

No prophecy was every produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:21)

Almighty Lord, you have raised up many faithful leaders for the work of Christ. We thank you for their witness and for passing on the message of Jesus Christ. By the example of those first eyewitnesses, inspire us with your Spirit to make known your saving Word to all the world, that the good news of Jesus Christ would be spread to the ends of the earth. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Introduction

Many of the letters in the New Testament were written by Paul, but some were written by other Apostles, including Peter, James and John. Paul had become a Christian after Jesus died and rose again, but Peter, James and John had been followers of Jesus during his time on earth. They were eyewitnesses to all Jesus had done.

Read: 2 Peter 1:1-4, 10-21

On reading these verses, what are some of your initial impressions and questions? What stands out to you?

The Biblical Context

In the letters of 1 and 2 Peter we have the eyewitness testimony of one of Jesus' closest followers. Peter is perhaps the most famous of the original twelve disciples, and the one about whom the most is written in the Gospels.

Some scholars suggest that the biblical letters of Peter may have been written down at a later date by Peter's students and disciples, but nevertheless, they still bear witness to Peter's direct experience of having been with Jesus and record the experience of someone who had been with Jesus from the beginning.

The letters of these disciples were shared among churches, so all could hear directly from the people who knew Jesus the best.

Discussion Questions

1. Based on verses 1-2, to whom do you think Peter is writing? Were they believers? How can you tell?
2. According to verses 3-4, where do we get the power to live and obey God? How does God bestow this power upon us? What means does he use?
3. Who is the Giver of faith? According to verse 5, what kind of things should this faith produce in us?
4. Verse 10 refers to "your calling and election." Why is it important to know that you have been chosen by God? How does this help in times of struggle and doubt?
5. In verses 12-15, for what reason does Peter say he wants to remind people about the promises of Jesus? What does he foresee will happen soon?
6. What does it mean to say that Peter was an "eyewitness" of Jesus' majesty? What particular event does he refer to in verse 17-18? (Hint: See Mark 9:2-8.) How does Peter's experience confirm his message about Jesus?
7. In verses 19-21, how does Peter describe the Word of God? How is Peter's message backed up by the rest of Scripture? Have you found that to be true in your own life?
8. Read Acts 10:38-43. In these verses, Peter speaks of his first-hand experience in being with Jesus. How are Peter's words here similar to what we confess to believe in the Creeds?