

TAKEAWAY

BELIEFS MATTER

2 Peter 1:12-21 – Part Three



SESSION OUTCOMES

You don't necessarily need to share these, but be aware as a leader to help steer discussion.

- To reflect on how we can grow in godly qualities with increasing measure, not settling for complacency
- To consider what voices and narratives are shaping our lives and whether we're paying attention to God's prophetic word
- To explore practical ways of living counter-culturally according to kingdom values rather than the world's "iron laws"

INTRODUCTION

Running through Peter's words to early Christians in 2 Peter is the constant emphasis on truth – that what you believe matters because it shapes how you live. His words give us a glimpse of what the Christian life should look like. In chapter one Peter shares eight characteristics that are vital to keep followers of Jesus from being 'ineffective or unfruitful': faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, godliness and love. Peter encourages Christians to continue growing in these qualities – our knowledge of God is not meant to remain 'nice' information, it is for our transformation.

SHARE

- What habits or practices help you grow in your faith? Anything from last week's try outs that have helped you 'add to your faith' that you'd like to share and praise God for?
- How would you describe a myth? What "myths" or narratives—either personal or cultural—have you found yourself living by?
- When have you experienced God's power working through weakness, sacrifice, or surrender rather than through worldly strength?

READ

2 Peter 1:1-22

In this session, we'll unpack 2 Peter 1:12-22. To help give context to this passage, you may find it helpful to read the whole of chapter one.

DISCUSS

The ancient philosopher Sallustius (86 - 34 BC) described myth as something that 'Never was, but always is', do you agree? In what ways are myths powerful, or even necessary? How does Christianity differ from the powerful myths that otherwise shape our world?

What are some of the myths, narratives or values that you can get swept up in or find yourself living by? How does the story of Jesus challenge or reshape those?

Peter clearly rejects the idea that Christianity is a myth. Why did Peter know that what he taught about Jesus was true? What is some of the evidence that he gives to prove faith in Jesus is not a myth (verses 16b-19)?

Peter says he wants to "stir up" believers who already know and are established in the truth. Why do we need constant reminding of things we already know? What does this tell us about spiritual formation?

The way of the cross and today's cultural values, have competing narratives about power, strength, and force. What are the challenges of living out the way of the cross in a world that celebrates very different narratives and beliefs?

What does it mean practically to hold out a lamp "in a dark place" (verse 19) whilst waiting for the morning star to rise? How do we balance present action with future hope? (see also Revelation 22:16-17)

PRAY

The words from Revelation 22:16-17 say "Come!" What situations do you need Jesus to come into? What situations, relationships or circumstances do you need reminding of the truth? Pray for them together.

TRY OUT

- Reflect on your last week and see if you discover a myth or belief that is not the way of Jesus. Find one way, in the week ahead, to practise kingdom values counter-culturally: choosing sacrifice over self-interest, generosity over accumulation, or humility over power.
- Set aside time each day to "pay attention" to Scripture as Peter urges—perhaps reading through 2 Peter each week during this series, asking God to stir you up through His word.