

## EYEWITNESSES OF MAJESTY

*We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. (2 Peter 1:16, NIV)*

EVERY EVENT HAS A BACKSTORY. When we know these, it makes us more eager to pay attention to what's right in front of us, especially the people.

In our home, we are still baseball lovers. My sons are grown now and don't live with us all the time, but when they're around, they'll check in with the game and engage in conversation about who's doing well and who's struggling. My wife, too, has through the years become a real-fan of "our team." But here's the remarkable thing: she may sit and watch for two or three innings and not know the score. That's right, the little score graphic sits in the upper left-hand corner of the screen without interruption, but *she never bothers to check it!* For her, the score is incidental. She watches because she knows our players, identifies their styles, and has a sense of their families. She even gives some of the players her own nicknames.

We follow golf tournaments in the same way—and I don't just mean our family *we*. I mean you and me and those of us who love golf. We like players because of the way they play the game, but we also like them because of how they interact with the fans and how they treat their caddies and how they talk about their strengths and weaknesses and because of the causes they take up.

In this way, "story" is important to us all. Maybe even more so in a data-filled universe. We want more than facts and figures; we want flesh and blood. But we also want that flesh and blood to be true. Fiction is fine in some places, but when we're speaking of heroes in real life, we want them to be, well, real and full of life.

When Peter set to writing his second letter, he spoke strongly about the story that mattered. It was not a man's story, and it was not invented. It was the story of God, full and powerful, told with the person of Jesus at the forefront. And it was a story told by those who had seen it happen before their very eyes and had every interest in seeing its integrity and its wonder maintained. There were other stories out there, Peter warned, stories told for personal power and financial gain, stories to discredit Jesus. These were the falsehoods, the blasphemies. They did literal damage to unwary souls. Peter and his fellow apostles taught with a different purpose: "to stimulate you to wholesome thinking." That's a good story, the kind that brings life. It is the story of God working by his Son in your heart and mine.

**Opening questions** When does a story "ring true" for you? What do you do when you think a story lacks this aspect of truth? What is the most majestic part of the true story of Jesus for you?

**READING** 2 Peter 1:12-2:10; Jude 1:17-23

### Remembering the story

What value did Peter place on being reminded of the work of God in Christ?

Where did Jesus' glory come from? How was it witnessed by the apostles?

### False teaching

How did Peter describe false teaching? What are the consequences for those who spread false teaching? How might we guard against false teaching in our own pursuit of Christ?

Jude also warned of false teachers, but offered prevention against its corruption. What are the attributes of the prevention, presented in verses 20-23?