

Pleasant Valley  
Church of Christ

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## Schedule of Services

### Sunday

Classes . . . . . 9:30 am  
Worship . . . . . 10:30 am  
Evening . . . . . 6:00 pm

### Wednesday

Classes . . . . . 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

# Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

August 10, 2008

## Cunningly devised fable?

by David King

"For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty" (2 Pet. 1:16).

Skeptics dismiss Christianity as an elaborate hoax. In short, they claim that our religion is a concoction of "cunningly devised fables" that have duped millions of people.

In our opening text, of course, the apostle Peter denies that charge. But upon what basis? How can we be confident that the religion we follow is legitimate, and its claims valid? How can we refute the charges of the skeptics who insist that Christianity is built upon a foundation of fraud and deceit?

Notice the response that Peter himself gives in our text: "(we) were eyewitnesses of His majesty." Christianity does not require our personal experience to validate its credentials. Like any other artifact of history, Christianity's claims rest upon the recorded testimony of those who were there at the beginning. That's why we have **four** gospels to tell us the story.

There are three lines of eyewitness evidence that support the claims of Christianity.

Peter refers to the first in the context of our opening text (v. 17-18): the transfiguration of Jesus. Peter was one of three apostles who was with Jesus on the mountain when He was transfigured. Peter saw Jesus' appearance turn angelic, and he heard the booming voice from heaven (Matt. 17:1-9). This incident must have left a deep and lasting impression upon Peter, because it is the only specific incident he mentions here.

In addition to the transfiguration, there were many other miracles witnessed by others during Jesus' ministry. The four gospels recount some of these miracles, but indicate that there were many others, the details of which are not recorded (Jn. 20:30-31; Mk. 6:54-56; Matt. 4:23-24). How else can we explain the explosion of contemporary interest and controversy surrounding a man of such humble origins who led no army, wrote no book, and held no political office? **Something** extraordinary happened to generate all this attention in the first century. If not the miracles, then what?

But all the miracles of Jesus pale in comparison to the greatest miracle of all: His own resurrection from the dead. The writers of the New Testament repeatedly point to this one event as the foundation of Christianity (1 Cor. 15:12-19; Rom. 1:4; 1 Pet. 1:3). When Jesus was executed, every precaution was taken to ensure that His defeat was complete. Yet something happened to His body. Despite every attempt to explain it away, the only story that fits all the evidence is that He arose from the grave and appeared to His disciples, all of whom devoted the rest of their lives to defending the integrity of what they had seen.

Many of the eyewitnesses who left behind the story about the origins of Christianity gave their lives in defense of their testimony. If Christianity really is a hoax, somebody would have cracked and exposed the details. But they didn't, because they couldn't. Christianity is not a fable. It is based on real, certifiable facts that we can build our lives upon.