

2Peter 11-09-30b

Let's pick up our study now in 2 Peter, we're in chapter 2, looking at the first few verses of that chapter, and the two things I want to mention as we continue, one is to cover again the ways that people have understood this idea of the false teachers who come in and even denying the Lord that bought them. I gave sort of short shrift to option number three, where they say that the Lord bought them, but he really didn't, is the notion because nearly everybody 99 point something percent of interpreters believe that we are talking about unbelievers here. And so it is a problem for that theory when it says they are denying the Lord that bought them.

If they are unbelievers, then they shouldn't really be bought. So how do you explain that? Well, we talked about the idea that, well, maybe it was potential and they didn't take advantage of it. That was the fourth option.

The third option was, well, they claim they are false professors. They are wolves in sheep's clothing. They were never really saved, but they claim to be those that the Lord has bought.

And I didn't really deal much with why that option isn't workable, but the main reason it isn't workable is that's not what the passage says. They don't deny the Lord that they claim bought them or that they say bought them. This passage says they deny the Lord who bought them.

It's a declarative statement. The Lord has purchased these men. There's no ifs, ands, buts, or maybes.

They have been purchased by the Lord. And you can see the force of Peter's statement here, even biting the hand that fed them is sort of the idea. He says, how can you deny the Lord who purchased you? We talked about the preciousness of the blood of Christ.

And we have talked about that in other passages where how much is the blood of Christ worth? It's worth a lot. And we have been purchased with it, which makes us worth a lot. And nobody ought to sell themselves short or be down on themselves because we have been bought with a price.

Therefore, glorify God in your body. These men have been bought with a price, and they're denying that very Lord. It is as though Peter is just shocked.

How could someone recognizing their redemption do this? That's what the passage says. And you really can't stretch that out of shape and say, well, they weren't really bought. Sorry, the passage says they are bought, denying the Lord who bought them.

If you start stretching this out of shape, what other passages are you going to stretch out of shape in the same way? It is a distortion. This isn't a claim they are making. This is of a piece, you can almost imagine Peter thinking of himself in the courtyard during the trial of the Lord

Jesus.

And you remember the tears and the grief and the agony, the mental agony that Peter went through after denying the Lord, denying that he even knew him, and how awful that is. And you've got that same apostle saying, these men are denying the Lord who bought them. So these are in fact believers.

And so the problem is elsewhere. It isn't that they are unsaved men and you can easily dismiss their behavior. Well, of course, an unsaved man, it's a more sobering thought that Christians can do these things.

And we can. And we need to be sober and watchful and diligent, not only over our own souls, but over what might be infiltrating the Christian community at large, infiltrating our homes, our families, our churches, whatever it may be. We need to be watchful and aware.

And that's the idea. The second thing I want to mention is that as we move into chapter 2 in 2 Peter, we enter into the territory and into the text that is covered by Jude. If you keep your finger here in 2 Peter and go to Jude beginning at verse 4, it's the last page before Revelation begins.

Jude has his introduction, mercy and peace and love. Beloved, when I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints, because verse 4, certain men have crept in unnoticed. This is your surreptitious infiltration, crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men who turned the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, if I had to guess what this might be like, and again I hesitate to name names, but my hesitation doesn't mean I won't do it. You look at Bart Ehrman. Once a Christian God-fearing, Bible-believing, conservative evangelical who quote-unquote lost his faith, and he didn't lose it through his studies, and he didn't lose it through an investigation of the text, he lost it through personal disappointment.

Many, many people have abandoned their faith because they felt like God did them wrong. They lost a child. They prayed for someone and that prayer wasn't answered to their satisfaction, and they're sort of shaking their fist in God's face and saying, well, if you're not going to do what I want, then I'm going to stop following you, which is just, this is the kind of arrogance that harbors itself in our souls, and we've got to watch out for it.

You can be a believer. You can get angry with God and go in a very bad direction a very long distance. It doesn't mean you're not saved.

You can deny the Lord who bought you. We don't want to even take one step in that direction, but it is possible, and history is rife with examples. So Jude says the same thing Peter says, and

we're going to be kind of bouncing back and forth.

This is one of the issues that is raised by scholars who are trying to say, well, one or the other of these books is not canonical. Which one came first? Which one borrowed from the other? Did they both borrow from a common source? These endless scholarly wranglings, and nobody can make up their mind. There are some that say Peter had read Jude's letter and thought it was good and included it in his.

There are others that say just the reverse, that Peter wrote first and Jude saw it and thought, well, I'm going to extract a little bit of that and send it on because I think it's good. We don't know, we don't have to know if either one of these individuals ever saw the other's work or heard it. It's the same Holy Spirit.

It's much the same situation in a lot of areas in the early church. We shouldn't be surprised that the warnings would be the same. Do you not think that in several pulpits across the country there might be pastors who are preaching confidence in God in the face of economic downturn, or confidence in God in the face of nuclear armament in Korea and Iran? Do you not think that there might be pastors preaching similar messages from the Word of God in the light of similar circumstances? So we shouldn't say, well, now which one of these pastors heard the other one and which one preached first? If it's a valid message from the Word of God, then it's God, the Holy Spirit, just as Peter has pointed out.

Men spoke as they were born up, carried along, supported by the Holy Spirit. That's all we need to know, and that's how we identify what is Scripture, not by a formula, not by textual criticism or textual comparison, but by the Spirit bearing with our spirit telling us, this is your Heavenly Father talking. This is the Son of God being illuminated and brought to life for your soul and for your edification.

That's how we know what Scripture is, not a creed, not a council, not a church proclamation, not a scholar or a pastor or anybody else. God the Holy Spirit tells us in our spirit when we are asking whether that question is getting answered. If we are seeking whether we have found what we're looking for, and if we're knocking whether or not this is the door that is open from God, God the Holy Spirit will tell us.

That is our gift. It's our heritage as church-age believers. Men spoke the Word of God, prophetic truth, apostolic truth, Christological truth from the Holy Spirit.

If the Holy Spirit is pitching and the Holy Spirit is catching, then we are going to know it when we hear it. We're going to know it when we see it. You don't need any claptrap.

We don't need any human mechanisms. You say, well, that's awfully subjective. It sure is.

It is only going to bring truth to those who are diligently seeking it. Proverbs chapter 2, those

verses that we memorized, if you seek for it, if you search for it, if you lift up your voice for it, it doesn't say if you think real hard about how bad you want it, does it? It says if you lift up your voice and cry out, then you will understand the fear of the Lord. Then you will find the knowledge of God.

At some point, you'd be surprised what vocal prayer will do. Of course, it used to be if people saw you sitting in your car or walking along and your mouth was moving, they thought, well, that's a nut. That's something wrong with that person.

But now they just figure you've got a Bluetooth or a speaker thing. You can pray out loud in your car driving back and forth. It's just you and God.

Everybody else just figures you're singing along to the radio or something. You can be inconspicuous. We're going to be returning to Jude, so don't forget where it is.

Look at chapter 2 now. Many will follow their destructive ways. These hieracies, these sect-like understandings produce behaviors.

That's why they're destructive. They change the way people act. They started out as destructive heresies, and they end up producing destructive ways.

We are supposed to observe, interpret, and then what? Apply. It ought to make a difference. If we're learning the truth of God, we should be improving our ways, right? Well, it works in the opposite direction as well.

If we imbibe and take on board destructive beliefs, it is going to affect our ways. We can believe things about ourselves. We can develop an inferiority complex, or we can develop a gnawing worry.

We can develop a suspicion of somebody in our periphery, or a bitter root of jealousy or some sort of negative thought about someone. It's a root of bitterness that springs up. We get bitter because we think we've been mistreated or we think we've been shortchanged or we think somebody has done us wrong.

It changes everything. It is like putting on a pair of sick green glasses, and every time you look around in the world, everything is this sickly pallor instead of the beautiful, vibrant colors that God created. It changes everything, and our behavior changes.

Our conversation changes. The way we operate changes. Things that we believe and things that we place our faith in condition our worldview, and it changes our ways.

Destructive beliefs lead to destructive ways in the same way that constructive beliefs, constructive faith, changes our ways. James is going to talk about this. I will show you my faith by my works in my life.

It will out. It will make a difference. It's not academic.

It's not abstract. It's not philosophical. It's practical.

It's pragmatic. It is rubber meets the road. I am doing things differently.

I look at the world differently. My conversation, my thoughts, my actions are different because of what I believe. I think, therefore, I am.

You remember the Latin for that? Cogito ergo sum. Right? That and e pluribus unum are about the only Latin I know. Cogito ergo sum.

I think, therefore, I am. Well, what we think makes us who we are. You are what you think.

So this is worse than somebody coming in and shooting. It's worse than someone coming in and robbing. It's worse than someone coming in and burning the church house down or running off with things because this is attacking our eternal destiny, our eternal rewards.

Our eternal future is under attack through the avenue of thought and belief. That's why Peter uses destructive. Apollia, three different times.

Apollumi, the verb. It can destroy. This is worse than termites, worse than corruption that would destroy the flesh.

This destroys eternal things. Because of whom the way of truth will be maligned, blasphemed. The way of falsehood is infiltrated into the church, amongst the brethren, and the way of truth gets maligned.

Truth is obscured and lumped in with this falsehood and the truth suffers. Many will follow this. By covetousness they will exploit you.

How do you know that you are going to be saved? How do these false teachers that you see on television fill these giant venues? We fit comfortably in residential spaces. These guys fill, in some cases, stadiums, fill auditoriums, hundreds, yea, thousands of people. What is the attraction? I ask myself, what draws people to this manifestly false gospel, false teaching, perversion and distortion? Well, in our day, the most sure way to fill an auditorium or to fill an auditorium is to preach the prosperity gospel.

God will give you what you want, positive confession, sow your seed into the kingdom and the windows of heaven will open and you're going to get stuff. God is going to solve your problems. God is going to supernaturally work in your life and make all kinds of your goals happen.

What is that hooking? What part of our soul is it grabbing? Is it the hunger and thirst after righteousness to know God, to be of service, to be useful and reflect His glory in the future? What

part of the human soul does that connect with? I want it and I want it now. I'm hurting and I want the pain to stop. I'm lacking and I want stuff and circumstances to be different.

I want influence. I want to get over. I want things to be better for me than they are.

The biblical name for that is covetousness. And that's what you have here. By covetousness, they will exploit you.

Notice it doesn't say by covetousness, they will exploit others. By covetousness, many will be exploited and put it in the abstract. He says, no, they're going to exploit you.

Peter says, listen to me, wake up, watch. You will be exploited. They are going to come at you through the Achilles heel of what we want.

Remember the Apostle Paul says covetousness, which is idolatry, idol worship, a substitute at the top spot of priorities. It is not the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is me, myself, and I. Covetousness is idolatry.

Idolize the acquisition of things. Idolize power. Idolize... This is the same reason that people read horoscopes.

I will get over. I have secret inside information that's going to enable me to manipulate circumstances. Today, the horoscope says don't make any big plans.

So I'm not going to get on to Expedia.com and get those airline tickets. I'm going to wait until tomorrow when the horoscope says now is the time for long range endeavors. It will work better.

I've got inside information. This is why people end up cultivating the supernatural. Palm reading and all the other forms of alleged spiritualism.

Control over the self. You go to Scientology and some of these others where this is how you can control your own soul. This is how you can make yourself better.

You've got self-improvement courses. I'm going to be this. I'm going to be that.

I'm going to be the other. It's all covetousness. We want to watch anything that appeals to us on the basis of just follow this plan, adopt this strategy, buy my book, get my resource, listen to my tape, and you're going to be happy.

You're going to be healthy, wealthy, and wise. By the way, I told you I'm listening to this Franklin thing. It's really funny because what is Ben Franklin's most famous saying that he put in Poor Richard's Almanac? Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy and wealthy and wise.

Well, whoever wrote this book said it's funny because later on, Mark Twain, Sam Clemens commented on that and he said it is the most infernal saying that was ever created. My parents

tried it on me and they got me up earlier and earlier every morning and look at me. I'm a physical wreck.

I'm indolent. Look at how I turned out. This getting up early doesn't make you healthy, wealthy, or wise.

And he really savaged it in the way only he can. But you know, people always have a formula. Here's your formula.

Buy my investment advice. Get my plan for working at home. You can make millions in your pajamas and all of these things.

Self plastic surgery. Do your own hair removal. Do it yourself.

Here it is. Here's the secret. You're going to be so happy when you get my product.

All the infomercials. Covetousness. Covetousness.

Appealing to the self. You deserve it. Do this for yourself.

They will exploit you with deceptive words. This is a message that is not the truth of God. They are not speaking because they are representing and being born along by the Holy Spirit.

This is a man-made thing. For a long time, their judgment has not been idle. This literally means drowsy.

It hasn't been napping. Their judgment has not been on a snooze somewhere. This judgment is a living, alive, breathing, alert thing.

God has already judged this behavior. You remember the fallen angels. They have already been judged.

Their sentence has already been passed. The sentence for those who lead believers astray is already fixed. The law has already been passed.

The mandatory sentence is already on the books. There is no appeal. There is no mitigating or extenuating circumstances.

Men who go to a group of believers and lead them astray, there is a penalty already on the books. It is apolia. You lose everything.

This is the danger of being a Bible teacher. Not an honest error like, well, I thought that was what it said, but I didn't parse the verb correctly. If someone goes in and starts exploiting the people of God in this way, milking them for money, taking advantage of them, appealing almost consciously to their covetousness, and you can think of examples that certainly seem to fit this description,

these men, it doesn't matter what they might have ever accumulated at any point in their life, the penalty for leading the people of God astray is total loss of all things.

They will be in the darkness, which is outside. They will be outside the New Jerusalem. They will be far, far away, waiting for a long overdue shipment of leaves from the Tree of Life.

They will be as far away as you can get. And it doesn't matter how notorious or how successful they are in this life. The penalty for deceiving the people of God is total loss.

You get nothing. Bupkis, zilch, zero, nada, nothing. No reward, no privilege.

You are the lowest of the low. You are the serfs in the kingdom of God when this happens. And it is a sober thought that, you know, because I don't think men wake up some morning and say, you know what I do? I think I'm going to deceive the people of God and just lead them all astray and put myself under the most appropriate condemnation that God can think of.

How does this happen? Why would someone do this, especially being a believer? The first deception is ourselves. We deceive ourselves first before we deceive somebody else. And there are people who wake up every morning and tell themselves they are doing God's work.

Look at the people I'm helping. Yeah, you know, I'm probably stretching a point. I'm probably making some stuff up here.

But look at the results. Look at how happy people are. Look, I'm doing a benefit.

They sell it to themselves before they sell it to others. And that's how they can get up in the morning and look at themselves and look at others and feel like they're doing great. And we have to watch out for that Jeremiah 17, nine heart.

Their judgment has not been idle and their destruction. How many times are we going to get this Apollia word? Their destruction does not snooze, does not sleep. For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, and I'm going to glide over a little of this because I want to tell you what I promised I would tell you earlier on, but I didn't go as fast as I thought I would.

If God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved for judgment, it's not hell. This in Greek is the word Tartaros. Tartaros is not the eternal burning lake of fire.

This is a different thing. The angels who sinned, not the angels who rebelled. This is your Genesis six angels, sons of God, daughters of men.

We've been through that many times. If God did not spare them, God and notice the analogy. That's another reason we know that God's talking about, through Peter, believers, because these are unfallen angels who sinned.

Angels have free will. An angel can sin without rebelling against God and following Satan. It has happened at least once that we know of in Genesis six.

These angels have a separate and distinct fate. They are not destined for the lake of fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. If that was the case, why wouldn't Peter just say, if God did not spare Satan and his angels, but all of these examples are coming out of Genesis, and that's important.

It doesn't even say, well, I'll go back and translate this. I want to get to something else. Chains of darkness to be reserved for judgment.

Their judgment is still future. They are being held for judgment because their offense is different. Satan and his angels have already been judged.

This is different. He did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing the flood on the world of the ungodly. I don't know about you, but I've heard just dozens and dozens and dozens of times Noah being held up as an Old Testament example of evangelism.

If you go in and say, you know, God never told the Israelites to evangelize. Well, what about Noah? Noah, preacher of righteousness. Noah preached the whole time that he was building the ark, he preached.

Well, perhaps he did, but they act like this was in the light of the impending judgment. Noah was preaching righteousness, you know, repent, get in the ark, and for all the hundreds of years he built the ark, he was just preaching, you know, repent for the doom is at hand. Here's what's interesting.

Do you see the italics in that verse? Where are the italics? One of eight people. If you scratch that out, the verse, and why would those words not be in there, if that's what Peter meant? But it took me a while to puzzle over this, because I'm thinking it's really odd, and I know there's some rough Greek in 2 Peter, but this you can't excuse on rough Greek. This does not say one of eight people.

Well, let me cut to the chase and give you something to chew on before next week. Keep your finger in 2 Peter and turn back over to Jude. Jude 14, and you remember this verse.

Now, Enoch, 7th from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, Behold, the Lord comes with 10,000 of his saints. Enoch prophesied, and this has got its own set of problems, because this is sort of a quote from the book of Enoch, which is not in the canon, etc., etc. Regardless of that, look at the very first phrase.

Enoch, 7th from Adam. If you look at this in Greek, it's got the word for 7, then it's got Apa, Adam,

from Adam, and it literally says, 7th from Adam, Enoch, if you look at it in Greek. It says, literally, he spoke beforehand.

This is pro-efetusen, he prophesied beforehand, pro-fetuo, also, to these, then it says, 7th from Adam, Enoch. That's the word order in Greek. Makes a great lot of sense, doesn't it? He spoke before, but also.

Of course, but is the post-positive, so you say, but he spoke before to these. 7th from Adam, Enoch. Got it? Hebdomas, this is like, you know, Hepta, 7, right? Hebdomas, Apa, Adam, Enoch.

Let me say it one more time, then we're going to go back to 2nd Peter. Hebdomas, Apa, Adam, Enoch. Right? If I left out the, from Adam, it would be Hebdomas, Enoch.

Right? 7th, Enoch. Go back to Peter, and in Greek, we have Ogdon, Noe, 8th, Noah. That's all it says.

There's no people, there's no others, there's no one of, it's 8th, Noah. Now, in Jude, it said, 7th from Adam, right? Here, we have 8th, Noah, righteousness announcer, or Noah, the 8th righteousness announcer. This is the patented, one-of-a-kind, only get it here, Sam Hall translation, Noah, 8th announcer of righteousness.

You say, whoa, wait a minute, if Enoch was 7th, and Noah is a couple more generations, how does he end up being 8th? I'm running a little over time here, but you'll appreciate this. Turn over to Genesis, chapter 4 and 5. It's conveniently all on one page in my Bible. Genesis 4 and 5, end of 4 and beginning of 5. This is the book of the genealogy of Adam in chapter 5. It gives all the generations.

You get Adam, then Seth, then Enoch, and then Canaan, and then Mahalalel, then Jared, then Enoch, then Methuselah, then Lamech, and then Noah. If you count from Adam, Adam is 1, Seth is 2, Enoch is 3, Canaan is 4, Mahalalel is 5, Jared is 6, Enoch is 7, as Jude says, Methuselah is 8, Lamech is 9, and Noah is 10. Peter says, just for the sake of argument, that Noah is the 8th preacher of righteousness.

This is what I did. I said, let me just number Noah 8 and work backwards. So, to cut a long story short, if you do this, number 1 is Enoch.

You've got Adam, Seth, Enoch. Enoch is Adam's grandson. And if you think about it, God created Adam, God created Eve, that pair gave birth to Seth.

Seth is the son of created Adam and Eve. The first time you have a child that comes from non-created, second generation people, is when Enoch marries one of his sisters, or when Seth has Enoch by marrying one of his sisters. Enoch is the first guy that God didn't sort of touch the parents, and here comes the child.

He's a grandson. Not only that, but, read his, he is mentioned in a real interesting way. Look at the end of chapter 4. Adam knew his wife again, she bore a son and named him Seth, for God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed.

Abel was left without issue, because Cain killed him. So, what Abel was not able to do, have offspring, Seth is able to do. And what is the proof of that? Enoch.

And he's mentioned in the last verse of chapter 4, as for Seth, to him also a son was born and he named him Enoch. And then what does it say? Look at it. Then men began to call upon the name of the Lord.

Something changed. When Enoch came along, the kind of contact that Adam and Eve and apparently Seth had with God, went away. Now, if you want to hear about God and know about God, you've got to preach Him.

Men began to call upon, men began to vocalize, call upon the name of the Lord. This is when preaching begins. Who's the first preacher of God? Enoch.

Who's the second preacher of God? Enoch. Who's the third preacher of God? Enoch. Who's the fourth preacher of God? Enoch.

Who's the fifth preacher of God? Enoch. And Genesis doesn't say anything specifically about Noah doing some big evangelistic crusade before the flood. Peter is talking about something else.

And so that's what we're going to look at when we come back next week. What does it mean to be a preacher of righteousness? He is the eighth preacher of righteousness, not the first. Not one of eight saved in the delusion preaching it afterward.

He is the eighth preacher of righteousness. And there's a reason for that preaching. And that's what Peter is talking about.

What is the preaching? What is true preaching? What is false preaching? What do you follow and what do you not? And I think that's what he's talking about here. The construction in Greek is almost identical to what you have in Jude. Enoch, seventh from Adam.

Here's what he said. Well, here's Noah, the eighth preacher of righteousness. Let's talk about him.

Well, anyway, I thought that was very fascinating. So I wanted to be sure and get to it. Sorry for running over.

But we'll continue here next week. Father, thank you for the truth of your word. Thank you for the powerful presentation of the Lord Jesus Christ and his work for us, our place in your plan and

purpose, our opportunities, the potential for our lives both now and in the future.

We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will remind us and motivate us through these things that we have seen so that we can change our ways and walk in that narrow way that leads to the straight gate of life. Lay up the gold, silver and precious stones that will reflect your glory both now and in the ages to come. We pray it in Jesus' name.

Amen.