

Standing in the True Knowledge of Christ

The Preservation of Truth

“Established in the Present Truth”

2 Peter 1:12-21

In the first 11 verses of this chapter, Peter has shown a progression of the Christian life.

- In verses 1-4, we are shown what God has provided — a precious faith, multiplied grace, divine power, and exceeding great and precious promises.
- In verses 5-7, we are shown what the believer must pursue — giving all diligence to grow in faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity.
- In verses 8-11, we are shown what that growth produces — a life that is fruitful, spiritually discerning, stable, and assured.

Verse 12 shifts from explanation to emphasis. The question addressed is: “How do we remain grounded in these truths over time?”

Truth must not only be learned, it must be relearned, reheard, and reinforced.

- Truth neglected becomes truth forgotten
- Truth forgotten becomes truth abandoned
- Truth abandoned leaves a believer vulnerable to error

This is especially important in light of what is coming later in this letter: false teachers (chapter 2) and scoffers (chapter 3).

Peter now shows us something essential to the Christian life:

God preserves His people in the truth by continually reminding them of the truth.

I. A CONFIRMED TRUTH (v. 12)

A. The connection to the previous truth — “wherefore”

This ties directly back to God’s provision (vv. 1-4); the believer’s progress (vv. 5-7), and the visible proof (vv. 8-11).

2 Timothy 2:14

¹⁴ Of these things put *them* in remembrance, charging *them* before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, *but* to the subverting of the hearers.

B. The commitment to constant reminder

“I will not neglect to put you always in remembrance...”

1. The responsibility declared

“I will not neglect” — Peter refuses to be careless or passive. He is saying, “*It would be spiritual neglect for me NOT to remind you.*”

2. The repetition described

a) “Always in remembrance” — continual, ongoing repetition.

b) “Put you in remembrance” (ὑπομιμνήσκω) — bring back to mind, to recall to attention.

C. The condition of the believers

“Though ye know them...”

Peter acknowledges they already know these truths

because they have already been taught.

Hebrews 2:1

¹ Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip.

D. The stability of established truth

“And be established in the present truth”

1. The position described
 - a) “Established” (στηριγμένους) — to fix firmly, to set fast, to stabilize
 - b) These believers were not weak or wavering in their faith at that point. They were grounded, settled, and standing in the truth.
2. The phrase “present truth” explained
 - a) This means that is already revealed, currently operative, and personally possessed.
 - b) This is not new revelation — it is applied revelation.

II. A CONTINUAL STIRRING (VV. 13-15)

A. The ongoing duty of stirring (v. 13)

1. The conviction expressed
 - a) “I think it meet” — fitting, right, proper
 - b) Peter sees this as part of his God-given responsibility.
2. The activity explained

a) "To stir up" (διεγείρω) — to awaken, arouse, shake from complacency

b) This is stronger than simple reminder. "Stirring" activates the heart and will as well as the mind.

3. The method repeated

"By putting you into remembrance" — same as in verse 12. This is truth pressed upon the heart again.

B. The limited time of the servant (v. 13)

"As long as I am in this tabernacle"

1. The body described

a) "Tabernacle" (σκηνώματι) — a tent, temporary dwelling

b) The body is viewed here as temporary, fragile, and passing.

2 Corinthians 5:1

¹ For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2. The time defined

"As long as I am..." — this speaks of urgency.

C. The certain departure of the servant (v. 14)

1. The certainty acknowledged — "knowing," "shortly" — Peter is expecting death.

2. The departure explained — "Put off" (ἀπόθεσις) — to lay aside, like a garment. Death for the

believer is simply a departure to another place.

3. The revelation remembered — “even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me”

John 21:18–19

¹⁸ Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldest not. ¹⁹

This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, **Follow me.**

D. The lasting desire of the servant (v. 15)

1. The effort declared — “endeavour” (σπουδάσω) — same root as “diligence” in earlier verses. This is intentional, earnest effort. Even near death, Peter is still laboring spiritually.
2. The goal defined — “That ye may be able... to have these things always in remembrance.” Peter is not just thinking about their present — he’s planning for their future after he’s gone.
3. The phrase explained — “after my decease” (ἔξοδος) — transliterated in the English word “exodus.” This is a departure, an exit. Used of Israel leaving Egypt. He’s speaking of his departure into glory, not the end of his life.
4. The burden revealed — Peter’s concern is not that they remember *him*, but that they remember the truth.

III. A CREDIBLE TESTIMONY (vv. 16-18)

Peter now answers an important question: *“Why should these truths be taken so seriously?”* The answer is because they are divinely confirmed.

A. The denial of human fabrication (v. 16a)

1. The error rejected

- a) “Cunningly devised” (σεσοφισμένοις) — cleverly crafted, skillfully invented
- b) “Fables” (μῦθοις) — myths, legends, fabricated stories
- c) Peter is rejecting the idea that the Gospel is a myth and that the apostles are religious storytellers.

2. The context anticipated — this directly prepares for the false teachers and scoffers to be addressed in later chapters.

B. The declaration of Christ’s power and coming (v. 16b)

1. The message proclaimed — “made known” — declared, revealed, preached
2. The truth defined — “Power and coming” (δύναμις καὶ παρουσία) — this points to Christ’s divine power and His second coming in glory.

C. The eyewitness of divine majesty (v. 16c)

The authority claimed — “eyewitnesses” (ἐπόπται) — one who has personally seen

D. The event of the transfiguration (vv. 17-18; Matt. 17:1-5)

1. The glory displayed — “He received... honour and glory...” (v. 17) — Christ’s divine nature was unveiled.
2. The voice declared — “This is my beloved Son... in whom I am well pleased” — this is divine authentication.
3. The witness confirmed — “This voice... we heard... when we were with him...” (v. 18)
 - a) Peter emphasizes that they heard it; that they were there; that this actually happened in real time.
 - b) Christianity is rooted in historical reality and verifiable revelation.

IV. A CERTAIN WORD (VV. 19-21)

A. The superiority of the written Word

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy...”

1. The comparison implied
 - a) Peter has just spoken of the transfiguration (vv. 16-18) — a visible, audible, undeniable experience.
 - b) And then he says: “We have also a more sure word...” — (βεβαιότερον) — more firm, more reliable
2. The truth established
 - a) The written Word of God is more certain than even a personal experience.
 - b) The reason for this is because experiences can be

misunderstood and memories can fade, but Scripture is fixed, objective, and unchanging.

B. The responsibility to heed the Word

“Whereunto ye do well that ye take heed...”

1. “Take heed” — give attention, cling to, apply carefully.
2. This is not casual reading, but intentional, careful attention to what is read (James 1:22-25).

C. The illumination of the Word

“As unto a light that shineth in a dark place...”

1. The condition described
 - a) “Dark place” (αύχμηρός) — murky, filthy, obscure, gloomy.
 - b) This describes the world and the age we live in along with the confusion of false teaching.
2. The function of Scripture — “a light that shineth” — the Word of God reveals truth, exposes error, and guides the believer.

Psalm 119:105

¹⁰⁵ NUN. Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

D. The duration of our dependence

“Until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts”

1. The future anticipated — “day dawn” (the return of Christ); “Day star” — Christ Himself.

Revelation 22:16

¹⁶ I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, *and* the bright and morning star.

2. The present necessity — until that day, we must rely on the written Word.

E. The source of the Word (v. 20)

1. The priority stated — “knowing this first” — this is foundational truth.
2. The misunderstanding corrected — “No prophecy... is of any private interpretation”
 - a) This does NOT mean that individuals cannot study Scripture.
 - b) It means Scripture did not originate from the prophet’s own ideas.

F. The inspiration of the Word (v. 21)

“For the prophecy came not... by the will of man...”

1. The denial — not of human origin; not from human initiative.
2. The affirmation — “holy men of God spake...”
3. The divine process — “As they were moved by the Holy Ghost”
 - a) “Moved” (φερόμενοι) — carried along, like a ship driven by the wind.
 - b) The writers wrote willingly, but were guided perfectly by the Spirit.

Conclusion:

The danger Peter addressed in these verses is not that we will suddenly reject the truth. The danger is that we will slowly neglect it.

God preserves His people in truth through:

- Faithful reminder
- Continual stirring
- Clear testimony
- And ultimately, through the certainty of His Word

The question is:

- Am I continuing in it?
- Am I taking heed to it?
- Am I allowing it to shape my thinking, my priorities, my life?

If we are going to stand in the days ahead — in a world of confusion, false teaching, and spiritual darkness — then we must be people who are:

- Established in the truth
- Stirred by the truth
- Grounded in the truth
- And guided by the Word of God