

More Than a Manual

Scripture and Background Information for January 22-28.

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

For most Christians we hear about the importance of the Bible to our understanding and growth in our faith but if we are honest, that's not exactly our experience. Instead, we find it confusing, boring, or irrelevant and instead of consistently engaging with Scripture, we find that we avoid Scripture itself. God designed Scripture for so much more than what we often experience. This series is an invitation to view Scripture the way God intended and to begin to engage with it in fresh ways that help you understand more of its purpose and find the One behind it all along.

Background for 2 Peter 1:16-21:

Peter is very explicit about the reason he writes 2 Peter. In 2 Peter 3:1-2 he says that he is giving the audience a reminder hoping that they, "remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by [their] apostles." The words of the prophets and apostles, which are contained in the Scriptures, are powerful in Peter's eyes. Therefore, he reminds his audience throughout this letter how these words and commands can impact their lives by helping them live faithful lives (2 Peter 1), deal with false teaching (2 Peter 2), and prepare for Jesus' return (2 Peter 3).

In our passage for today, Peter addresses an objection from his contemporary opponents about the authenticity of the Scriptures that many would similarly have today. The opponents pointed out that many Christian claims seemed outrageous, as if they were just myths made up by various Jewish men throughout history. Wanting to preserve his audiences understanding of the greatness of the Scriptures, Peter responds in two ways: by appealing to his own eyewitness testimony (2 Peter 1:16-18) and to the fact that God is the ultimate source of the words of the scriptures (2 Peter 1:19-21). In both responses Peter demonstrates the reliability and power that the Bible holds which results in the many benefits he mentions throughout the letter for those who diligently adhere to its words.

Insights and questions to engage with the text:

1. Peter is making his claim against those who would question the reliability of the Scriptures. There are many in our day who also question the Scriptures and rather they can be trusted. Are there specific questions or doubts you have had about the Scriptures? How have you found some peace to trust them?
2. Peter claims that both the eyewitness accounts and the prophetic speech recorded in Scripture are based on God's own actions. What has God revealed about Himself in the words and accounts of His actions in Scripture?
3. In verse 19, Peter uses multiple images (lamp shining, day dawning) to describe the effect that revelations from the Scriptures can have on its readers. How have the truths revealed in the Bible shown its usefulness in your lives?
4. How have the readings in Luke been going? What has stood out or what fresh insights do you have about the Lord or the life He has for you as a result?