

You have to admit that the pandemic we find ourselves in has given us an abundance of spare time. As we spend much of that time indoors we have an excellent opportunity of becoming better acquainted with God's word. I encourage you to pick up the Good Book and find your favorite story and read it several times through, using a different translation version of it each time and reading all of the parallel versions of that same story if there are any. As an example, the telling of a story by one gospel writer will be slightly different from another gospel writer of the same event because varying details may be added by the other writer's version. Once having refreshed your mind of the story, think about it and what it means to you, ponder what the message is that the writer of the story wants you to know and how you can apply any of its lessons to your own life. One of the gifts that God gives mankind, having been formed in his image, is a powerful imagination; so when we read these bible stories our minds can create how we imagine the story to have gone as if we were there witnessing it. In a sense, we are witnesses, we are actually second hand witnesses of those events because almost all of what is recorded for us is recorded by first hand eyewitnesses. The recorded events that weren't from first hand eyewitnesses, like Moses writing about the creation, were written by faithful believers who were guided by Holy Spirit, who by the way was a first hand eyewitness himself of all that is in the bible. He guided all of the writers of the bible. So the stories we read are all recorded by reliable witnesses. So when we retell the stories found in the bible to others, we can trust that what we say is true and that we are being reliable witnesses ourselves for the cause of Christ. If I may suggest a story to read, please read the story of the transfiguration found in Matthew 17, Mark 9 and Luke 9:26-36. We are studying this event in our Wednesday bible class. Peter was a faithful witness of the transfiguration along with James and his brother John. They witnessed Jesus physically turn into his pre-incarnate person; God, the second figure of the Holy Trinity. They witnessed also Moses and Elijah appear with the Lord and that they talked about what was soon to be accomplished in Jerusalem. They also witnessed God's booming voice tell them, "This is my beloved Son, my Chosen One, listen to him!" The three apostles were changed for life by what they saw. They saw God in his majestic glory! They also saw the two most influential characters from the Old Testament; Moses, who represented the Law, and Elijah, who represented the prophets. Peter tells us what he learned from this event in his second letter in chapter one, verses 12-21. Peter tells his readers what that event meant to him and what it means for us, that primarily God's word is true and reliable. I encourage you to familiarize yourself with this story as well. We will have a more lively discussion about this on Wednesday if everybody has read through these stories beforehand. John alludes to this event in John 1:14-18 saying that he witnessed the glory of Jesus, who tabernacled with man, and that he himself is God and has explained God the Father to us. For the love of Christ! Jim