

2Peter 11-10-14b

Let's pick up our study now in 2 Peter chapter 2. We have looked at the angels who sinned, who were cast down to Tartarus. This was the Greek idea of where evil spirits went. And so the name was co-opted by Peter to identify the place where the disobedient angels went.

Now, I mentioned last week that we were gonna do something that would sort of give us stereo vision for this section. And we're going to do that now. If you'll keep your place, don't lose it in 2 Peter chapter 2. Turn a few pages forward in your Bible to the epistle of Jude.

Peter and Jude are very much talking about the same thing. It is reminiscent of what the gospels often do where Matthew and Mark or Luke and Mark or sometimes Matthew, Mark and Luke are all covering a similar episode, but there will be slight differences and variations. So Jude, beginning in after his introduction, Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, brother of James, to those who are called, sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ.

Notice preserved in Jesus Christ. The idea of preservation is introduced right at the very beginning. Mercy, peace and love be multiplied to you.

Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, Peter has just affirmed in 2 Peter that he is going to be diligent to the very end of his life to put them in remembrance of these things so that they can have faith in them even after he is gone. And he talks about diligence. I was diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation.

I found it necessary to write to you, exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints, to the sanctified. The faith once for all delivered. That is a very pungent phrase.

Once for all delivered. If it's been once for all delivered, how much needs to be added to it? How much additional revelation is Jude expecting there to be? He doesn't say the faith that is being delivered or the faith that will be delivered. He says it's once for all been delivered.

The delivery is complete. All of the stuff has come that's coming. So where does that put the charismatic idea of new prophecies and fresh revelations under some sort of miraculous manifestations of the spirit? Those were fine in the days when the faith was still being delivered, but Jude says it has been delivered once for all to the saints.

He goes on to say, and we see the concern that Peter has, for certain men have crept in unnoticed. This is that high rhesus coming in. It lays beside for a while.

And then the next thing you know, it's in. It's alongside and then it's inside. Crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation.

And it's the condemnation he's about to describe. And in translating this in Greek, you could

almost say who were long ago marked out for the following condemnation or marked out for this condemnation where you put the emphasis on this. And he's about to tell you what this is.

Now, there are others who try to say, well, they were, God predestinated them to be heretics. That isn't in the context. It's not what is being said.

It's just, as so often is the case in these ancient languages, they would put things up front that we save for later. They save for later things that we would put up front. And so when he says they've been marked out for this condemnation, we say, well, he should have already told us what that was.

If this is a demonstrative referring back to something, well, what this refers to is a head. So don't be thrown off track. Marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Turn the grace of God into lewdness, lasciviousness. Now keep your place in Jude and turn back to 2nd Peter. We've seen in verses eight and nine, the righteous man dwelling among them tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds.

The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment, especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness. That's your lewdness and who despise authority. Now, what is the first authority that a godless person would despise? God himself, the Lord Jesus Christ, the son of God, who is the image and fullness of God manifest to us.

Peter goes on to say they are presumptuous, self-willed, not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries. We'll do a little exegesis on that in a minute, but go back to Jude now. These ungodly men turn the grace of our God into lewdness, deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. What's Jude talking about there? You've got people delivered under the blood of the Passover lamb, taken across the baptismal waters of the Reed Sea, the Yom Suf, right? In all respects, party to and heir to the same deliverance as all the rest of the Israelites, but afterward were destroyed. This is your Korah, Dathan and Abiram crowd.

This is your strange fire offerers. These are those who God later took out under special judgment. Then look at verse six of Jude, the angels who did not keep their proper domain, their first estate, but left their own abode, he has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day.

This is the Tartarus angel group that Peter has just described for us. And in the light of our break discussion about everlasting, you notice they're reserved in everlasting chains, but once the

judgment for them comes up, those chains are not going to last after that, right? So everlasting means as long as necessary in many cases. It depends on the context.

If God gives you everlasting life, that's not going to run out at some future point. But if he puts an angel in an everlasting chain, well, that chain is going to last ever as long as God needs it to. Once the judgment comes, obviously they're no longer changed.

Now they're judged. Then look at verse seven, Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them in a similar manner to these having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh. What is strange flesh? This isn't normal flesh.

Normal being the God given functions for procreation and perpetuation of the human race. This is the reason for which a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves unto his wife and they too shall be one flesh. That's normal.

Everything else is abnormal. Given themselves over to sexual immorality. Now the reason that's important is it illuminates and it clarifies something that is in the second Peter passage.

They are set forth as an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Look back at chapter two of Peter's second letter here. Those who walk in verse 10, according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority, their presumptuous self-will, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries, whereas angels who are greater in power and might do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.

But these like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed speak evil of things they do not understand and will utterly perish. Well, let's begin back up in verse 10. Especially those who walk according to the flesh.

What is the Greek preposition for according to? I know I've got some Greek scholars in here. What's the preposition according to? It's kata, right? Kata, according to. Kata is not the word that is used here.

This is the word opizo. Opizo is the word that means behind. Walk behind.

Now, why does Peter use this language? Why does he phrase it in this way? Well, there is a figure of speech here. There is a circumlocution or a polite way of saying something that isn't very polite. And it is brought out, for example, in textual commentaries such as this one I really love.

This is one I've had ever since, I don't know how many 30-odd, 40-odd years I've had this. But it's the linguistic key to the Greek New Testament. Don't worry about it.

I don't even know if they still print it or not. But I like it because it's kind of a play-by-play. This is the Joe Buck of commentaries.

Just quick little bits of information as you go verse by verse through a passage. It's by Fritz Reinacher and Cleon Rogers. And my good friend in seminary, Rick Caradani, couldn't ever say Reinacher.

And so I used to tease him. And because of the color of it, we would call it Rednecker. So we'd always say, well, what does Rednecker say? And so this is my Rednecker commentary.

But when you get to 2 Peter 2, verse 10, here is the comment. When it talks about the word opizo, let me find my place here. Put my marker in the wrong chapter.

It says, there's a fellow named Green who says that this suggests that we're talking about sodomy. We are talking about a particular kind of perversion. And this is a phraseology that is found elsewhere in, yeah, here it is.

Opizo with the genitive meaning after the phrase, them that walk after the flesh suggests sodomy. And I found this in a couple of other commentaries as well. Now, why is this important? Well, I'll tell you one thing.

This thing, my copy of it was published in 1976 before we had any sort of widespread movement of that community in our country. It's pretty much notorious in San Francisco and one or two other places, but was still largely, in other words, this is not a politically motivated interpretation. Long before there was any politics associated with it.

But what is it saying? That there will come a time, Peter is saying, when false teaching is going to make light of divinely instituted authority. This is the authority of the husband. This is the institution of marriage.

This is the authority of government. You notice we've got a fresh round of anti-government, anti-authority, anti-rich people protest that is spreading through our country at the current time. So far it is peaceful.

So far it is non-violent, but everybody's kind of walking on eggshells. They couldn't even go in and spray wash the park, the tiles in the park where these people have been camped out for a month and have been violating all the rules of the park. They're not supposed to stay overnight.

They're not supposed to store food. They're not supposed to set up things. And there's been all kinds of sanitation issues and garbage issues.

And so the people who own the park, it's privately owned, but it is publicly accessible. And they have basically suspended all the rules and let these protesters stay there for four weeks. Well, they said, we would like to come in if everybody will just pick up their stuff and move out temporarily so we can spray wash and sanitize.

They said, oh, we know what this is. You're just trying to get rid of us. You're gonna shut down

our protest and they wouldn't let them come in and clean.

And they said, well, we may need the police to come and assist us because you can't very well spray wash over people that are doing some kind of lay down on the ground protest. Well, they're daring the authorities. They're daring the police.

They're daring the community government to deal with them. Well, from such small sparks, large fires get lit. As I mentioned recently, Patty and I are listening to a review of the French Revolution.

And that also started in seemingly innocuous and small ways. The king sent some soldiers and instead of the usual fear and terror and obeisance, they mocked them. And there was a particular village, if you remember the night of the tiles where they were throwing slate tiles off the roof on the king's soldiers.

Well, seems pretty mild, seems pretty localized. That was the spark that set off the French Revolution with its blood and heads on pikes and the guillotine and the mass slaughter of tens of thousands of people was set off with that one incident. And it just grew and multiplied because this attitude had been growing throughout the people.

Lack of respect for authority, beginning with a growing atheism and empty hollow Catholicism so that the government, in particular the king, was no longer viewed as God's representative on earth. Loss of respect for God meant loss of respect for that which was put forward as God's representative on earth, which in fact he is. God gives the rule to kings and that led to the ultimate overthrow of the monarchy.

Well, all I'm saying is keep an eye on these seemingly pointless, seemingly innocuous demonstrations because their very existence is a caution and is an alert. Why would anybody want to do this? What do they think it would accomplish? Well, it isn't done for what it will accomplish. It is an expression of what is in somebody's heart and soul.

I feel like I am a have not and I want the haves to give up what they've got so that I can have it. That's the roots of revolution. That's the roots of corruption and destruction of any organized society.

That is exactly where it begins. So all I'm saying is it may be nothing or it may be something, but the very fact that it exists is this attitude that Peter is talking about in 2 Peter 2. They do not hesitate to speak evil of authorities, of dignities. You look at the vilification of presidents and it's been on both sides going back a couple of decades now.

The hubris and the arrogance and the mocking deriding just insufferably bitter tone of criticism of our government was, it is a new and detrimental thing. And this idea that, well, the standard of rightness is whatever I think it is. Is new and it is a deadly innovation in our culture.

This is what Peter is talking about. Like natural brute beasts. Natural brute beasts are driven by

instinct internal programming.

If you've got a medium size or larger dog and you walk them anywhere around squirrels, you know what a brute beast does. Rabbit runs across the trail, squirrel goes across, you know, your dog, it doesn't matter how well trained, they just lose all consciousness of space, time, training, humans. It's just programming kicks in.

It is just instinct. It is brute force desire. I must sink my teeth into that.

And away they go. Jerk your arm out of the socket. They can be as morose and sorrowful as anything when they realize, oops, but they just go blind.

They go deaf. They go dumb. They just go on autopilot.

Well, that's the brute beast. And if we do not as sentient creatures made in the image of God, maintain self-control, the last and some would argue the highest of the fruit of the spirit list, self-control. If we lose that, we revert to base instinct.

And our base instincts are all corrupt. We are driven by selfishness. We are driven by self-centeredness.

We are driven by a fallen nature. It is our spirit that overcomes, that dominates, that subordinates, that exercises authority over these baser urges. That's what makes life work properly.

And when you begin to debase and despise and dismiss authority outside of yourself, you also have debased, despised, and dismissed authority inside yourself. If you can't recognize authority externally, you don't recognize it internally either, which means there is no place or heed for the Holy Spirit or for the word of God and its authority or for any standards or morals based upon it. And you become a, if it feels good, do it.

It is very sobering to look at the mob ethos, what happens in a mob. There is this, we saw it, I saw it as a child in the Watts riots. You occasionally see it since then at a sporting event or something people, blood gets up.

And there is a loss of mental faculty and people do things that they would never be caught dead doing in normal circumstances. But there is this emotion. There is this mob mentality that takes over.

And again, you look at history in warfare. This happened in, has happened in every war that's ever been. I was listening to an accurate historical account of the encounter between John Paul Jones and his Bonhomme Richard and the Serapis, his most famous naval battle he's enshrined for all time because of his victory there.

Well, read an accurate and fulsome account of that battle sometime and the carnage and the

blood that was running in the scuppers and why it was, it was one of these episodes. All of that is here to remind us as just like in Romans chapter two. In Romans one, Paul says, you see these who willfully suppress the truth and unrighteousness, deny the witness of God and creation and are given over to ungodly passions and immorality and all of these other things.

And then in chapter two, he says, but you, oh man, don't be too quick to smile and feel superior because you do the same thing. That's what Peter is doing here. He says, let's think about the angels in the past.

Well, that's easy. Let's think about Sodom and Gomorrah. That's easy.

Oh, those ungodly men. Of course, righteous lot, I'm kind of starting to puzzle about that because he was God's man, but he didn't come out of that too well. And then you go over to Jude and he's talking about the Israelites who were delivered out of Egypt, but a lot of them didn't come out too well.

In fact, only two of them ever made it to the land. And you begin to think, wow, this requires a little bit more reflection. And that's exactly where Peter is going with this.

And he says, now you look at these false teachers and those who follow them and how godlessness can go to such an extreme. They literally rush in where angels fear to tread. Angels are careful not to disparage dignities.

Even if they are fallen dignities, they won't do it because they know that this is a slippery slope. And once you start despising structures and authorities, it's one step after another. These like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed speak evil of things they do not understand.

And we so often, you often hear somebody, they'll get a snippet off the news. There'll be a headline or a blurb, a blog entry somewhere that says, thus and so happened in such and such a place. Right away, people are passing judgment and bad mouthing and impugning motives.

You heard this throughout President Bush's presidency. You hear it now throughout President Obama's presidency. And there is a lot we do not know.

I do not know the hearts of the people who are running for office or who are currently in office. You can infer, you can make assumptions, you can research backgrounds and things, but I don't know what is in the heart of somebody just based on a superficial incident or what they say or what they do. I don't know what is in someone's heart when they vote a certain way.

But all the time you hear people drawing snap judgments and saying, this is the kind of person he is. Just like these protesters. I know what's in the hearts of those who are calling for the police to help them sanitize this place we've been eating and throwing out scraps and urinating and defecating for a month.

I know they just want to drive us out of here. That's an unwarranted assumption about authorities and about dignities, the owners of that park. Maybe it is and maybe it isn't their motivation, but to come out with that immediately with no other information than their decision that they would like to spray wash the park.

They told everybody you can return as soon as we're finished washing. We just want to sanitize it. It's a health risk.

Oh no, they were having none of that. Once you get us out, you won't let us back. Says who? They have no basis for that.

They've let them stay there without enforcing the rules for four weeks. Like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, they speak evil of things they do not understand and will utterly perish in their own corruption. When you flip over to Jude, he describes much the same thing.

Likewise, these are who go after strange flesh. This is your walking behind idea, this opizo. This is suggestive language.

This is euphemistic language. These men who walk behind one another, they've got impure thoughts. Sexual immorality, gone after strange flesh, set forth as an example in verse seven of Jude, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

And people jump to the conclusion, well, these are hell bound people. These are people who are in hell suffering eternally. It says the judgment of eternal fire.

This means their judgment and their loss is permanent. The fire is permanent. Not necessarily that which is thrown in the fire.

I was talking to Dr. Godbold on the break about the nature of judgment. Think about the great white throne judgment in the light of the judgment seat of Christ. What does Paul say about the judgment seat of Christ? That at that judgment, there is gold, silver, and precious stones, wood, hay, and stubble.

And fire will reveal what's what in that day, right? Well, if the wood, hay, and stubble is thrown into the fire, how much of that is gonna survive? Do you expect 1,000 years after the judgment seat of Christ at the end of the millennial kingdom? Are you gonna be able to go back and look at the fire of the Bema judgment and still see the wood, hay, and stubble there? What happens to the wood, hay, and stubble? It is consumed, it is burned up. What happens to the chaff that John the Baptist talked about? The chaff is burned with unquenchable fire and God gathers his wheat into his barn. It's an unquenchable fire, but it's not unburnable chaff.

Chaff is eliminated, chaff is gone. Wood, hay, and stubble is gone. The fire will burn forever as a

reminder of God's holy judgment, but that which is thrown in the fire is not as permanent as the fire.

The whole purpose of fire is to be destroyed. Otherwise, why wouldn't it just be bars and chains? If you're not gonna destroy something, why talk about fire? Fire in the ancient world is always destructive, unless your name is Mishaël, Hananiah, or Azariah, but fire is destructive. You put something in it, it's destroyed.

Likewise, verse eight of Jude, these dreamers defile the flesh. This is sexual immorality. What is ubiquitous in our country, by the way, ubiquitous in the Christian community, there is virtually no more interest in morality in the church.

It is a commonplace for teenagers to engage in physical relations with one another during dating, and before marriage, and without benefit of marriage, and after marriage, and adultery is a commonplace. Homosexuality is becoming acceptable in certain areas of the church, and any speaking out against it is being condemned throughout the church. Well, that's not love, that's not this, that's not that.

We should try to love these people into the kingdom instead of condemning them. This is the same sort of misguided child training. Don't ever frown at your child if they do something wrong.

Just wait for them to do something right, and then smile. This is ubiquitous. It is everywhere.

It is in the church. It is in teaching. It is in Sunday school materials.

It is in books, and widely promulgated, preached, taught, and exemplified throughout the modern day church, and it is as unbiblical as it can be. There are standards of purity that God demands from us. It's not a nice to have.

It's not a wish to have. It is required. It is required.

It is the verb, *dei*, from which you get the word *desmos*, which are chains or bonds. We are bound to be holy. We are bound to eschew immorality in all of these areas, especially including physical immorality, and we've lost that emphasis.

It doesn't get preached much. It doesn't get taught much anymore, but notice the emphasis, both in Jude and in 2 Peter, on sexual purity, on refraining from immorality, and once again, it is an incremental thing. My advice to people who are dating is, you need to adopt the old standard.

If you're gonna spend any time with somebody, don't do it alone. Don't do it late. Don't do it in isolation.

The old idea where a gentleman would come calling on a young lady, and there would always be family present. He would come over to the house. He would get to know the family.

The family would get to know him. He didn't say, hi there, I'm here to pick up your daughter, and I'll see you six hours from now, and there was a lot of wisdom in that, and it is a dangerous thing, and young ladies, don't let yourselves get taken off in secluded places at late hours. You're asking for trouble.

Do you really wanna test your resolve? Do you wanna test your ability to maintain self-control against the inner desires that are a part of our nature? Do you really wanna put that to a profound test? Why do that? What's the point? You want to dance with it. You want to play with it. You want to get to the edge and enjoy the edge and say, well, but I didn't do this, or I didn't do that, or I didn't allow this, or I didn't allow that.

As the Bible says, a man cannot take fire into his bosom and not be burned. And the best place to put a stop to that sort of thing is before it ever starts. Any guy worth his salt, any individual worth knowing and worth developing a relationship with is never going to put you in that position and won't need to.

We'll enjoy you for your company. We'll enjoy you for your heart and your soul and your dedication to God and your mind, not your physical attributes. What are you thinking? Who are you really trying to attract when you start going down that road? So stop and think in the calm, cold light of day and establish a policy for yourself so that you already know what your decision is before you're put in the way of temptation.

Look at this passage. Everybody, young, old, married, unmarried, look at this passage. Look at the emphasis on the appeal to the flesh.

Angels know better. Angels don't even let themselves get indignant at other angels that have fallen. They don't let that type of thinking enter into their mind.

That's how they stay unfallen. There are people who say, well, he's bad so I can say whatever I want. He's an evil president so I can say anything I want about him.

Or that's an evil practice. This is how you end up with people shooting abortion doctors. Well, they're evil so the rules don't apply.

As soon as that idea comes in that wow, the restrictions are off because this situation justifies it, that is where chaos breaks out. Every time, without fail. We give ourselves permission on some false pretext.

Look at Jude 9. Michael the archangel contending with the devil when he disputed, he's talking to the devil. If you don't think there's somebody you ought to be able to freely insult and freely badmouth and accuse of all kinds of bad motives and bad practices and horrible actions, do you not think it would be safe to badmouth the devil? Look at the example of God's highest archangel. Disputing with the devil, he dared not bring against him a reviling accusation.

He says, I commit you to the Lord. I'll let the Lord deal with you. If there's going to be any rebuke, I'll let the Lord do it.

This is how we keep ourselves pure. Where does Michael stop his thinking about the evil of Satan before it ever gets started? He doesn't even go down that road. I'm sure you need some rebuking, but I'm going to let the Lord do it.

I'm not going to make one reviling accusation. All I'm telling you is, you can't have this dead man's body here disputing over Moses. Well, we're sort of out of time for tonight, but there is a wonderful interplay.

If you look at 2 Peter 2 and you look at Jude, they are talking about the same thing and they are talking about it in much the same order, but you almost get the idea that Jude and Peter met together and had a wonderful afternoon or day or two of fellowship and then went back and wrote their respective letters. And this conversation was in their mind and they both sort of reviewed it. You know how this is.

You have a conversation with somebody and then you're talking to somebody else and some of those same ideas come up. And I personally think we'll find out someday that this is kind of what happened. I think Peter and Jude may have actually discussed this.

And it isn't that they were depending on a source or that one of them was copying the other. I think they talked about it. And I think they went back to their respective ministries and God, the Holy Spirit had impressed this on their heart.

And so they wrote in their own way, in their own language, with their own impressions and vocabulary, imparting this divinely inspired truth to their respective audiences. And we have the benefit of getting both letters. And so we get sort of both sides of the conversation.

You can imagine Peter saying, well, you remember Noah and Jude says, well, yeah, it was the same thing with the Israelites. Look at what happened when they came out of Egypt. And so we have this great double coverage and God doesn't repeat things and doesn't emphasize them for no purpose.

Why do we have this? What's the most important thing in the Bible? It's the Lord Jesus Christ. And we've got four copies of his life and ministry. We've got two copies of this almost identical material and almost side by side.

Is it important? You be the judge. But it's a great topic for our day and time. All you have to do is look around.

We are replete with opportunities for application. So we'll pick up at this point. We'll see what it is to have a heart trained for covetous practices.

Peter isn't through with that idea of covetousness, that wanting something, appealing to that craving. And he's gonna bring it up again when we get to verse 14. But we'll pick that up next week and we'll close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word. It truly is a vital source of not only information but of encouragement, of strength and of spiritual food for our souls to arm us and to prepare us to face the world as it is around us in this day. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will keep it in our minds and at the forefront of our thoughts as we seek to live our lives in a way that pleases you, that reflects your glory, that is the outworking and the application of these things so that we can be good and faithful servants, so that we can be royal children, members of the household of faith who reflect the standards and the light that exists around you and around your throne and is personified in the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

We pray these things in his name, amen.