The Trustworthy Word

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[0:00] So just a little bit of recap from earlier in this book. We looked a couple of weeks ago at verses 12-15 and saw Peter's purpose statement for this letter.

! He's writing because he recognizes the end of his life is coming. And there's going to be a day where there's no more living apostles to guide the church, to give advice to the church.
And so he wants to make sure that he's able to permanently remind these believers of what he taught them by writing it down. And that's why we have this letter of 2 Peter.
When that day comes for Peter to die and go to glory and be in his eternal reward, he wants these people to stick to the scriptures.
He wants them to hold on to the Bible. He wants them to be faithful to what's revealed in God's written word. And that's really important in their context because what had already started happening was there were these false teachers that hadn't come in from the outside.
[1:03] They had actually risen up from within their church. And they were starting to lead people astray and deceive them primarily by teaching that Jesus was not going to return back to the earth.

And with not believing in Jesus' return, there was no threat of judgment. There was no threat of being held accountable to him.
And so because they taught that Jesus would not return to the earth, they also lived horrible lives. They lived very sinful lives marked by sexual immorality and greed for all kinds of money.
And so Peter is writing to warn them against these people and he wants them to stick with the scriptures because what those false teachers will do is they will undercut the scriptures.
They will undermine the authority of the Bible. And so Peter wants them to be alert to this false teaching that's going on in their churches and he wants them to hold on to the Bible.
[2:04] And Peter is going to get in in chapter 2, we'll see the beginning of chapter 2 tonight. He's going to start describing how we can spot these false teachers.

And he's going to do it by exposing their lives to us. And I've said this before but I'll say it again tonight that bad theology always leads to bad living.
And so if you see someone that's living badly, if you see someone who's living in sin, it's because they don't know God like they should. And so if someone is claiming to preach Christ, claiming to teach the Bible, and their life is marked by unrepentant sin, that's a sign of someone who's not walking with Christ, someone who doesn't know Christ the way that they should.
And so Peter is going to confront these false teachers because of their faulty life, but he's also going to confront these teachers because of their faulty teaching as well. And one of the ways that Peter is going to start this argument in verse 16 is he's going to show us the origin of Scripture, where it came from, and what it is, its nature.
And so why do we need to rightly understand and appreciate the Bible? Two reasons. One, because it's the Word of God.
[3:24] And two, because false teachers will disregard it. False teachers will try to draw you away from it. And so do you believe the Bible?

Do you believe that every word in the Bible is from God? Do you believe that every word is the Word of God? Most false teachers would probably answer those questions correctly.
They would probably be able to answer those questions by saying, yes, I believe that the Bible is God's Word. But when it comes to issues like this, actions speak far louder than words.
And Jesus has told us that we will recognize false teachers by their fruits, by what they produce with their lives. And the reason false teachers are so dangerous is because they don't, no false teacher just comes out and says, I'm a false teacher.

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No one just comes out and flatly rejects the Bible usually. These false teachers that arise within healthy churches don't get anywhere by saying that they're false teachers or that they openly reject the authority of Christ or His Word.
[4:31] And so false teachers will say things like, I believe that the Bible is God's Word. But then when the Bible addresses issues that our culture doesn't like, things like sexuality, gender, gender roles, creation, the doctrine of hell, anything the culture doesn't like, these false teachers will cave to what people want to hear.

And so ultimately what they believe in is not Scripture, but what they believe in is their own wisdom and understanding. And in Peter's situation in these churches, these false teachers were planting doubts in the hearts of these people who belonged to this church.
And so Peter wants to remind us of two things primarily in our passage tonight. That Jesus will return according to the Scriptures, and that false teachers will be judged according to the Scriptures.
And in this passage, Peter gives us a soaring view of Scripture. And what he says is that God's Word is more reliable than our experience.
God's Word is more trustworthy than something that you live through. God's Word is truth.
[5:56] And so we need to cling to it in the midst of our dark world. And so I'll read our passage for us this evening. We'll start in 1.16 and read through chapter 2, verse 3. Peter says, For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was born to Him by the majestic glory, This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.
We ourselves heard this very voice born from heaven, for we were with Him on the holy mountain. And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Knowing this, first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.
But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.
[7:21] And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

And so we'll break our passage up into two points this evening. Number one, I'm sorry, three points. Number one is a trustworthy witness. A trustworthy witness. And we see this in verses 16 through 18.
Earlier, Kagan read for us the account of the transfiguration of Christ, where he was transformed before Peter, James, and John, and his face became radiant and glowing with the glory that was his as nature being God.
And so Peter is reminding the readers what he saw with his own eyes, what he heard with his own ears.
And the reason he's bringing this up is because the transfiguration actually was a sneak preview of the return of Christ. The reason his clothes and his face were transformed before them is because that's what he will be like when he returns to judge the nations at the end of time.
[8:43] And so Peter begins this, if you remember back in verses 12 through 15, he says, I want to remind you of the things that I taught you. Why? For or because we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And so the we here is the apostles, the proclamation that they gave was about the return of Christ. And so when he says, we, the apostles, proclaimed to you or made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
The apostles were preaching the gospel message everywhere they went. And an essential part of that gospel message was that Christ came to the earth, died for his people, rose again on the third day, ascended to heaven, and one day soon would return to judge the earth.

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And this is a hallmark of Paul's preaching if you read through Acts. He preaches to these pagans who don't even know the Bible and he says in Acts 17 that God has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed.
That's Jesus. And of this, he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead. And so Peter is saying, I'm reminding you of these truths because we weren't making things up to you.
[10:10] We weren't coming up with our own stories. We weren't supplying anything to you that was made up or fabricated. And so these false teachers were calling what the apostles taught a myth.

They were saying it's just a fable, it's just a fairy tale that they've made up to make Christ look more glorious than he actually is. Peter says we weren't making stuff up, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.
The false teachers were saying that Christ would not return, but Peter had glimpsed his glory. Peter had glimpsed his power and he was simply testifying to what he had seen and heard.
Verse 17. When Christ, when he received honor and glory from God the Father and the voice was born to him by the majestic glory, this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased.
We ourselves heard this very voice born from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain.
That word majesty, Peter saw his glory.
[11:36] Peter saw this royalty expressed from the very face of Christ. Christ. And as Kagan read the transfiguration account beforehand, maybe you've read that on your own, I hope you have, if I asked you, what is the point of that story?

We might come up with all different kinds of things to explain why that event happened in the life of Christ and why the apostles got to see it. But here, Peter's going to give us a divinely inspired explanation of why that event took place.
Why did the transfiguration happen? Peter said it was to show the glory that he would one day return with to the earth. It was to show his power that he would one day come back with.
This voice was God the Father speaking and it says that Christ received honor and glory. Honor and glory.
Honor is a reference to the words that the Father spoke. Glory is a reference to his appearance. He was honored by his Father when the Father said, this is my beloved Son.
[12:52] He received glory in that his face was transformed before the apostles. And if you're taking notes, I just want you to write down Psalm 8 at this point.

Psalm 8 uses all three of these words, glory, honor, and majesty, in prophesying who Christ would be.
And when it talks about Christ in Psalm 8, 5, it says that the Father crowned him with honor and glory. Crowned him with honor and glory.
This is my beloved Son. And there's one other time the Father said that to Christ. Maybe you've thought of it.
It was at his baptism. And so two times in the life of Christ, people around him heard the Father's voice say, this is my beloved Son.
[13:48] And Peter says, I was there. We were there. Verse 18, we ourselves heard this very voice born from heaven because we were with him.

These false teachers will cast their doubts on the return of Christ. These false teachers will try to undercut the authority of Scripture. Will try to undercut the authority of Christ.
But the Father has spoken. The Father has told us what his plan is for his Son. His Son will reign. His Son will rule.
His Son will return in judgment. And so these false teachers can disagree with what Peter's teaching. But Peter's saying, I'm just telling you what we heard God say when we were there to see his glory.
And something interesting, the transfiguration is described in all three of the first Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. And in all three places, right before the transfiguration happens, Jesus says something to his disciples that's kind of mystifying at first.
[15:08] He says, like Mark 9, 1, he says, truly I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come with power.

Jesus is saying, some of you standing around me won't die until you see my power. Until you see my kingdom power. And so Peter's saying, based on what Jesus has told us, based on what we

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saw and heard on that mountain, Jesus is going to come back and bring in his kingdom with force and with glory.
And at this point, if this was Peter's only argument, he would really just be basing his defense of Christ's return on his experience, on something that he saw, something that he heard.
And if he just stops there, the false teachers could say, okay, that's great, Peter, but how do we know that's true? Or they could say, okay, we believe that happened, but how do you know that's what that event means?
How do you know that just because you saw something cool means that Christ is actually going to come back? And so secondly, we see the more trustworthy word.
[16:28] The more trustworthy word in verses 19 through 21. Peter's a trustworthy witness, but there's a more trustworthy word.

As helpful and as true as Peter's experience was, the word of God is more helpful and more true. In verse 19, he says, and we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed.
What does Peter mean by the prophecies of the Old Testament? That's what he's referring to. What does he mean that they're more fully confirmed? Is Peter saying that the Bible is more reliable because of the experience that he had?
Is that what he's saying? No. He's saying, I saw this with my eyes. I heard this with my ears. I was standing on the mountain with him. But we have a more reliable witness even than me.
We have a more sure testimony about who Christ is than I can give you. And he's referring back to the Old Testament predictions of who Christ would be.
[17:48] There's something more certain and more reliable than his eyes and his ears. And it's the Bible. And so think about everything that Peter saw throughout his life with Christ.

Think about everything he heard. And Peter just takes all of it and submits it to the Bible. He says, what's written in the pages of Scripture, including this letter that Peter's writing, is more reliable even than something that I know to be true.
The truth and the light given by the Scriptures is steadier and stronger than any experience. Regardless of how memorable or even miraculous it was, Scripture is more certain than what you know that you know.
Scripture's more reliable than what you know that you know. And eyewitness testimony is incredibly valuable in court.
[19:00] But it's common for eyewitnesses to get some details wrong. And so they'll say he was wearing a red shirt but he was wearing actually a black shirt.

They'll get key details wrong that doesn't necessarily invalidate their testimony. And one time I had to serve as an eyewitness when I was in seventh grade. Not in court but in the principal's office. There were these two girls that were about to fight and I thought they were joking. And so I walked up and was like, hey, what's going on? And they pushed me out of the way. All 75 pounds of me. And I got called into the principal's office to testify and write down an eyewitness testimony. And I hope it was reliable. I never heard back on how that ended but I didn't get in trouble thankfully. But eyewitnesses are incredibly important when it comes to piecing together a story.
And Peter says I was an eyewitness. And scripture is more reliable even than my eyewitness testimony. The Bible explains our experiences not vice versa.
[20:11] And so the Bible is the truth regardless of what you experience or regardless of how you feel about it.

And so any experience we have any experience you have should be cross-checked with the Bible. Should be examined in light of the scriptures.
And you guys already know this intuitively but if you based your decisions on how you felt you wouldn't live a good life. If you only went to school when you felt like going to school what would your attendance look like?
Not very good right? So we can't make decisions based on emotions or based on feelings. We need to submit them to the word of God. And I've got a good friend in the room Hayden Christie.
Hayden hi. She's embarrassed. So Hayden has been a lifelong Oklahoma State fan. And it's been tough lately not going to lie.
[21:15] This year she flipped to being an OU fan. It was I understand her disgust with OSU we've had a tough run. But that was an emotional decision Hayden.

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I'm praying that you'll repent and come back to the Cowboys. But we can't live our spiritual lives just letting our experiences guide us.
Letting our experiences determine the decisions we make. And this is a crucial point because for many people when it comes to their spiritual life personal experience is the most important thing to them.
They judge everything based on how they feel or based on what's happened to them. And Peter's reminding them this isn't about how you feel about this event.
The second coming of Christ is a reality and it's testified to in the Bible. In the Old Testament in particular. And so as we think about the Bible seeing with our eyes is not essential to faith.
[22:32] Reading the Bible is. And so I think it is easy for us to think like man if I could have just been there on that mountain where he was transfigured it would be a lot easier for me to have faith.

Or if God would just perform a miracle that I witnessed it would be a lot easier for me to believe. If I could just hear God speak audibly it would be easier for my faith.
And I certainly get that logic get where your thinking is going but that's actually not true. If Jesus were here tonight preaching this sermon would your faith actually be stronger?
He would preach a better sermon than I could but would your faith be stronger by seeing him? No.
And Jesus says in Luke 16 he's talking to someone who's died and gone to hell in this parable and they say if you could just send someone to tell my brothers and show them something.
And the answer is they have the Bible. no vision will help them. And so we need the Bible.
[23:53] The Bible helps us understand who God is. And a miracle as awesome as that would be to witness, hearing God's voice as amazing as that would be to hear, actually wouldn't strengthen our faith.

How many people saw Jesus? How many people encountered him? How many people saw him do a miracle? How many actually had faith in him? And so in the Scriptures we have something that's better than being there.
We can read the full Sermon on the Mount. If you were there trying to listen to Jesus preach, I'm sure there would be a baby crying somewhere and you would miss half of it. Reading the Bible is better than being there for these events.
Because Scripture is more sure, more reliable, even than experience. And so Peter says, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place.
Paying attention to the Bible isn't just an option. It's not just a good thing to do, it's a necessary thing to do. It's the right thing to do. It's an absolute necessity because it's the way to know God in a saving way.
[25:08] And he compares the Bible to a lamp shining in a dark place. You may think of Psalm 119, 105, your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light to my path.

Peter's saying, God's word is a beacon of light shining into the darkness. This world is a dark place, there are dark things that happen every day. God's word is a light that will shine into that darkness.
There's one time our son Charlie a couple years ago woke up in the middle of the night and I walked in there but I didn't bring my phone so I didn't have a light and I was trying to think back through where all the toys were on his floor because we hadn't had a chance to clean up his room that night and I stepped so hard on something.
Don't know what it is but it like cut the bottom of my foot and bruised it. Hurt so bad. I needed a light. That was my need in that moment. And we need to see scripture in that way spiritually.
We desperately need the light that this book provides us. We desperately need God's wisdom for living this life. How long?
[26:20] How long do we need the Bible? How long do we need to pay attention to it? How long do we need to read it and meditate on it? Verse 19 Until the day dawns the day is the return of Christ.

The final day. Until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. This word for morning star could literally be translated as light bearer.
And have you ever woken up before the sun comes up before anyone? Anyone do that on a regular basis? You're up before the sun is? Nice. If you go outside before the sun comes up you'll see a very bright star.
In the eastern sky. That's actually the planet Venus. And the ancient world called that the light bearer or the day bringer. And so it rises and lets us know the sun is about to rise and so it almost drags the sun up over the horizon.

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And Peter is saying you pay attention to the scriptures until that morning star rises. Until that day comes and Christ appears.
[27:26] we need to hold on to the scriptures until then because once we see him we see the fulfillment of everything we've believed. We see the fulfillment of everything that scripture pointed to.

And so when Christ appears we will see him face to face. When we see him the word that's written about him on the pages of scripture will be fulfilled and even eclipsed by the word made flesh Jesus himself but until then we desperately need to pay attention to the Bible.
We need God's word until we see Christ. God's word will take us home. God's word will get us there. How can you make it to heaven?
How can you survive the trickery of false teachers? How can you have faith? How can you be sanctified by paying attention to God's word as to a lamp shining in a dark place?
And the way we do it is knowing a couple of things. Verse 20, knowing this, first of all, that no prophecy of scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.
[28:43] Verse 21, for no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. And what Peter says here is incredibly interesting because he's not just saying that prophecy itself comes from God, which is true, but he's even saying that the interpretation of that prophecy comes from God as well.

So the word comes from God and the interpretation of that word also comes from God as well. because that's true, there is a right way to read the Bible and there are a lot of wrong ways to read the Bible.
And so it's not just your interpretation versus my interpretation or if you've been in a conversation with someone and they're like well that's just your interpretation of it. We can say this is what God said and this is what God meant by what he said.
The prophecy, the word itself and the interpretation of that word come from God. And so the Bible based on verses 20 and 21 isn't just a human record of their faith in God.
No, the Bible is God's own authoritative account of what he's done. It's not just men writing about what they've experienced.
[30:12] it's God himself inspiring these men to write his word. And notice in verse 21 men spoke from God.

They didn't just speak about God they spoke from him. The words they spoke are what God spoke. And so the prophets weren't creative. The prophets weren't artistic.
They just said what God told them to say and it says they were carried! along by the Holy Spirit. This word for carried is used in the New Testament a couple of times in Acts to describe a ship that's kind of being carried across the water by the wind.
And so this is the idea of control or power. The Holy Spirit is the one driving them to write what they wrote. Now if you look at verse 21 they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.
If you look back in verse 17 that word is actually used a couple of times and it is translated as born.
[31:27] For example in verse 17 the voice was born or carried to him by the majestic glory. Verse 18 we ourselves heard this very voice born or carried from heaven.

And so the same God that spoke to Jesus on the mountain is the same God who speaks through scripture. It's the same voice that we hear.
And Peter is saying that the voice about Christ the voice of Christ in scripture is more trustworthy even than a good eyewitness testimony of a miracle of an experience.
And so God has given us a book look back at chapter 1 verse 3 that contains everything we need for life and godliness. It's a book verse 4 that contains precious and very great promises intended to make us more and more like Christ until we see him return.
And so if you struggle to love God's word if you struggle to value God's word if you struggle to read God's word think about the return of Christ he's coming once again to render judgment based on how we've lived this life and that return is spoken about in the Bible we need to pay attention to this book number three and finally why it matters why it matters in verses one through three of chapter two why do we need to pay attention to God's word why do we need to hold on to it so tightly why do we need to rightly understand it because false teachers are coming and in these churches they were already there and they were already causing damage and if we look at verse one of chapter two but false prophets also arose!

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[33:26] the people and this is actually kind of a paraphrase of what Moses wrote in Deuteronomy 13 describing what to do with false teachers and so Peter is referring back to Israel's experience he's like just like they were redeemed from slavery just like they were brought into the promised land and then false teachers rose up from among their own people the same thing is happening in your churches you've been saved by Christ you've been liberated by him and now there's false teachers coming into your church he says just as there will be false teachers among you as well the warning is clear there will be false teachers in the church there will be people who try to deceive in the church but they have a tell there's a way to notice them there's a way to spot them and it's their lifestyle that gives them away he describes them as those who will secretly bring in destructive heresies those are false teachings even denying the master who bought them bringing upon themselves swift destruction we need to pay attention to the

Bible because not everyone who claims to be a teacher actually comes from God not everyone who claims to preach Christ actually teaches about him rightly and this danger of false teachers isn't a problem that's out there outside the walls of our church this is much closer to home this danger of twisting scriptures can be done by a Sunday school teacher small group leader pastors friends who will be among us but will introduce destructive teachings denying even the master who bought them and now what that phrase means denying the master who bought them is these people are claiming to be Christians these false teachers aren't claiming to be from another religion and trying to draw Christians out of the church they're rising up within the church and claiming to follow
Christ and yet with their very lives denying his authority over them and Peter says the result of this is bringing upon themselves swift destruction speedy destruction but what is our defense against false teaching our only defense is knowing our shepherd's voice knowing what the Bible says and so pay attention to the Bible and if you don't know the Bible as well as you should which I think is all of us we should all know it better but if you don't know much of it you are more susceptible to false teaching than someone who does know it and so we must pay attention to God's word verse two they will also have many followers that are deceived by them verse two many will follow their sensuality that's kind of sexual immorality and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed these people's messages there's no judgment coming because
Christ isn't coming back and so we can live however we want there's no threat of judgment there's no accountability and because of them claiming Christ but living in a way that's contrary to him the way of truth will be blasphemed Christianity will be spoken poorly of false and in their greed and their desire for money they will exploit you with false words false teachers will lie in order to get money and so just these two verses tell us a lot about false teachers false teachers are almost always connected to sexual immorality and money usually those two things and Peter is saying that's how you can spot these guys they will try to deceive you they will be remotely successful in the people they're able to lead astray but they will lie they will cheat they will be greedy they will live sinful lives as they're introducing their destructive teaching and
Peter says their condemnation from long ago is not idle and is not asleep false teachers will perish but God's word will not Peter mentioned in verse 19 of chapter 1 that God's word is a lamp shining in a dark place there's a lot of darkness in our world there's a lot of darkness in your schools we need the light of God's word to guide us pay attention to this trust word word the word of God is powerful the word of God created the universe in the beginning the word of God is continuing to uphold the universe the word of God convicts us it lays open our hearts exposes our secret thoughts and the word of God was made flesh and he laid down his life for us sinners so that we would be saved from our sin and saved from this destruction his life as a payment for his people and so what will you do with the scriptures what will you do with the
[39:05] Bible will you believe it will you cling to it will you love it will you obey it will you share it or will you ignore it and be destroyed like these false teachers were and will be we won't be judged by how cool we were we won't be judged by what people think about us at the end of time we will be judged based on how we responded to God's word let us pay very careful attention to the Bible let us stick to the scriptures our father we thank you for your word which we thought so much about tonight I pray that we recognize the nature of your word is that it is your word it is what you said and not just the nature of it but the origin of it this wasn't produced by the apostles themselves this was produced by you and the apostles recorded it as you carried them along by your spirit so father

I pray for these students that we would all submit to your word and I pray!

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