

## **2Peter 11-10-07a**

This is Friday, the 7th of October, 2011. We are in the second letter of Peter, 2 Peter chapter 2. We will begin by taking just a moment to go to the Lord in prayer. Father, thank you for this opportunity to spend time together studying your word, hoping to find in it those truths that will help each one of us live in a way that is pleasing in your sight, that brings glory to the Lord Jesus Christ and fulfills the purpose for which you created us and saved us and have destined us for participation at this time in history as a part of the body and bride of Christ.

We know that these truths are particularly important and pertinent as the age draws to a close and as we, whether it is the end of our lives or the end of the age, find ourselves face to face with the Lord Jesus and hopefully equipped to serve him and to reflect his glory in the ages that are to come. We pray that as we look at this passage together, God the Holy Spirit will illuminate it, will make it meaningful and applicable for each one of us. We pray it in Jesus' name.

Amen. The passage that we are looking at, really this entire letter, but particularly this section, centers on the Lord Jesus Christ. He is at the focus point, he is at the fulcrum of the idea picture that Peter paints beginning in the end of chapter 1. He talks about the Lord Jesus and says, we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

And this puts the Lord Jesus right where he belongs. He is at the center. It is the truth about the Lord Jesus that defines the faith.

It isn't just any old faith, it's not a system of obedience, it's not a way to get through life successfully, more successfully than some other way. Scripture as a whole focuses on the Lord Jesus Christ. The Old Testament looks forward to him.

The Gospels declare him. The New Testament epistles look back at him and comprehend not only what he began in the first advent, but what he will conclude and complete and move forward at the rapture and second advent. It is all about the Lord Jesus Christ.

And that recognition, which we are familiar with, helps us in this passage because this is the movement that Peter introduces to his readers, his hearers, in this letter. He says, when the Lord Jesus came, we were eyewitnesses. We saw the glory and the recognition that God the Father gave him.

He is not just any old body. He's not just another rabbi. He's not just an inspired teacher.

He's not an ascended master or a wise man such as Confucius or Gautama Buddha or somebody. He is unique. God the Father spoke from heaven.

I was there. I heard it. And I am telling you, as a commissioned apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, this is the truth about him.

We heard this voice, which came from heaven, when we were with him on the holy mountain. And so we have the prophetic word confirmed. All of the scriptures that looked forward to the Lord Jesus Christ are confirmed in the eyewitness testimony of the apostles.

The prophets said he was coming. Moses said he was coming. Isaiah and Ezekiel and Daniel and all the rest said he was coming.

He has come. The apostles are eyewitnesses that he came and that he fulfilled those Old Testament prophecies and that he communicated fresh truth. He imparted the Holy Spirit as the definitional common ingredient of this age.

And that testimony is entrusted to the apostles. It's really, really important that we have this in the forefront of our minds. That's why Peter states it here so explicitly, so emphatically.

We have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed like a light shining in a dark place. And heeding that testimony, paying attention to what the apostles say, this starts out as an external light. They saw it.

They saw the glory. They are testifying to that glory. And when we appropriate that knowledge by faith, when we grab hold of that testimony and that actual truth, it's not just that Jesus was here, but it is the content of his work, his teaching, his role in God's unfolding plan for human history.

When we get hold of that, there is a light that begins to shine in our own soul. The day dawns. The morning star rises.

And now it is our truth. I don't believe it because an apostle said it. I believe it because God the Holy Spirit has affirmed it in my own heart.

That's kind of where we have gotten to through the first chapter of 2 Peter. So now it is logical that in this next chapter, of course there weren't divisions in the letter, Peter didn't chapter and versify the thing, but in this section of the letter that is coming up, he is going to talk about what happens if you miss that argument, if you miss that construction in God's plan. God foretold it for a reason.

God didn't decide that he would just spring Jesus on humanity out of nowhere and try to explain it in the moment. He gave us plenty of time as human beings to get used to the idea that there would be a Savior coming, that there would be a Redeemer, a Goel, a Mashiach, a Davidic King, an Abrahamic land owner who would secure and bequeath the promised inheritance to God's people. There is a reason why it was foretold.

We just take it for granted. Well, of course, you've got the Old Testament. It didn't have to be foretold.

The Old Testament people or those in the Old Testament days could have just wandered around

bumping into things and flash, here is Jesus ascending as it were from Mount Olympus or Mount Zion or somewhere and trying to explain it all. We needed time. We needed groundwork.

We needed a foundation laid. The Jewish people in particular, the Israelites, needed to know beforehand so that when he came they would have the opportunity to accept him. Notice that it is the same pattern now.

We didn't just sort of get a little bit of apostolic testimony that, well, Jesus came and died for your sins, so go with that, put your faith in that, be saved. We've got extensive amounts of prophecy leading up to the next coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Why? Same reason all of the prophecy was there the first time, which is we have got to prepare.

We have this groundwork that needs to be laid, a structure that needs to be built so that when he comes we're ready. We've already seen an example of a nation that was given the plan and given the expectation and told the details up front and they weren't ready. Israel was not ready when Jesus came the first time.

There was the prophetic word. They say, well, maybe we didn't have enough evidence. Maybe there wasn't enough proof.

Maybe God should have thrown in a few more miracles and a couple of more prophets and been more explicit and given more detail. Of course, we know that that's not the problem. The problem was lack of a receptive attitude in the hearts of the people who were on the earth at the time that Jesus came.

Now, Peter says, we've got the same kind of word made more certain because Jesus has already come once. This isn't going to be an innovation. This isn't going to be an inauguration or an introduction.

This is going to be a return. He is coming back. And the word back means something.

We have the prophetic word made more certain. So the mission of the apostles is to rehearse everything that happened up to and including Jesus' first coming and then prepare the new people of God, the church, the body and bride of Christ for his return. So in order to do that, we've got to know what the nature of that information is.

What is it that is true and what isn't? So this is where you make the turn into chapter two. If you're going to heed this light shining in a dark place so that the morning dawns and the day star rises in your heart, the first thing you have to know is what's true and what's not. No prophecy of Scripture, whether it's Old Testament or New Testament, is invented by the author.

If it is a genuine prophecy from God, it comes via the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the medium through which communication takes place. In the absence of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is through the Holy Spirit that communication comes between man and God, between God and man.

There is a gulf fixed. We don't go to heaven. God doesn't come to earth.

How does information go back and forth? God, the Holy Spirit, superintends the communication of truth. He imparts wisdom and power to the communicator. He imparts wisdom and power to the communicatees, those who receive it.

We are taught by the Holy Spirit. What you hear and what you latch onto doesn't make sense to you because of me, except as God, the Holy Spirit, enables me to get it across. And as He enables you to grasp it.

Without Him, I can't get anything straight, and neither can you. And neither can I when I'm looking at it. So He is integral.

He is completely a part of the entire process from beginning to end. He made sure the information is here to begin with in the Scripture, and He is in me and in you. And when we are in Him, then this communication process takes place, and we end up with a live communication channel from God's throne of glory straight to our hearts.

And that's how it works. So Peter says we've got to understand that first, that if we are going to be plugged into God's truth, it's not a matter of a formula. It's not a creed.

It's not a dogma. It's not canned or bottled or somehow graven in stones with the finger of God. It is a dynamic process where the truth of God can live in our hearts and make a difference because we have a live connection to heaven.

We have a live connection to God's throne through and only through the Holy Spirit. Not through the communicator. Not through the communicatee.

Not through the ink on the page. God, the Holy Spirit, is the living connection. He is what makes the Word of God alive and powerful.

Without the Spirit, it's like only having one tube of your epoxy. It's just goo. So you get to chapter 2. He says, Prophecy never came by the will of man.

Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. But just as in anticipation of Jesus' first coming, there were false prophets. Pseudoprophetai.

That's the Greek word. You don't even have to translate it. Pseudoprophetai.

Now, if you think about it though, that word could have two applications or two meanings. So I'll give you a second to think about it. Pseudoprophetai.

You know what pseudo means. You know what a prophet is. So is he pseudo because he's not really a prophet, or is he a prophet of false things? Is he a prophet of falsehood, or is he falsely

claiming to be a prophet? If you think about a doctor, if he doesn't really have a medical degree, and he just put on a white coat and one of those stethoscopes, and said, Hey, come in.

I'm Dr. Hull. Well, that would be a pseudo doctor. Or he might be a doctor with a medical degree, but he's a complete quack.

You've got cancer, and he prescribes take two aspirin and call me in the morning. You see what I mean. There's two places where the falsehood could come in.

Either he's not a legitimate communicator at all, and is pseudo in that sense, or he's a legitimate communicator, but he has prostituted or betrayed or corrupted his function, and is putting out false stuff. Well, the answer is yes. It is both.

Because if you do the latter, you have basically done the former, right? If you start practicing quackery, it doesn't matter what you've got hanging on the wall. You are no longer a real doctor. A real doctor has to have the identity and the function, has to have the designation and the application.

So a pseudo prophet, and Peter doesn't try to parse out which one it is, because whoever this is, it doesn't really matter if they at one time were legitimate. What they are teaching now delegitimizes them. So you don't have to go back and say, well, do you have a seminary degree? Okay, you're a true prophet that teaches falsehood.

No, you're a purveyor. But it's important because he says, just as there were pseudo prophet among the people, there will be pseudo didaskaloi. And you know from the whole Poimankai didaskalos pastor teacher, you know what didaskalos is.

Pseudo didaskaloi, and the same sort of dichotomy is wrapped up in that word, and it's really kind of a both and. If you begin to teach falsehood, you are no longer a true teacher. You aren't really a teacher.

You are a destructive force instead of a constructive force. You are not edifying. You are tearing down.

And you can't claim to be a builder, and every job site you go to, you take stuff apart. You're not a builder. It doesn't matter what you started out as.

So another critical thing to look at in verse one here is, it says, there were also, and by the way, I think the very first word in chapter two, verse one, but there were, this is the post-positive, adversative conjunction, duh. But many times, its force is not so much adversative as continuative. And it is often translated now.

And I think it's a better translation here. Prophecy never came by the will of man. Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

He's talking about the past. He's talking about those men who were looking ahead to the Messiah, to the Redeemer, to the Goel, to the seed of the woman who would crush Satan's head. Now, in addition to these holy men who spoke as they were carried along, there were also false prophets.

You see how it's almost unfortunate that we have the chapter break here. There is prophecy. Holy men of God spoke.

The Holy Spirit moved them along. Now there were also pseudo-prophetize. Whenever you have the one, you have the other.

And from the earliest days, there were false prophetizers. Think about, Moses hadn't even got down from Sinai before they started saying, look at this cow. This is what brought us out of Egypt.

That's a false prophecy. And notice, among the people. This is my point.

Among the people. This wasn't a Hittite coming over the hill and saying, hi there, my name is Bill the Hittite, and I've got a new God for you. They rose among the people.

They rose from within. And you know, this is sort of a traitorous affair. The worst enemy you can have is someone who breaks bread with you and then lifts up his heel against you.

This is what Jesus said of Judas and referred back to the psalm. Someone who is in confidence and is in acceptability and is inside the walls, inside your circle wagons, and then turns false. False friend.

False teacher. False prophet. Among the people.

En ta laos. And if you look at the use of laos, this is often augmented in our English translation. It'll say the Jewish people.

It'll say the people and the Gentiles. And they'll change it and say the Jewish people and the Gentiles to distinguish because everybody understood in the first century that the people, that's the people capital P. That's Israel. That's the Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob folks.

So there were also false prophets among the Israelite people is what this means. And this is in, in, among. Remember Jesus said the kingdom is in whom in? Among you.

In your midst. They were in the midst of the people. You could still make a case, you know, people want to split hairs and say were they believers or were they unbelievers? Was a false prophet? Is it possible that he could ever actually be saved, so to speak, and still do false prophecy? This is why we spent some time on pseudo-prophetize.

You don't have to be a godless pagan unbeliever to peddle falsehood and error. They're among

the people. Are the people all saved or all unsaved? Well, generally speaking, we figure that's something of a mix.

I like to think that all the Israelites were saved. That seems to be the thrust of scripture. But could there be some terrors amongst the wheat, so to speak? Well, these teachers are amongst the people and it doesn't specify what they are yet.

So, just as there were when these true prophecies were coming along and men spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, there were false prophets back in the old days. What is Peter saying here? Even the Old Testament Israelites had to figure out who was telling the truth and who wasn't. And they were responsible for that choice.

This isn't something new. Ever since prophecy has been in existence, there have been some who are telling the truth and some who aren't. And you can't say, well, show me your saved badge and then I'll know you're telling the truth.

They can be saved and be purveying falsehood. I think a lot of people who are promulgating false teachings today are Christians. They are brethren.

They are going to be in the resurrection. They'll be in the eternal future. And they have misled themselves or they have been misled by others.

And they propagate and perpetuate false teaching. And Peter says, now, there were also false prophets among the ones who were telling the truth, even as there will be Pseudo-Dadoscaloi in whom in, in your midst, among you. Now this ought to be a sober sort of warning for us.

Don't think just because somebody is near. Don't think just because they are familiar. Don't think just because, oh, well, they used to be really, you know, orthodox and purveyors of great helpful truths.

We have always got to examine what we hear. We are responsible. I have been teaching for a long time.

Most of you have known me for a long time. And you think, well, you know, he's not going to go into error. You cannot take that for granted.

You have God the Holy Spirit and it is your job to constantly assess, does this guy I'm listening to, is he pitching with the same Holy Spirit that I'm catching with? And any teacher can go astray, can go awry, can get into error. Any teacher. And you can't put your confidence in the teacher.

You put your confidence in God, in God's Holy Spirit. And we constantly gut check what we believe, what we hear, and anything that doesn't pass that check, we throw it out. God is our teacher.

God is our Father. God the Holy Spirit is establishing that link between God and heaven. And if any part of that is going to fail, what end of that connection is going to fail? Sometimes when you're a network computer guy and you say, you know, I used to have a connection to the server or to the Internet and now I don't.

I can't get there. My browser comes up, you know, 505 or could not find, you know, I don't know what's the matter. I'm not seeing the Internet.

Where is the problem? Well, it's usually not the entire block that's out, although that can happen. It's not the entire city that's off the Internet. It's usually my end.

Something's wrong with my machine. Maybe I kicked the network cord out. Maybe I've somehow flipped the little switch on my laptop that turns the wireless card on and I'm no longer broadcasting, but it's usually on my end.

In this conduit between heaven and earth, what's the weak link? It's the last little earthly guy that's trying to tell you what's in the Word of God. God in heaven is not wrong. God the Holy Spirit conveying that truth down to His holy apostles and prophets is not wrong.

The Scriptures inspired, inerrant, infallible are not wrong. Where is the weak link? Right here. This is the weak link.

The mouth that is speaking, the guy on the television, the author of the book, the ghostly voice coming out, the radio speaker, that's the weak link. And you and I have to check that link. I have utter confidence and you should have utter confidence in every other link in that chain except the last one.

Peter says, just as there have always been false prophets, there will always be false teachers. Peter says, I am telling you now, you've got to check that last link. This is the guy upon whom you should have suspicions, sitting right here talking.

And it says, who will secretly bring in, and I told you last week that this is a really unique word, but in my haste to get to Noah, I sort of skipped over it. This word has two prefixes on it. The first one is para and the second one is ace.

You know what para means, like parallel alongside, you know what ace means, into, and then the verb form is ago, A-G-O, which means to lead. When you take Greek, it's one of the first verbs they give you because it's easy. Ago.

It's like ago. A-G-O. Well, para, ice, ago.

And I read an article in some long, dead, obscure journal somewhere about para, ice words in Greek because there are a lot of them. And it always has kind of a negative connotation because para means alongside, ace means in. And it's not ice, para, ago.

It's para, ice, ago. And that's important because I sit down on the bus next to a thief, a pickpocket. I'm sitting in the waiting area for an airplane.

And I sit next to this guy. Well, his hand is alongside me, alongside my clothing, alongside my pocket. And next thing you know, it's in my pocket.

It's alongside, and then it's in. It's para, and then it's ace. I thought it was okay when it was para.

I could use other analogies that I won't. But, you know, keep your hands to yourself. Your hands should be alongside.

You're in the movie theater, dating, you know, there's a girl and a guy sitting there. Got your hands beside, all of a sudden, the hands aren't beside anymore. They're somewhere else.

You've got to watch for that because that's sneaky and it's out of line. Well, this honestly is the Greek idea of para ace. And there are a number of words that they coined using this prefix.

Well, ago means to lead. So these false teachers start out with something that seems benign and seems to be fine. And it's alongside, it's acceptable.

And next thing you know, it's in. It's, it started out okay, and then it went someplace it wasn't supposed to go. And much of the false teaching that has infiltrated the church has started out orthodox and biblical and fine.

And then in the application phase, it has taken a left turn. It's gone north. It's turned into a betrayal of the truth.

Para ace ago. They start out leading you parallel and then it goes into something bad. So, secretly bring in doesn't quite get it.

And there isn't any way to really get it into English. But they will, they will start out sounding good. And, and then it is going to take a weird turn.

It is going to slip under the radar. It's already among the people. So it's inside and it's going to start out okay, but it's going to end badly.

And these are destructive divisions, destructive splitting up into groups, destructive factions, ruinous separations. Doesn't mean heresy in the sense of a real identifiable doctrinal deviation so much as this left turn thing is going to produce factions. It is going to divide.

It is going to schismatize. If I can make up a word, it is going to create schisms. And it's hard to counter because it's already in, it's already among the people and it's been laying there beside for a while.

And now all of a sudden it has taken this turn and it drives a wedge. It divides people into camps

into us and them. Oh, well, you're, you know, you're this and I'm that.

And, you know, there are certain things where there are going to be different opinions. When does the rapture take place? We have a, you know, the pre-mid and post-tribulation thing. Dr. Quizzle just preached a sermon on it.

Well, how important is that? Well, it depends. I believe in a pre-tribulational rapture and I believe that there is a literal millennium and all of that is going to happen beforehand. You're going to have the rapture, you're going to have the tribulation, then you're going to have a literal thousand year millennial reign of Christ.

Right? Well, somebody else might not. Not Brian. I know Brian believes that as well.

But some guy that would be sitting right here. Some guy sitting right here might say, you know what? I'm a mid-trib. I look at the scriptures and I think that, you know, we're going to go through the beginning and then God's going to deliver us out and it's going to happen at the three and a half year mark.

Well, that's an opinion. That's an understanding. I can respect that.

I know the scriptural foundation, why people choose to believe that. Now, if somebody can hold that, somebody can even present it. I could give you the evidence for that view and I could make a fairly compelling case, well, I don't know if I could make a compelling case.

I could make a reasonable case for it. Where does that go wrong? I know guys that have completely different views on some of that than I do. But neither one of us schismatizes over it.

I don't make it a cause for division. I don't say, well, you know what? You're mid-trib. You ain't coming to my house anymore.

And don't be talking to me. I'm going to block you in my phone. I'm going to turn off.

I'm going to delete you from my contacts. And I'm going to treat you like a fugitive and a vagabond there. If someone takes one of these things and teaches it in a way that creates division, that creates strife, I can teach the pre-mil, pre-trib rapture in such a way that you understand it, that we together, and I don't ask you to believe it or leave the church.

If you want to believe something else, that's fine. I'm giving you my best understanding. But if somebody came in our church and said, you know, I'm mid-trib, I wouldn't have any concern over it unless and until they started saying, hey, Ken, hey, Dan, hey, Matt, listen, this mid-trib thing, you've got to have this right, or I just don't think... If you create a schism, if you start to divide the body... Does it matter in day-to-day living if we are trying to produce the fruit of the Spirit, speak the truth to one another in love, encourage, build up, lay hold of righteousness by faith, the specific timing of a future prophetic event for which we have no scriptural exhortation to be overly

concerned about, we are notified about it, but we're not said, now, pay close attention on this and push out of your fellowship anybody.

It should not be divisive. Creedalism becomes feudalism. People build palisades.

I was looking at a beautiful picture of a castle in Scotland, and it's on an island in the middle of a loch, and there's a bridge, and then all the walls go straight up. And I thought, you know, that's what this kind of teaching can do. There are essentials over which we divide and separate and distinguish ourselves.

I can't fellowship with the Mormons because they do not recognize the unique deity of Jesus Christ. I'm sorry, but if you're a Mormon, no, you really can't come here to our church because this is a church dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ, the one and only uniquely born Son of God. And if you do not recognize Him as that, why would you want to come? That's why we never had a Mormon in here, probably never will, and why I won't ever show up at a Mormon temple partaking of any of their stuff.

We are fundamentally divided, and that's an essential. Fine points of eschatology are not essential, and those who make them essentials and divide the body of Christ over them are wrong. And this is pseudo-didaskaloi.

I can give you my best understanding of a lot of things, but we don't divide over that. And if you have a different view, I respect that, and I hope you respect my understanding. But you don't have to agree, and we can still be united, and we focus on those core things.

Some things are essential, some things are non-essential. Peter says these false teachers will be notable and distinguishable and identifiable because they will, from inside, introduce and then twist these teachings that will divide. They will schismatize the body of Christ from within, even denying the Lord who bought them.

Fundamental truth. If you deny the Redeemer, we're not talking about the timing of which trumpet got blown when, and do the seals come after or co-terminus with, right? Denying the Lord that bought you, is that a non-essential or an essential? If you're a Mormon, you are denying the Lord that bought you, assuming you ever came to faith in Him at all and have been redeemed. You're denying the Lord that bought you if you don't recognize His divinity, His deity that's taught throughout Scripture.

It's pictured in the Old Testament. It's explicitly stated in the New. If you can't wrap your mind around that, we are going to separate over that.

But these are fundamental issues. Denying the Lord that bought them, and they bring on themselves swift destruction. What is swift destruction? We need to take a closer look.

We haven't done it in a while, so we're going to take a look at what does Apollia really mean?

How is it used in Scripture? We'll pause here and take our break, and when we come back, what is the definition? If you breach basic fundamental doctrine, what is the consequence? If I get the rapture wrong, I'm not going to be Apolliad. But if I deny the work of the Lord Jesus Christ in redemption and reconciliation and propitiation, I am going to be severely Apolliad. And what does that entail? That's what we'll look at when we come back.