

CALL to PRAYER -

Thank God for your copy of the Bible

*Intro* - For the last two weeks we have addressed some important aspects of our Lord's First Coming. Our text today mentions another "coming" of Jesus, but it is not the Second Coming. This "coming" was spectacular, stunning and majestic...but guess what... all of us missed it. You see, this "coming" has already happened. Only a handful of people got to see this unique event and oh what a sight it must have been. None of us got to see it but all of us can hear about it and read it. Do you ever feel like if you had been there and seen the events when it happened that it would be better for your faith? After our Lord's resurrection, Thomas said he wouldn't believe it unless he could see and touch the wounds of the Risen One. Thomas got to see and touch but Jesus said to him in John 20:29, "*Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.*" There is a bigger blessing for believing and not seeing. We walk by faith and not by sight. For us "*seeing is not believing*" but "*reading is believing*" and "*hearing is believing.*" And it is better for us this way. I have two main points today. 1] *The Biblical accounts are true.* 2] *Having the Bible is better than being there.* The beginning of a New Year often brings a renewed desire to read our Bible. I want to encourage you to that end by reminding you that all the Biblical accounts are true and that having the Bible is better than being there.

## *2 Peter 1:16-21 - Better Than Being There*

### THE BIBLICAL ACCOUNTS ARE TRUE

- This passage is Peter's retelling of his experience seeing the Transfiguration
  - Peter was an eyewitness. 1:16c
  - The gospels tell us that three disciples were privileged with this experience
- Peter calls this a "coming" of the Lord Jesus Christ
  - 1:16b a powerful coming
  - This is a common word used for the 2nd Coming *Parousia* (2Peter 3:3-4; 1Thess.4:15)
  - Jesus even called His Transfiguration a "coming" - Matt. 16:28
- The Transfiguration must have been an amazing sight
  - Matt. 17:1-8
- As Peter recounts this amazing event, he is careful to call it a true event.
  - 2 Peter 1:16-18
    - Peter was an eyewitness - (1:16)
    - Peter heard the Heaven Father's voice - (1:17-18)
  - Peter didn't embellish what happened nor was this event a work of fiction.
    - 1:16 - the Transfiguration is not a cleverly devised story
- Our faith is not based on a fable and Christians should beware of infusing fairy tales when we retell the true events of the Bible. Our faith story is not a "fish story"
  - 1 Tim. 1:3-4                      1 Tim. 4:7                      2 Tim. 4:3-4
  - Peter said he didn't use cleverly devised fables to tell of the coming of the Lord
  - The Bible is true; it is not embellished like a tall tale or a fairy tale.
- You can believe the Bible because it is true. (John 3:33; 1 John 5:10)

## **THE BIBLE IS BETTER THAN BEING THERE**

- Peter makes an application from his experience of the Transfiguration that is amazing
  - 2 Peter 1:19 “the prophetic word made more sure” “more sure word of prophecy” (KJV)
  - There is something more certain than a lived experience.
  - If you want an ultimate experience, then read your Bible.
    - The Bible is better than being there.
- The Bible is better than being there and a more a sure word or prophecy because:
  - It is a record of eyewitness accounts 1:16
    - 1 John 1:1
  - It is a record of what was heard from God Himself 1:18
    - Mt. Sinia “Thus saith the LORD...”
  - It is not the result of man’s interpretation - 1:20
    - The Bible isn’t a book of religious men’s bias
  - It did not originate as an act of the human will 1:21a
    - Gal. 1:11-12
  - The Bible is Holy Spirit inspired 1:21b
    - Acts 1:16
- The Bible records human experience without human error
  - It is God’s word to humans that’s better than human experience
    - It records human experience without human bias
      - It filters out the false - Ps. 12:6
    - It records Divine interaction by way of Divine inspiration
      - This keeps man from messing it up
    - It is **written** revelation for faithful preservation.
      - 1 Chronicles 28:19 Ex. 24:4 Deut. 31:24 “It is written”
      - Oral tradition is subject to attrition (addition, subtraction, multiplication...)
  - “Holy Bible book Divine precious treasure thou art mine...”
- The Book is better than the movie
  - Have you ever read a book and then to go see the movie which was a letdown?
    - So reading is better than seeing?
  - The Bible is better than being there. The Book is better than the movie
- Have confidence while reading The Book
  - 1 Thess. 2:13 2 Tim. 3:15-17
  - Don’t neglect it; bask in it. 2 Peter 1:19
- If you won’t believe what is written, then you wouldn’t believe it if you had seen it
  - John 5:46-47
  - Luke 16:31
- For us it is not “seeing is believing”; rather it is, *hearing is believing & reading is believing*
  - 1Peter 1:8
  - Rom. 10:17
  - Having the Bible is better than being there
    - Read it! Hear it! Live it! Love it!