

2Peter 11-09-30a

This is Friday, the 30th of September, 2011. We're in the second letter Peter wrote, preserved for us in the New Testament. We're at chapter 2, verse 1. We'll pause for just a moment before we begin to give each of us an opportunity to go before the Lord in prayer to ensure that the ministry of God's Holy Spirit will be unencumbered and unobstructed and undiminished.

Shall we pray? Father, what a blessing it is for us to gather, to spend time in fellowship, receiving the blessings and the benefits that come from our assembly, unique ways that you edify us and build us up when we are together. We thank you for this passage of Scripture. We ask your blessing on us as we study it together.

May each of us discern in it and remember from it truths that will motivate us and prepare us to accomplish your will in our lives. We pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.

We've reached the part of the letter, as you recall, at the end of chapter 1 of 2 Peter, where he brings up the issue of what is Scripture. It's not quite Pilate's question, what is truth, but what is Scripture? And he says, we have the prophetic word confirmed. Well, as you get to the end in verse 20 and 21, he is talking about these prophets and they were true prophets.

They made a prophecy and it was fulfilled. And he says, we have the fulfillment. The prophetic word made more sure.

The prophetic word was sure, but when you see the fulfillment of it, there is a tangible reality. It doesn't mean that, well, it was kind of a shaky prophecy, but we firmed it up. We put some scantling underneath it.

But he's basically saying we have seen Old Testament prophecy fulfilled. And I think he's referring specifically to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the focus and center of all Scripture. And he says that you do well to heed this fulfillment of prophecy.

This prophetic word made more sure. It isn't that the prophetic word was insufficient or inadequate, but with its fulfillment, we should pay the more heed until the day spring rises. The morning star appears in our hearts.

Knowing this first, having this as a foundation, that the Scriptures, these prophetic words that have been fulfilled and embodied and expressed the truth of them, the fullness of deity and bodily form in Jesus Christ, these Scriptures that pertain to him before and after are not of any private origination. People didn't just make it up. Ezekiel wasn't just sitting there by the river Kabar saying, well, this captivity thing is pretty dull.

Let me see if I can write some fiction. The apostles didn't decide, well, we're making too much money in the fishing business. Let's make ourselves persecuted and hounded and crucified by

writing some fabulous imaginary stories about a guy we used to know a while back that was executed as a criminal.

Let's turn him into something fantastic and get killed for it. He says it did not arise from somebody's personal ideas. Men spoke.

Holy men of God spoke. And remember, writing was the record of men speaking. When you read a letter from the apostle Paul, when you read the book of Jeremiah, whether it is an apostle or a prophet, they didn't sit down at a table like we would with a little candle and an inkwell and a quill and say, well, let me scratch out a little Scripture here.

They spoke. They were orators. They were Jerusalem.

They were proclaiming and preaching. And there was a Baruch, or there was a Mark, or there was somebody there to take their words down. Dr. Luke.

Epaphras. Somebody was there to take down the spoken words. Notice, these prophetic words made more sure the Scriptures.

Men spoke as they were moved. There is something about speaking. The Bible is big on speaking, spoken prayers, spoken prophecies.

This is why, interestingly, when we get together for church, we don't all gather and sit in our pews and then pick up a book and read together. People speak. Teachers teach.

Preachers preach. There is fellowship of the spoken variety. There is something about the voice.

Evening and morning and at noon, I will pray and cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice. So these Scriptures are transcripts. They are shorthand notes taken down and elaborated from the men who spoke.

And this becomes important because how do you verify? See, we like to think of texts. We think, well, and we say, and there is nothing wrong with it, but this is what we say. The books of the Bible are inspired.

They are inerrant and infallible in what? In the original autographs, right? We say, if we could get back and find Paul's original draft of Galatians, that is mistake-free, error-free, totally inspired and perfect. Well, guess what? Paul probably didn't pen any of his letters personally. Paul was pacing up and down in a room or in a prison cell, prophesying, apostolizing, preaching, and there was somebody over there in the corner frantically trying to get it all down.

So this is why Paul says at the end, see with what large letters I write with my own hand. I'm putting my little signature here at the end because his eyes were messed up from being stoned and whipped. You think about that 40 lashes minus one all of those times.

You think those lashes didn't ever hit him in the head? Didn't ever hit him in the face? He was a mess by the time. That's why he said, I can't decide whether it's better to stay here and keep being an apostle for you or to go to glory and be with the Lord because I think he was getting pretty creaky. The medical options were pretty limited in his day.

But it's spoken, and it's important to know that it was spoken. It was preached. That's why he says we have the prophetic word, the prophetic oration made more certain.

The word of God is designed to be proclaimed, to be spoken aloud, to be communicated. It doesn't say writing the truth to one another in love, does it? Speaking the truth. When you come together, let each one have a psalm, a hymn or a spiritual song.

Singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord. Encouraging and edifying one another while it is called today. This is spoken interaction.

Now, obviously, if you're joining us by way of a recording or the Internet, you're at the very best, or at the very least, a time delay. And we may end up having to type. But the optimum fellowship is spoken.

Our fellowship with God is designed to be spoken. It forces us to concentrate when we formulate our thoughts. We're not just kind of groaning in the Spirit to God.

We put subjects and verbs and adjectives. We couch it, we phrase it, we express it, because it's for our benefit that we pray. Oh God, look down on my heart, see my desires, and please answer them all.

That's not the drill. The drill is think, solidify, and in the very act. You know how when we talk to each other, in the very act of speaking, sometimes you answer your own question, or you realize how something sounds when you put it into words, and it is for our own benefit.

So it's not an accident that there is an emphasis here on the speaking. Prophecy never came about. And by the way, the verbs in both Hebrew and Greek are vocal and verbal, for profituo, keruso, for preaching, and similar verbs in Hebrew.

Holy men of God spoke as they were born along, carried along, buoyed up by, supported by the Holy Spirit. Now chapter two. So the focus here is the communication of God's truth through holy men of God to the people of God who are interested.

And that is what we are doing tonight. Not that I'm a holy man, but holy here is the sense of sanctification, which means set apart. You remember sanctification, holy, hagios in Greek here doesn't mean glows in the dark with righteousness effusing from every pore.

It means set apart. Be ye set apart, because I am set apart, saith the Lord, distinct and separate, unique in some regard. But chapter two, verse one, there were also false prophets among the

people, even as there will be false teachers among you.

False prophets, false teachers who will infiltrate. This is what the word actually means. It's only, forms of it are only used twice in the New Testament.

And in both cases, it means to infiltrate, to bring something in that is under the defenses, goes around the things that should stop it. Who will infiltrate destructive heresies. The word heresies is the Greek word, high races, which did not originally mean what it means in our English transliteration.

We say he's a heretic. That's a heresy. That's some abominable distortion and perversion.

High races in Greek just meant a faction. It is translated several places in the book of acts as sect. It'll say men from the sect of the Pharisees or men from the sect of the Sadducees.

And the word there is high races. And it doesn't mean that the Pharisees and Sadducees were all heretics. It just means a, a unique understanding and identifiable philosophy or an identifiable mindset or, or group of interpretations.

So there, it is a common view of a thing, philosophical high races. So these men are going to infiltrate a sect type of thinking, a sectarian point of view, a sectarian set of interpretations. And we have seen this repeatedly.

You have, and what it does is it colors everything. Let's, and I, I'm not trying to pick on anybody, but I don't see any way to avoid giving some examples. Take your, your charismatics and Pentecostals, their view of the active imminent role of the Holy Spirit in things other than scripture.

They see it everywhere. It is, it is a, a point of view that sees the Holy Spirit and how many birds fly overhead in impulses that you receive. You get spooky, mysterious forms of guidance.

Isn't it something I, I, the telephone was ringing. And as soon as I opened the door, it stopped. And that made me think that, that I was starting down this road, but now I'm going to stop because the telephone stopped.

And I think that was from the spirit. I just felt an impulse. I had a, I had a glow.

I had a, not to say that the Holy Spirit cannot give us impulses. He can, and he does, but that is not our view of the way life works. We don't sit around waiting for that impulse in all circumstances.

And in all ways, God can do whatever God wants. God does give us impulses and it is the Holy Spirit acting on us, but it's not routine. They are usually exceptional.

Think of the old Testament. How often did the spirit come upon somebody so that he could slay

the enemy with the jawbone of an ass or build the temple or the tabernacle or whatever. I mean, it was, it happened, but it wasn't a commonplace.

It wasn't a stock part of the routine. It was sort of exceptional. God does these things today.

Trust me when I tell you there are times when God, the Holy Spirit will compel or impel or, you know, strongly suggest in the military sense. And, and we find ourselves doing certain things, but it's not the norm. It's, it's a special case.

So when he says there were false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you who will seek, who will, who will infiltrate in a non-obvious way, they will bring in, in a, in a way that doesn't raise alarm, destructive points of view, destructive schools of interpretation. And you can see this over the last 150 years. Look at your, your Tübingen school or the Graf Velhausen group, the higher critical method of Bible study that says, let's treat it like humanly originated text.

And let's take out anything that smacks of the miraculous or the supernatural. This is a later invention by mythologizers. Let's strip that away and find the historical Jesus.

Or let's interpret everything as, as sort of a spooky presence of the Holy spirit. And you're going to glossolalia lies and somebody is going to take something out of that. There's going to be miraculous healings and everything is going to be supernatural.

We are called to a natural life that we live by supernatural power. We're not called to a supernatural life. It's, it's, it should be normal.

It should be reasonable, but we partake of the extraordinary. We partake of the eternal in other ways. There are overlays to Christianity where it is going to be all in the light of the things I've mentioned many times before, these little fads and trends that have come through the spiritual life.

Here's the key. It's not just any old viewpoint. These are destructive heresies.

Now look at that word destructive. And if you're a Bible marker, you can put a mark on it or circle it. And then look at your last word in the verse.

It's the same Greek root. This by the way, is the same Greek word that was used of Judas, the son of perdition. It is the word translated perdition, several places in the King James, Apollia, A-P-O-L-L-E-I-A, Apollia, the angel with the key to the bottomless pit, Apollyon, his name comes from this.

The bottomless pit is that place of ruin. It does not mean what people think it means. You can be a believer and suffer perdition, suffer loss.

You can have your rewards utterly wiped out. It doesn't mean you've lost your salvation or you have no future, eternal life, but you can suffer perdition. You can suffer loss.

And these heresies, these schools of thought, these flavors of pseudo Christianity are destructive. They cause believers to lose everything. You are no longer engaged in righteousness by faith.

You are now engaged in works. You are engaged in distraction. You have been deflected.

You have been fooled. You have been deceived. Those who creep into houses and lead astray, silly women laden with sins.

We have that coming up. This is a destructive, it's destructive in the sense that it obviates and neutralizes healthy, productive, fruitful Christian life. You are now on some other agenda.

That's what these men will do. Even denying the Lord who bought them. Now, this has been a great problem for commentators because there is concern about, well, does this mean loss of salvation or what? And the Bible knowledge commentary has a nice summary of the views on this in the different ways that it has historically been explained or understood.

And of course, Dr. Wolvard and Dr. Zuck are responsible for the editing of that. And this is what they say. How can these false teachers who were said to be among the people and whom the Lord has bought? And this is, remember the Greek word for the public marketplace is the Agora.

Well, this is the verb form of Agora, Agorizo, or in this case, they are said to be Agora Santa, which are purchased ones. They are purchased. Well, remember, purchase is redeemed and it's important to understand the separate and distinct works that Christ accomplished on the cross.

Propitiation is not the same as redemption. Propitiation and redemption are not the same as reconciliation. They are different.

They are forensically, they are legally, judicially different operations. Everyone's sins in the entire human race have been propitiated. God does not sentence anyone with the penalty for sins.

That penalty has been paid. It doesn't mean you're off the hook. It kind of reminds me of these individuals that are found not guilty of a murder when everybody thinks they probably are.

So the family comes back after them with a civil suit, which is a different kind of trial, a different legal avenue to try to get some justice. And they feel like something went amok with the trial for the actual crime. So they're, you know, they ended up getting Al Capone on tax evasion because they couldn't get him for all of his other crimes.

But there is a legal avenue. Well, there are different kinds of problems that we incur and getting off on the propitiation part on the penalty for sin doesn't secure salvation. So that's kind of what's

in view here.

And when, when these individuals, these false teachers, these high rhesus purveyors and infiltrators who come into the church and they've got a better way, they've got a new paradigm. This is how we're going to do church. This is how we're going to do the Christian life.

Here's the defining principle. And it's an overlay. It's a super set.

It's a grid. It's some, some perversion of, of scriptural truth. They are believers.

They, in many cases, even deny the Lord that bought them. And if they are bought, they are saved. If you are redeemed, you are saved.

Nobody is redeemed, but the saved unbelievers are not redeemed. And so this is what the, what the Bible knowledge commentary summarizes. How can these false teachers who are among the people, you know, they're part of the church and have been bought.

How can they end up in everlasting destruction? And that's how they are interpreting Apollia. Well, that's the faulty prothesis. Whenever you end up with an error in reasoning, it, you've got to go back and find it.

Did you have a faulty premise or did you draw a faulty conclusion because there was a fallacy in your logic? Well, here, the premise is faulty. How can somebody who is redeemed suffer everlasting destruction? Well, you have misunderstood Apollia. It is not everlasting destruction.

It is ruined and it is utter loss, but it is not utter destruction. And I can prove it. But let's look at what they say here.

How can, how can, how can they end up in everlasting? Several suggestions have been offered. Number one, they were saved, but lost their salvation. We know this is not the case, uh, because many other scriptures, John 3, 16, John 5, 24, uh, he who hears my words and believes in him who sent me has everlasting life and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

That's an act of God. And human beings by no work of will can undo an act of God. John 10, 28, 29, I give them eternal life.

They shall never perish. Neither shall anyone snatch them out of my hand. My father who has given them to me is greater than all.

And no one is able to snatch them out of my father's hand. Uh, number two, maybe we're misunderstanding the word bought, redeemed, bought means the Lord created them, not that he saved them. But this is stretching the word bought all out of shape.

It doesn't. If he wanted to say God created them, he would have used a perfectly good word for

create, uh, not Agora purchased that, that used to have a vision of a slave. They're on the block purchased, brought into possession.

It has nothing to do with manufacture or creation. So that doesn't work. Uh, really distorts and stretches the meaning of our garage.

So number three, maybe the false prophets merely said they were bought by Christ. This however, seems to read a lot into the verse because there's no, they're not claiming to be. I mean, that's just be really awkward.

That doesn't work. Number four, they were redeemed in the sense that Christ paid the redemptive price for their salvation, but they did not apply it to themselves. And so we're not saved.

In other words, the work of Christ is, is sufficient for everyone in the world, believers and unbelievers, but it is only efficient. It is only effective for the ones who accept it. So they were bought potentially, but they didn't cash in the ticket for that redemption to be effective.

Well, again, you're really kind of stretching things out of shape, but this is pretty much the view that the editors of the Bible knowledge commentary take because the others are so impossible to work. They say, well, that must be what it is. So they say, this is a strong argument for unlimited atonement.

The view that Christ died for everyone and against limited atonement, the view that Christ died only for those whom he would later say. However, atonement is related to propitiation. If you atone for a crime, you pay the penalty.

I have atoned for my speeding. I paid my ticket. Uh, I have paid my debt to society.

In other words, atonement is not redemption. They are not the same thing. And this is kind of blurring the lines, uh, in the work of Christ.

So none of those four options, and those are really the only four even remotely viable options. None of those work. Why am I belaboring this? Because there is a real us and them mentality that, that comes from a superficial reading of scripture.

Uh, it partakes of some of this perseverance of the saints and where the good guys, they're the bad guys. And, and, and we, we draw the teeth out of the warning passages of scripture. Half of what scripture is supposed to do is rebuke and correction, right? But if we keep saying, Oh, well this passage is the unbelievers.

We, we just push away the correction and the rebuke and the instruction of God when it is us, you know, that old cartoon they had decades ago now where he said, we have met the enemy and it is us. We have to police ourselves. We have to be on guard because these heresies have

been infiltrated.

These false systems of understanding have come in unawares and that's a concern that we need to take a note of and be, be alarmed about. You can't be alarmed if you say, well, all I got to do is spot the unbelievers and I'm good to go. So even denying the Lord who bought them and bring on themselves swift destruction.

And again, this is a, an, a, a great loss, great ruin. It will be an immediate ruin. And all you have to do is picture the Bama picture, the judgment seat of Christ.

And someone walks up there confidently. I had a great ministry. I led thousands in this direction and I had it all figured out.

And I think by the time they get to the front of the line, they will have already figured out that there was a big oops. And there's going to be, of course, you know, this is my nightmare. You walk up there and you're standing before the Lord and there's this blinding flash where all the wood, hay and stubble goes up and, and you're looking amongst the rapidly diminishing ashes to see, was there anything that survived? Is there a, is there a little amethyst in there somewhere, a little carbuncle or a, you know, corundum or something floating around in the, you know, is there, is it, was there anything at all of the fruit of my life? You know, that was some sort of a gemstone, but this is the idea.

People who perpetrate this sort of heresy, you get the idea that even if there had been something that was accrued earlier in life, that will be lost. Apollia is total loss and you can reverse your rewards. You can negate earlier achievements by later behavior.

Um, does anybody remember athletic awards that were won by OJ Simpson? I mean, if you go back and read a detailed biography, but the only thing he's notable for now is how he ended up, not how he began. And it isn't how you start, it's how you finish. It's a biblical principle over and over again.

So, uh, we want to resist the human urge to sort of rest on our laurels, to hark back and say, boy, I was a, I was a streak across the sky in my younger days. And I, that should have pretty well secured my place in the heavenly pantheon and gotten me at least an apartment in the new Jerusalem. So I'm, I'm going to, I'm going to coast.

I'm going to let my pack slip, let the younger ones, uh, handle the heavy lifting now. And I'll just wait for glory. We can, by apathy, by indifference, by slipping into false understandings and promoting those understandings, wipe out earlier, uh, worthwhile service.

So it's a fact believers can lose rewards. You can be bankrupted. You can be wiped out.

Uh, this is why the Bible over and over again says you have need of endurance. He that endures

to the end, uh, don't quit. Don't slack.

Uh, because slacking off can result in loss. Uh, many will follow their destructive ways. How many different times are we going to have this destructive? It's destructive heresies.

They're going to bring swift destruction and others are going to follow their destructive ways. It is possible for believers to lose, to be applied. And by the way, it is not loss of life.

Yeah, I know this. Satan gets thrown into the bottomless pit, right? Who's got the key to the bottomless pit, Apollyon. And yet who comes back out alive and well from the bottomless pit.

Satan, if it's a pit of Apollia, how does he come back out after a thousand years? Because Apollia does not kill you. It is loss. It is ruin.

Um, these ruinous heresies, they haven't destroyed Christianity. Your church is not obliterated. What did it do? It ruins it.

It, uh, corrodes it, corrupts it. It's not gone. It just suffers great loss.

And that's what Apollia means. Well, we need to pause here and take our break. But, uh, when we come back, we are going to, uh, see one of Peter's favorite subjects, uh, come up.

And, and this is one of the more interesting things I have stumbled across. I learned something totally new, something you had never seen or heard. I suspect anywhere I'd never seen it or heard it anywhere.

And, uh, it's, it is a great illustration of the things that we have seen in our first session tonight. So after the break, uh, Lord willing, we are going to explore unbroken snow in the word of God. And, uh, so let's pause here.