

## Empowering Grace Pt 2

If you go to the movies and you watch a remake of a movie where you loved the original, you will mostly likely see the following disclaimer: "This movie has been reimagined for modern audiences."

In other words, "We know better now and are more enlightened now and so we are going to change all the things you loved about the original movie because we live in a different world with different values. Those old values that you loved so much are dated and archaic. Let us educate you in the new morality so you can adapt your values to this present day and age.

In less than 50 years after the death of Jesus, this is what was happening in the churches in Asia Minor, where the original message of the Apostles was being re-interpreted to fit their morality.

Wimber used to say that the marketplace (culture) keeps on changing and we as Christians need to adapt the method that we use to communicate the Good News. We use YouTube, Facebook, social media, television and movies in order to reach this generation. Even Vineyard worship has adapted. Rather than putting out a new Worship CD once a quarter, they now release individual songs through YouTube, Facebook, Spotify, Apple Music and other media in order to reach a generation with a shorter attention span. Nobody listens to full albums anymore.

Even Jay Pathak, our National Director, uses podcasts to communicate information.

However, the third "M" is the message, and that never ever changes, because it is based on the inspired Word of God.

Let's tune in to Peter as he re-emphasizes the unchanging message of Jesus.

### **1. Be stirred up.**

#### **2 Peter 1:12**

***Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have.***

These qualities as discussed last week are: virtue, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, godliness, brotherly affection and, finally agape love. This is what we brought you from the beginning and in these things your faith was established and grounded. The truth bears being repeated.

***13 I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder, 14 since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me. 15 And I will make every effort so that after my departure you may be able at any time to recall these things.***

The time of Peter's death is drawing near. God has done many miracles in Peter's life, but as with all of us, there comes a time when our mission in this world comes to an end, and we join Jesus in glory. Peter was acutely aware that his end was coming soon, but for the time being, he still had breath and as long as he still breathed, he wanted to breathe life into them so that they would endure even after he was gone. He wanted to challenge them, to stir them up, to awaken them from any possible complacency.

We need to guard against the same things. God has given us something beautiful here at the Tampa Bay Vineyard. We have great worship, the teaching of the Word, we love each other, and we minister to each other. However, we can't remain us four and no more. We can't become a nice little social club, we have to become the functional part of the body of Christ, which means we have to work to expand the kingdom of God. We have to become his witnesses.

## **2. Be a witness to the truth.**

***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.***

Peter here is echoing the words of Paul:

### ***1 Cor 2:4-5***

***my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.***

Peter is telling them that what he is sharing with them, wasn't something that he heard secondhand or that he devised, he was an eyewitness to the power and glory of the teachings and ministry of Jesus Christ. He experienced first-hand the Kingdom of God breaking into this present age. In fact, the Gospel of Mark is written by Peter's scribe, John Mark, who although not present as a disciple of Jesus, strove to write down everything that Peter told him about his time as Jesus' disciple.

People want to say that Christianity is a myth like the Greek gods and later the Norse god. However, our faith is based on historical events to which there were thousands of eyewitnesses.

***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.***

Peter is recounting what he witnessed on the Mount of Transfiguration:

### ***Matt 17:2-6***

***2 And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. 3 And behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. 4 And Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah." 5 He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."***

Of all the disciples only Peter, James, and John, the beloved, got to experience this moment. They got to hear God himself affirm Jesus as His Son and as His personal messenger. This is also reminiscent of when Jesus was baptized, and a dove descended from heaven and again God's voice was heard to say:

## **Matt 3:17**

***"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."***

Anyone who has ever heard the voice of God is forever changed. When you hear the voice of God, that moment becomes the moment when you know, that you know, that you know.

Peter is telling them and us that he heard directly from God that Jesus is His Son and that we are to hear Him and obey Him. As Pastor Karl used to say, God's love language is obedience. To hear is to obey.

### **3. Believe in the prophecies regarding Jesus.**

***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.***

Even if you can't take my word for it and the things that I've witnessed, the Law and the Prophets are filled with prophecies, God's utterances, that all point to the coming of Jesus and the establishment of His Kingdom. There is nothing more sure than God speaking directly through His prophets. This is not man interpreting His words, these are His words directly.

If we read the Old Testament there are anywhere from 200-400 prophecies that point to Jesus.

***Gen 3:15 (Messiah will be born of a woman)***

***I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."***

***Mic 5:2 (He will be born in Bethlehem)***

***But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel,***

***Isa 7:14 (He will be born of a virgin)***

***Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.***

***Isa 9:6-7 (He will come from David's lineage)***

***For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom,***

***Isa 40:3 (A messenger will prepare His way)***

***A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.***

***Ps 2:7 (He would be acknowledged by God as His Son)***

***I will tell of the decree: The Lord said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you.***

***Isa 53:7 (He would not defend himself before his accusers)***

***He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.***

***Zech 12:10 (He was pierced for our transgressions)***

***"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him,***

***Isa 53:5-6 (He would be the sacrifice for our sins)***

***But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.***

***Dan 7:13-14 (He will return again to rule and reign)***

***I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. 14 And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.***

## **Conclusion:**

Peter wants to stir us up to being witnesses of a truth that was prophesied in Scripture, live out by Jesus and attested to by His Apostles. Let the Word of God and the witness of His prophetic Word on top of the witness of the disciples, to His teaching and ministry, be your morning star. Don't let the darkness of this world fill you with doom and gloom, but instead use the prophecies and Peter's witness as a lamp in dark world until Jesus returns or until He calls us home and a new dawn breaks in His Kingdom.