

Message for Sunday, February 15, 2026

Scripture: 2nd Peter 1:16-21

Title: Experiencing God

Message for Sunday, February 15, 2026

Welcome

Announcements

Giving Options-online, in box in back, mail etc.; Special Offering for February is Human Relations (same video to play); Ash Wednesday Service is at 5:30PM on February 8th. Book Club is on March 3 at 10:30AM; Hospitality help needed and Cookies needed for hospitality.

Fellowship of Love

Song

Call to Worship

L: Come worship the Lord.

P: Praise the Lord on high.

L: Worship the Lord from the mountaintop.

P: Worship our Lord and King.

L: Let the earth quake and the people tremble.

P: Let the nations revere the Lord of life.

Unison Prayer

Source of light and love, reveal to us your glory.

As you appeared to your servant Moses in devouring fire on Mount Sinai, appear to us now in power and might during our time of worship.

As you revealed Christ's resplendent light to his disciples on the mountaintop, reveal your radiant light to us during our fellowship together.

Transform us with your glory, that our souls might shine your light into a world shrouded in darkness. Amen.

Offering Song

Scripture: 2 Peter 1:16-21 NRSVue

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 had been eyewitnesses of his majesty.

--

¹⁷ For he received honor and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

--

¹⁸ We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain.

--

¹⁹ So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

--

²⁰ First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation,

--

²¹ because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.'

Message: Experiencing God.

Today is transfiguration Sunday. For those of you who didn't come from a tradition that marks some of these "extra" days on the church calendar, Transfiguration Sunday is the Sunday that we remember the

story in the Gospels where Jesus is changed on the mountain top and is seen with Moses and Elijah. If I'm talking about this why aren't we reading that story? Well simply put, I don't want to read that story. I want us to read what is happening in 2nd Peter.

As a book 2nd Peter is wrestling with some interesting issues. One of the biggest issues it is wrestling with is the issue of authority, which is why it has been often used to put women down in the church. Another issue that it focuses on is the issue of the Parousia. I know some of you haven't heard that term before, but it is a significant theological term. What that term means is the second coming of Christ. The Transfiguration is considered theologically to be the first direct evidence of the second coming. Christ's appearance on the mount is what he will look like when he comes in the clouds again.

This is a theological leap that takes place in the early church. The events on the mountain in the gospel have little to do with the end times, except that people wanted a way to envision what the Parousia would look like. Besides that, the story of Jesus on the mountain matters little to this text. If there is no connection to the transfiguration then why am I talking about it?

In the early church the concept of Christ coming again occurred very early. It is a rather essential idea that is instilled in the creeds as well. By the time this letter was written there was an issue. That issue is that decades had passed and still Jesus had not returned. This led to disappointment for some, to other questioning the very nature of the church. Before we continue down this thread though we need to talk a little bit about 2nd Peter and its history. 2nd Peter was probably not written by Peter. Most scholars date the book at being written between 90-110 CE.

The contention that it wasn't written by Peter isn't something new. When the church was deciding what books were going to be cannon

there was a significant debate about the Peter books because even then they knew they weren't written by Peter. Instead, they were written by someone in the tradition of Peter. Think of it kind of like the Pope speaking, the Pope speaks for Peter because he is a direct line from the apostle. Before you think this is some liberal scholarship garbage, you should know that there are a number of conservative publications that do an excellent job of laying out the issues of the book of Peter's authorship and the contentious nature of it in the early church. Those publications do come down on the side that this is written by Peter. Their justification for this though comes down to "the Bible said Peter wrote it, so Peter wrote it." Not exactly the strongest argument.

Let's get back to the point of this passage though. The author is trying to speak to the issue of disappointment in the church at not seeing Christ's return yet. And makes the case that we know the Parousia is true because Peter saw the transfiguration and eye witness is what sets apart myth from the story of Christianity. Is that a convincing enough argument for you? Personally, I find it doubtful, maybe because I spend my days now around a lot of kids but the amount of times I've been told someone saw/heard/or did something only to find out it wasn't true after probing around is significant.

I don't find personal testimony the best case for faith in Christ. What I think this book lays out for us today is a way to understand our faith that is grounded in the reality of our experiences of God. What I mean by this is that when we approach our faith, looking for hope, looking for understanding, ultimately it is how we experience God that shapes that understanding.

I know some of you are wrestling if you have ever experienced God. Some of you when I said, "experience God," you automatically had something that happened in mind. What I do know, and what this passage encourages from us is to understand our faith as an experience, a witness, to what God has done. This means our faith isn't

Message for Sunday, February 15, 2026

Scripture: 2nd Peter 1:16-21

Title: Experiencing God

about keeping the right things in faith, but instead how we experience God and how we interpret that experience in light of scripture. You see that's why Peter's story is important; it is the experience of the disciples but also when they went to scripture and saw how it confirmed what Jesus said.

I have had experiences of God that I can't explain. Moments that happen that I don't even realize it is God until I think about it later. Times that happen and I don't think God has anything to do with it only to see later that God was guiding the process the whole time. You see our faith is a process of seeing God at work. A process of experiencing God every day in order to be the best persons we are able to be. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer/The Lord's Prayer

Song

Benediction

Song