Sermon Notes for May 4, 2014

The Authority of Scripture

II Peter 1:16-21

Introduction

How do we know the Bible is true?

How do we know that Jesus is coming again?

I. The Word of the Apostles. Verses 16-18

“We did not follow cleverly invented stories.”

“But we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.”

Think about all of the things they saw Jesus say and do in those 3 years they were with him.

Here is a man unlike anyone the world has ever known. He had power over death, power over nature, power over demons, power over sickness and disease and power over sin.

But the event that stood out the most to Peter in defending his teaching on the second coming was the Transfiguration.

“After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. 3 His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. 4 And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.

5 Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” 6 (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)

7 Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!” Mark 9:2-7

The statement made by God the Father brings together two Old Testament passages.

- Psalm 2:7 – “This is my Son.” Jesus is the King.
- Isaiah 42:1 – “My chosen one in whom I delight.” Jesus is the Suffering Servant.

God identified Jesus as the Messiah and the Suffering Servant. He will come again as King and Judge. Listen to him.
II. The Word of the Prophets. Verse 19

“We have the word of the prophets made more certain.”

It is hard to overestimate the high regard that the Jews had for Scripture. For the Jews, the word of God was a far greater authority that the “voice of God” or the witness of men.

Why? The written word could be tested. Deuteronomy 18:14-21

“If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or come true, that is a message the Lord has not spoken.” Deut. 18:22

There are over 300 references to the Messiah in the Old Testament.

Josh McDowell in his book Evidence That Demands a Verdict lists 61 of them.

Peter Stoner in an article called Science Speaks wrote, “The odds that any man might have fulfilled 8 of those prophecies would be 1 in 10^{17}.

These prophecies were either given by the inspiration of God or the prophets were very very lucky in what they wrote.

Christianity is an historical faith.

God invites us to examine the evidence and believe.

III. The Word of the Apostles and the Word of the Prophets is the Word of God. Verses 20-21

God is the Author of Scripture.

The voice that the Apostles heard and the voice that the Prophets heard is the voice of God.

Jesus affirmed that when he said, “Man does not live by bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.” Matthew 4:4

“Heaven and earth will pass away but my words will never pass away.” Matthew 24:35

Peter says, “Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation.”

“Men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”

The Author of Scripture is God.
God used over 40 human authors to write it down. God worked through their own personalities and writing styles so that what they wrote was exactly what he wanted to say.

God’s word is authoritative, inerrant and inspired. It is “God breathed”.

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” II Timothy 3:16-17

Conclusion

Greater confidence in Scripture leads to greater boldness.

Greater confidence in Scripture leads to greater obedience.

Evidence alone will not bring someone to faith. Salvation is a work of the Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit uses the Word of God and the historical evidence for faith to bring people to Christ.