and as an eyewitness, he tells us so. And then Peter adds that they not only saw this together, but they heard it together. Experts in psychology tell us that "group hallucinations" do not happen. They all saw, and they all heard.

Personal experiences are subjective. An experience by itself doesn't make something true. Many of us in this room or reading this sermon can give an account of what we think God has done in our lives. Some have come to me and claimed that they've seen Jesus. Others have come to this group and told about how they have had their lives changed. Some here have been addicts of drugs, alcohol, sex, or anger. They left these things at the foot of the cross and experienced freedom from these chains of sin. Still, those experiences are just experiences. They are subjective.

Peter says that seeing, hearing, and experiencing things are perhaps not enough; it is ALL BACKED UP BY THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD FOUND IN THE WRITINGS OF THE PROPHETS.

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.

Brothers and sisters, this is a GREAT WORD OF COMFORT. The world is a dark, lost place, and Peter reminds his audience that God's Word shines in a dark place and will do so until He returns. Peter is telling his audience that God's Word proves itself to be true. It confirms itself.



It is not something of “private interpretation.” That means that it is what it is and says what it says. There are HUNDREDS of prophecies, not only about the Jewish people but also about Jesus. And guess what? THEY HAVE OBJECTIVELY ALL COME TRUE. They are not subjective like something we might have seen and heard, but they are HARD EVIDENCE that God’s Word is authentic, that Jesus came to earth, and he experienced death, burial, and a resurrection FOR YOU AND ME. The fulfillment of Scripture VERIFIES the content of the Bible so that you and I can know that it is true, and you and I can trust the promises of God.

Prophecy was very important to the Jews. They used it as a measuring stick of authenticity. If a prophet said something was going to happen, and it didn’t happen, the prophet was either ignored or sometimes he got killed. This was serious stuff to the Jews. Moses laid out the ground rules.

"When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that [is] the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, [but] the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him," (Deuteronomy 18:22)

Moses knew that fulfilled prophecy was hard evidence. It was evidence that God was indeed speaking through a person at work in the heart of the prophet, giving him insight into something that only God knew about. The exact fulfillment of all the prophecies we've discussed from the Old Testament is more than enough to demonstrate the accuracy and divine inspiration of the Bible and the truth of Christianity. Remember, only God can "declare the end from the beginning" and forecast to the very day "things that are not yet done" ([Isaiah 46:10](#)).⁵

Before the following events ever happened, the prophets in the Bible predicted them with total accuracy.

- 1 Destruction of Babylon, Ninevah (Nahum 3:15), and Tyre (Ezekiel 26:3). These kingdoms sought to annihilate the Jews and were sent into the dustbin of history.
- 2 When the Jews were taken into captivity in Babylon, Daniel counted the days down to seventy years until liberation because the Bible said it would happen. It did.
- 3 Babylon’s gates would open for Cyrus. Isaiah 45:1 (written between 701 and 681 BC) foretold of Cyrus BY NAME that God would use him to destroy Babylon.
- 4 And last but not least, for tonight, I end with the coming of the Messiah predicted with total and complete accuracy by the Prophet Daniel. In 538 B.C. Daniel wrote the following bold prediction:

⁵ <https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/the-old-testament-is-filled-with-fulfilled-prophecy-11652232.html>

"So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks of years and sixty-two weeks of years"(Daniel 9:25)

We have done the math together, and I have shown you that TO THE DAY, this happened. That was the day that Jesus the Messiah rode into Jerusalem, and the people lining the road cried out, "Son of David, have mercy on us and save us!" And Jesus did just that!

Tonight, Peter's words tell us that the Word of God shines in a dark place. I am here to tell you that you can believe it, trust it, and rely on it. The world may be going insane, but God's truth is marching on. Don't get panicked. Don't get side-tracked. His Word is a lamp unto your feet and a light unto your path. (Psalm 119:105)

Matthew 4:16 tells us, *"The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned."* Tonight, I want you to take home the BIG IDEA that our faith is genuine. Jesus was Divine. He came on a divine mission, and you and I partake of that mission when we put our faith and trust in Him. We have a dependable light in a dark shakey world. God's Word is truth. He is the truth. You can count on the truthfulness of Scripture.

¹⁶All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:¹⁷ That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Timothy 3:16-17 KJV)

It was literally "God breathed" and it is absolutely profitable for sound teaching, correction, and instruction in how we are to live in righteousness. In studying God's Word and in experiencing it, we are equipped to do any and all good works that God has planned for each of us.

Let us pray.