

2 Peter 2
Don't Let the False Teachers Get To You
J.D. Farag

KAPONO: Heavenly Father, thank You so much for providing for us, Lord, all of our needs and for taking care of us. And I just think about the grace that You show us every day, Lord. Thank You for this time that we can come together in worship and praise Your holy name, Lord.

And thank You for the word. So would You please bless this time together, Lord? May we hear what it is that You have for us. And we ask this in the mighty name of Jesus, we say, Amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen, amen. Good morning and welcome. So glad you're here. I want to welcome those of you - you can be seated. You can stand if you want.

[Laughter]

For those of you joining us online, we want to welcome you as well. We're so glad that you are. We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through 2 Peter. Last week we completed Chapter 1. Today we're going to commence in Chapter 2. Just the first three verses will be our text today.

So I'll ask those of you that are here, if you're able, if not, where you're seated is fine, to stand. You can follow along as I read the words. So that's why you should have probably just stayed standing, I guess. I don't know.

So the Apostle Peter now - and I want to preface the reading of the text today with just this reminder: These are the final parting words of the Apostle Peter. This is, if you will, his last will and testament.

And so why is that important?

Because of all the things that he could have talked about, he talks about what we're going to see here in these verses. In other words, this rises to the level of that importance.

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So *verse 1*. "But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them -- bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many [*Verse 2*] will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed, these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. [*Myths*]

Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping."

Let's pray. Father, thank You. Lord, we really desperately need for You at this time, as only You can, by the Holy Spirit, to settle our hearts, our anxious hearts, quiet our minds, our distracted minds.

Because, Lord, we have to. Our life depends on it. We have to be able to focus and give You our undivided attention. And the enemy wants to try to distract us so that we don't.

So please, Lord, would You get our attention? And then once you get our attention, Lord, hold our attention so our minds don't wander.

Lord, we want to hear Your voice. There's a lot of voices that are clamoring for our attention in these last days. But the only voice we want to hear is the still, small voice of the Holy Spirit as You speak, into our lives, in and through Your word.

So Lord, would you speak? Your servants are listening. We ask in Jesus' name, amen and amen. You can be seated for real this time.

[Laughter]

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So I want to talk with you today about how it is that we can be on guard against false teachers and in so doing, not let them get to us. Yay!

Actually, this, again, is a very serious matter. And this is why God inspired Peter to write this at the end of his life. The title of my sermon is sort of a play on words in the sense that false teachers can get to us in more ways than one, right?

By that, I mean false teachers have the ability to get to us so as to lead us astray, but they can also get to us. You know what I mean? If we let them. If we really let them, we can let them really get to us. So it's really in a twofold way.

Now, if you'll kindly allow me to, I need to take just a little bit of time to provide the back story, as it were, concerning this serious matter. And in order to do that, I have to borrow the last verse from *1:21*, because it's going to be germane to our understanding of what Peter is warning about.

Verse 21, Chapter 1, 2 Peter. **"For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."**

Peter's referring to the Old Testament prophets. And as we looked at last week, the more sure word of prophecy, the prophetic word, the fulfilled prophetic word that we hang our hat on.

Now, what Peter is saying here is that really, in effect, there's nothing new under the sun related to these false prophets that were alive and well then because the false teachers now are also alive and well now.

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These aforementioned Old Testament prophets prophesied in the name of the Lord amidst a flurry of false prophets. Not much has changed over the generations.

What Peter is saying again is that as it was for the prophets of old, so it is now. They had to deal with these false prophets, as you and I now have to deal with these false teachers.

These Old Testament prophets stood alone at great cost and personal sacrifice in their unwavering, unflinching fearlessness and faithfulness to speak the uncomfortable and unpopular truth no matter what. Death threats would abound; they remained steadfast. Great cost.

Jeremiah, as many of you who are part of our Bible study on Thursday nights through Jeremiah - by the way, this Thursday is *Chapter 49*.

We're almost done with the book. I want to savor the flavor. I'm really - Man, have we not fallen in love with Jeremiah over our study through that book? This was an amazing prophet of God who went through so much but never wavered.

Chapter 5, Jeremiah, verse 31. Jeremiah writes, **"The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their own power; and My people love to have it so. But what will you do in the end?"**

Did you catch that? These false prophets? Oh, man, the people were loving it. They were prophesying falsely. These were false prophets. That's what false prophets do. They prophesy falsely. Again, I know, deeply profound.

But they're lying to you! And the problem is you want them to. And you love it when they do. **"The people love to have it so."**

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That's the kind of context in which the prophet Jeremiah stood so faithful. *Chapter 23:16-17*, **"Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesied to you. They make you worthless. They speak a vision of their own heart, not from the mouth of the Lord.**

They continually say to those who despise Me, 'The Lord has said, "You shall have peace."' And to everyone who walks according to the dictates of his own heart, they say, 'No evil shall come upon you.'"

Yeah, but Jeremiah's prophesying about the coming Babylonian invasion and subsequent captivity. He says it's coming; it's coming.

No, it's not going to come! Don't listen to Jeremiah.

Yeah, but he said that it was going to happen.

No, it's not going to happen! You've got to get that growl in there, right? No! (Said with a growl) it's not going to happen.

Isaiah 30:9-11. This was, for those of you who were part of our Isaiah study, boy, that was - How intense was that? Verse 9, **"That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children who will not hear the law of the Lord. Who say to the seers, "Do not see," and to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us right things. [Oh, so you know it's right] Speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits."**

Tell us lies, sweet little lies. Is there a song about that? I think there is.

And then listen to this. This is what the people were saying concerning the prophets. We don't want to hear the truth.

Tell us lies. We want to hear those doom and gloom Prophecy Updates every week.

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[Laughter]

Speak to us smooth things that we want to hear, that our ears are itching to hear. Just tell us what - Tell us about the love of God, not the judgment of God. Tell us about the love of God, not the wrath of God.

I do that, too good, maybe. I don't know. I've had a lot of practice, right, over the years?

But they even take it further, if you can imagine, in verse 11, and they have the audacity to say, **"Get out of the way, turn aside from the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us."**

Wow! So stay with me. Peter is referring to Isaiah, Jeremiah, et al, all of whom were up against the false prophets in their day, and we get a little bit of detail as to what these false prophets were doing.

Can you imagine?

Well, that was then, Pastor.

Mm hmm. No. The names have been changed to protect the guilty. They're still alive and well today. Fast forward to *Acts Chapter 20*. This is perhaps one of the most heartbreaking passages of Scripture where we get a glimpse into the heart of the Apostle Paul. Listen to what he says in *verse 29*.

He says, **"I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears."**

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Enter Peter. Peter and Paul had a very good relationship that was very testy at one point. We actually have the record of it when Paul had to rebuke him. But Peter knew Paul.

And I'm of the belief that Peter here is echoing Paul when he also warns about these false teachers. And again, this rises to the level of being so important that in your final parting words, this is what you're going to talk about. Because you love people so much, you want to forewarn them after you're gone.

Like the Apostle Paul in *Acts 20* and Peter in our text is warning the people, Hey, you guys, I'm not going to be with you very much longer.

Please, you've got to know that there's going to be these false teachers. They're going to come in from among you and they're going to be false teachers that are going to wreak havoc within the church.

It's with this introduction, by way of the back story, that I think we're now ready to take and tackle the tough text before us today. Did you like how many T's I got in there?

What I'm hoping to do as we do is provide specific reasons as to why we can be settled in our hearts as we're also guarding of our hearts.

And as such, what follows are five conclusions that if understood should have the much-needed effect of not letting wolves and false teachers get to us, whether it's to lead us astray or to get to us in that way.

The first one is in the first part of verse 1, and it's knowing they will be among us. If you were to - see, and that's the problem, right?

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That's one of the things that the enemy has been met with a large measure of success in doing. He's kind of under the radar. It's very covert.

Because see, Satan, as we talked about in the Prophecy Update, cannot destroy the church from without.

So how's he going to do it? From within. From within. So Christians are so naive, and they believe, and they're so innocently - it's an innocent naivete. And as sheep are, we're just trusting. We're just trusting.

And there needs to be with that embracing and enveloping grace and trust and welcoming of people, there also has to come packaged with that discernment. And if we had the discernment of spirits, what we're going to discern is that they are already among us.

In fact, with our heads bowed and our eyes closed, let's just - don't look at the person next to you. I'll point them out to you right now.

[Laughter]

If you were to ask me what I thought was one of the best ways to not let the false teachers get to us, this would have to be at the top of the list, and I'll explain why I say that.

Again, knowing that there will be, not might be, will be false teachers that will be among us, even coming from within us is a heads up to us.

See by default, knowing this, that they will, not might, they will be among us, now you've got your antennas up, as they say. You've got your guard up, you've got your discernment on. Kind of like having your game on.

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Does that work? Maybe not. You get the point? Okay, it works. Thank you, brother. God bless you so, so much. I appreciate that.

You got your discernment on, and you can discern and not be so naive and believe and be deceived because of it. See when, not if, we take heed to this warning, we won't be blindsided, and we won't be caught off guard, as many sadly are.

When you're already aware of it, you know it, you're discerning it. when, not if, the false teachers arise from within our midst, you're able to - man, I can spot you a mile away. Here's the second one in the second part of verse 1, it's that they will be destructive.

Come on, Pastor. How does that help in not letting false teachers get to us? Really? They'll be destructive? Yay!

Well, the answer is twofold. We're going to see shortly. First and foremost, my heart can be settled knowing that this is an identifier. And here's why.

Peter provides us with this discernment of how you can identify the false teachers, because, again, they fly under the radar. You can identify them by how they secretly, it's always secret, introduce these destructive heresies. It's very subtle. Satan is very crafty and clever.

You know, the Apostle Paul, we talked about this again in the Update, warned and exhorted us when he wrote to the Corinthians not to be ignorant. Don't be so ignorant and naive about the devices of the devil.

I love it in the King James. It's the wiles of the devil. It just preaches so much better. Wiles, the strategies, the tactics of the devil.

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Because again, make no mistake about it, Satan knows the Scriptures more than we will ever know the Scriptures. And He knows how to get to us. He knows how to slither in, s-slither into a church and begin to wreak havoc within that church because his sole goal is to destroy the church. He hates the church.

Jesus said, *John 10:10*, that **"The enemy does not come except to steal, kill and destroy."** That's his sole goal.

So we know that's what he's going to do. How is he going to do it?

This is how he's going to do it. He will be, again, sadly met with a measure of success, as we'll see in a moment, when it comes to this. But he infiltrates as a wolf, like Paul would warn, in sheep's clothing, as it's been said.

Here's how you're going to know it's a wolf? You ready for this? Wait for it. It's a wolf if it eats sheep.

Let me try that again.

[Laughter]

Paul said that these wolves, these false teachers, will not spare the flock. A wolf, what does a wolf do? They eat sheep.

Is that too much? I mean, I don't know. Maybe I should come up with a better illustration. If you've got one, I'm more than willing to hear it.

But that's what wolves do. And that's how you can identify them. But again, it's a very undercover, secret. It's a secret operation, classified.

So they come in, and they're very subtle, and they secretly introduce these destructive false teachings. And you can spot them because they're trying to draw disciples unto them.

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Here's what that looks like, and I thank God so much for His protective hand on this, His church. Over the many years, God has this ferocious protection of this precious body of believers here. And again, I deem it such a profound privilege to be the pastor of this amazing church.

But here's what it looks like. Somebody comes in and they introduce themselves, and next thing you know, they're talking about, hey, you seem like the kind of guy that would be really interested in the deep things of the word.

[Laughter]

Just like that, too. That should be a dead giveaway. Oh, yeah, Pastor JD, man, he's a good teacher, but you should come over. We have a Bible study, and we get into the word, man. Oh, no you don't. You're drawing disciples unto yourself. You're leading them astray.

Next thing you know, and as Peter even mentions, they're denying the deity of Christ. Oh, yeah, Jesus is the Savior. He's Lord. He's Redeemer. He's not God.

Oh, you might want to ask John about that. He said that if anybody says that Jesus is not God, they're a liar, the truth is not in them. They're false.

You know, I - this is a needed strength. We need to have the spiritual spine to stand up to these wolves and say, "You're a wolf. You're a wolf. You know what we do with wolves?"

Well, I won't tell you what we do with wolves here. We've had our share, by the way. They didn't get very far. Thank You, Lord. We don't show them where in Scripture. Don't waste your time. We show them to Kam Highway.

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I'm serious about that, by the way. We have this profound, again, privilege of being the overseers of this God's flock.

And if a wolf ever comes in here and they start recruiting and proselytizing and drawing people unto themselves, that's how you can spot them.

And you can also spot a wolf because they're so crafty. They're so crafty. They're so slithery.

You know what I mean by this? And I think you will when I say this. You ever had a conversation with somebody and afterwards you're just like, man, I feel like I need to take a shower. I just feel so violated.

That's probably the Holy Spirit because you have been. And thank God that you have the discernment to even recognize it as such. That's the Holy Spirit. Never, ever, ever go against that check, that pause. That's the Holy Spirit saying, be careful.

Warning, warning, warning! The lights go off. You know, in our cars, we have those warning lights on our dashboards. I hate those things, especially the one of your tire's air pressure is low. Really? I just get out. It's not flat.

Why do I need to know that it's low? Whatever. Just one more thing to put electrician's tape over and cover it up.

[Laughter]

Come on. That's what we do, isn't it? How annoying is this? But don't ignore those warning signs. They're there to protect you from destruction.

So there are warnings - how about the low-oil warning? You might want to do something about that because it will destroy the engine of your Christian life if you don't. They will be destructive.

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And Number 3, they will be successful. Again, yay!

How does this help me? I mean, your title of your sermon is "How to Not Let False Teachers Get to You." And you're telling me they're going to be successful?

Yeah. They will be met with a measure of success by virtue of Peter saying, "many." I wish he didn't say "many will follow them in their destructive ways."

I think again about what the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, his parting words, his last will and testament, if you will. 2 Timothy, the final letter that the Apostle Paul would write. He knew it was just a matter of time.

He even tells Timothy as much. "I've run the race, I've finished the race, I've won the race, actually, and I fought the good fight of faith. And I know that there is in store for me a crown of righteousness. And not just me, but all of you [That's us] who long for His appearing." Parting words.

But what is he going to talk about? If it were me, I'd probably talk about the rapture. My parting words.

Hey, Pastor JD, you can write one more letter, preach one more sermon. What do you want to talk about? I want to talk about the Rapture.

Okay, well, that might be what you want to talk about, but here's what you need to talk about, this.

Now, he did talk about, of course, the rapture in his first letter to the Thessalonians. The first time the Gospel is even mentioned in the Apostle Paul's letters, 1 Thessalonians. And he had only been with that church when he planted that church for, some believe, some three months.

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And then he was run out of town. And he loved them so much, and this was a new church that he planted of new believers. And he's teaching them about Bible prophecy?

Yeah.

He's teaching him about the rapture?

Yeah. Because the rapture is part of the Gospel. Don't sell the Gospel short. The Gospel is: Jesus died for us, He was buried, He rose again on the third day, and He's coming back again one day. That's the Gospel.

Could you imagine if it was just stopped at the resurrection? He died, He was buried, and He rose again. Have a good day. Okay. Thank you so much. No, He's coming back.

He is?

Yeah.

Oh! When? How soon?

It can't be soon enough.

You mean He's going to take me out of here?

Yeah.

Well, that is good news, especially now with everything that's happening in the world.

So back to this matter of how false teachers will be successful. Paul, when he wrote to Timothy said that they will in great numbers, echoing again what Peter is saying here, many, I wish it were just few, but many, they're going to flock in great numbers to these teachers, these false teachers that are telling them what their ears are itching to hear because they're not going to put up with sound doctrine.

They're not going to go to Jeremiah's church, it's doom and gloom. No, let's go over to this guy's church because he's

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going to tell us what our ears are itching to hear. God loves you! He does.

But Jesus is coming. And He's coming soon. And you need to be right with Him. And you need to be born-again. And you need to preach and speak truth. Preach the word, Timothy. Preach the word. Don't shrink back. Be a Jeremiah. Be an Isaiah.

You know that Isaiah was sawn in half? What a way to die, man. Jeremiah: we're not so sure. This is a spoiler alert for Thursday night.

Chapter 49 - there's 52 chapters. We're almost done with it. It's going to be kind of a bittersweet completion of that book.

We really don't know. And I think God, by design, in His grace, kept that from us. When the Bible's silent, we would do well to be silent. We really don't know how Jeremiah died. I would like to think that he, you know, died of old age, and just went home to be with the Lord, this faithful servant, this faithful prophet of God.

I was just thinking about this, too, with John, the Apostle John. You know why he and when he wrote the Book of Revelation, when he was inspired by the Lord in the power of the Holy Spirit to write the Revelation of Jesus Christ and future events?

The Book of Revelation, the Oooh! Book of Revelation, right?

It was about the year 95 A.D, and he's been banished to the island of Patmos. Don't think the island of Oahu. This was not a paradise island. This was a barren island where they sent people to die. He's been banished to this island about 50 miles off the coast of modern-day Turkey in the Aegean Sea. Left there.

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Do you know why he was sent there? They tried to kill him; he wouldn't die. God wasn't through with him yet. God still had a plan for him yet.

And so we're told, and it's documented by church historians that they took John, and they wanted to silence him like they wanted to silence all the prophets of old. They tried to silence him by killing him.

How were they going to kill him?

Well, they tried to throw him in a cauldron of boiling oil.

Oh, my!

You would think that he's going to die. This is how it ends. Thank You, Lord. But he doesn't die. They pull him out of this cauldron of boiling oil.

What are we going to do with this guy?

I don't know. Send him to Patmos.

Fine. Get out of here.

God is going, Perfect. That was on the itinerary. I'm going to have you banished on the island of Patmos, and I'm going to give you the Revelation. And he died of old age, one of the only ones of the disciples.

You know how Peter died, right? We're going to talk about that more. But we have already seen it. He already referenced it when Jesus told him, Peter, there's coming a day when you're going to go where you don't want to go and you're going to die in a way that you don't want to die.

So we're told, again, by church historians that he was crucified as his Lord, but he did not deem himself worthy enough to be crucified, so he asked to be crucified upside down.

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How's that one? That's this Peter, by the way, that we're reading his letter. So I guess you could say he's kind of earned the right to speak into our lives concerning this matter.

So again, the question: How and why does knowing that they'll be successful help me and not let them get to me? I'm going to answer this way. Personally, in my own life, God has been ministering to me in this regard by releasing me from the onus being on me.

What do you mean? It's not on me. It's on them. I just have to keep my hands to the plow, stay true to the word, don't deny His name, as Jesus would have John write to the Church of Philadelphia in Revelation 3.

Don't concern myself - see - and Satan knows this too. He can drive you out of your mind if you focus on how much success he's having in drawing people away and leading them astray.

See if he can get a pastor, in particular to start now instead of focusing on the preaching of the word and the truth, If he can get a pastor distracted and now all of a sudden all they're doing is that, (Clap) he got them. Came in from the back door unaware.

And I tell you, you don't have to look very far, if I could be so candid, and it's heartbreaking. I say it with no delight in my heart, but I've seen many a ministry destroyed this way because they're all about being against or pointing out or that's all their ministry is about.

They've, I guess, adopted a name for themselves as being discernment ministries. Well, the problem with discernment ministries, as they are so-called, is that if your ministry, the entirety of your ministry, is devoted to attacking false teachers, well, where's the Gospel?

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You know how - this is an example and an illustration, that I think will be helpful.

If I'm in Honolulu, I'm in town, and I want to get back on the Kailua, and I see a sign and the sign says: This is not the way to Kailua. This is false.

Great! Now, what do I do? I would like to know the way. I need a sign that says this is the way.

Now, in all fairness, there are those who do point out, and we are, the Apostle Paul makes it very clear we're to mark those, we're to even name those. And Paul himself names some by name.

Can you imagine for like over 2000 or well-nigh 2000 years, every believer and even nonbeliever has read the name of these guys. It's in the Bible. How would you like your name as a heretic, false teacher?

Oh, that dude right there?

Yeah. And for almost 2000 years, they got your name there. That's worse than social media because social media has only got a short lifespan.

Pastor, what's your point? Maybe you're asking: Do you even have a point?

Yes, I have a point. My point is, is that the Lord knows. Let the Lord deal with it, and He will. And we're going to see that here in a moment. Don't take it upon yourself.

God has not called you to that. God has called you to be light, to preach the word, to speak truth, to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

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That's what you're called to do, to reach the uttermost parts of the earth. You're not to be a false-teacher hunter. That's not on you. I've released you from that.

I tell you; it has freed me. Man, I mean, I used to let them get to me.

God, don't You see what's happening?

JD, I'm all knowing. Of course.

Why are you letting it happen?

I got this.

Well, do You need some help?

No. JD, I don't need you to help Me on this.

No, but I want to help You.

You want to help Me? Don't help Me.

See, I was taking it upon myself. See what happens and what comes with false teachings are false accusations.

And you can let that get to you. And when you let that get to you, the enemy's got you right where he wants you. You're playing right into his hand.

That was his intention from the very beginning. He's the accuser of the brethren. He's the author of confusion. He's the father of lies. These are earmarks. These are tell-tale signs. That's how you're going to know.

So when you see this being met with a measure of success, just know that God knows. God knows. And you don't have to keep reminding Him either.

God, did you see what they did this time, what they said this time? What are You going to do?

I got this.

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Well, let me help You.

No! Stop. Don't help Me.

Yeah, but they're succeeding.

I know. I got it. I'll have the final word on it.

Number 4, the first part of verse 3, they will be deceptive.

You think? Firm grasp of the obvious, right?

So Peter here goes on to say that in their covetous greed, these false teachers will take advantage of and exploit people with myths. Myths are the antithesis of truth. They're fables, they're false.

And here again to the question of how does this help me in not letting false teachers get to me? Well, it does so, and it can greatly encourage those who hold to the truth. They're not easily deceived.

Again, personally, in my own life, God's done a work in my life. Such that they can still hurt but not harm. You know the distinction between the two?

It still hurts when the false teachers and false accusations come against you. But it's not as bad as it used to be, because I know I'm on the right side of truth.

So let the dogs bark. That's what dogs do; they bark. We have a little dog. He barks all the time. Doesn't matter. The same mail truck pulls up, bark, bark, bark!

Buddy, that's his name, it's the mail.

I know, but I still want to bark.

That's what dogs do. They bark. These false prophets: it's just what they do. Let the dogs bark. Bark, bark, bark!

Don't let it get to you.

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If you let them get to you, then guess what? They got to you. Again, I know, deeply profound.

But that's what Satan wants; he wants to get to you. He can't get to you from without, so he's got to do it that way. Don't let him get away with that. He wants to derail you. He wants to distract you.

That's another one, oh, man, distraction. This is all a distraction. Satan is the master distracter. That kind of rhymed a little bit right there.

Oh, he is so good at distracting us. Get us off message. Get us off track. It's a distraction, and it's a deception. Don't let him do that.

So all of a sudden, now I'm laser focused on this.

What? This has nothing to do with what you're called to do. Why are you doing that? It's a deception. It's a distraction.

We talked about it in the Prophecy Update. You'll forgive my continual reference of the Update. One of the more difficult Updates.

Had a little bit of a different flavor than usual, but we just talked about how Satan plays both sides against the middle and he does it in the area of politics.

He wants to get us to turn on each other and against each other so it's us versus them. And that's how he deceives and distracts and destroys. I don't know how else to say it. It's textbook divide and conquer.

So now you've got - and how about not just politics, how about race? Black against White.

I might as well say it again. I hope you don't mind. You know that your pastors, starting with your senior pastor here,

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are racist? You know how? Well, I'm an Arab, Pastor Leitu is Samoan, and Pastor Mac is African American. We have no White pastors here.

[Laughter]

Thank you for laughing. I wasn't sure. Right?

Hey, let's pit Black against White. Left against Right. Plays right into his hands, playing the two sides against the middle. They're two sides of the same coin. They're two wings on the same bird flying in the same direction.

But see, Satan is so deceitful, he's so deceptive. He's deceived Christians who have believed. That it's now Left against Right. Right against Left. Republican against Democrat. Democrat against Republican. Black against White. White against Black.

He got us right where he wants us. That was the whole point of it. We wrestle not against flesh and blood. You know, there's only one race, the human race.

And it's not, as one said so aptly, a skin problem, it's a sin problem. You know what I read in my Bible? That we're going to be before the throne; all nations, tribes, tongues, and people. I can't wait. All races.

But see, this is how Satan has destroyed, distracted, and deceived. Lastly, thankfully, the second part of verse 3, this is a sanctified satisfaction on my part, and I will also add Peter's part because notice at the end of verse 3, and I love the way that he's inspired to write this. **"Their judgment is not sleeping."**

You might think it is.

Lord! When are they going to get theirs?

Oh, don't worry.

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I told you I'm on it. I know all about it. I'm going to take care of it.

Yeah, but, God, you need to judge them!

I will.

Well, is judgment sleeping in this morning? Because...

No, it's not sleeping. I'm very much aware.

You know how when you're sleeping, you're unaware of what's happening around you? But when you're awake, you're alert.

Well, at least after you've had your coffee anyway.

[Laughter]

Right? Thank God for - I think there's going to be coffee in heaven, but that's another thing.

He says to them, know that their destruction is not sleeping. It's coming.

Now, why do you think God would inspire the Apostle Peter to write that, that way, to settle us down? Because we're all riled up. We're all worked up.

No, just calm down. They're going to be destroyed. They're going to get theirs in the end.

Now, this is not a delightful thing. God does not delight in the punishment of the wicked. We saw that on Thursday night in *Jeremiah, Chapter 48*.

God Himself is weeping and wailing for the judgment that He brings on Moab, modern-day Jordan. He takes no delight in it. It's heartbreaking for Him.

He restores them at the end, by the way. He's a restoring God. But he's also destroying God.

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And these are not Christians, by the way. Contrary to how they might act or talk or the Bibles they might carry, they are wolves, they're false.

And would to God that we would have the courage in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit to eyeball to eyeball say, "You are false. This is not true. Get out of my face. Get out of my church too."

But again, I'm - I repented. I have to repent again, though, it looks like because I'm just confessing I would get so angry at them.

But then verses like this and there are many like this settle me. I used to not only be angry at them; I used to be afraid of them. But then verses like this settle me.

So now, instead of being angry at them or afraid of them, I feel sorry for them knowing what's going to happen to them.

Did you notice the strength with which Peter writes this? Oh, their destruction isn't sleeping. They're going to be destroyed. Their destruction is coming. They've deceived, they've deceived, but they're going to be destroyed.

Oh, thank You, Lord. When again? Is it just me or - I want it, I want - I'll be merciful. Okay, I'm trying because I want people to be merciful to me.

But this has the much-needed effect of just - And it's really - lastly, and I'll close with this, a Psalm 73 moment. The psalmist, Asaph, he struggled greatly with this. In fact, he had a crisis of faith over this. He could not wrap his mind around how it was that the wicked were being met with success and prospering in everything they did.

And here he is, walking righteously and uprightly. And he's like, I've cleansed my hands in vain. I'm walking uprightly

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for what? I'm going through trial after trial, adversity after adversity, affliction after affliction, and here's this wicked false teacher, heretic.

There's more words you can add to that.

And it's like everything he touches turns to gold. Why do You let that happen? God, that's not fair.

God's like, I'm not done yet.

And then at the end of the Psalm, he goes into the sanctuary of the Lord, which is the best place to go. And by the way, that infers that he had not been in the sanctuary of the Lord, which is why he finds himself so conflicted and having this crisis of faith.

He goes into the sanctuary of the Lord and the Lord shows him there end. And it's almost like he goes from being so angry and he's actually disenchanted with God. Because it's God's fault that He allows them to get away with that. They're wicked. Why God?

And then God shows him a verse 3, how it ends for them. And he's like, oh, okay, I'm good now. Oh, God. Oh, God! And he comes to his senses. Okay, Lord. And he basically repents. I'm sorry, Lord. I don't know what I was thinking. I see that in the end they will get theirs. So I'm not going to let them get to me. Thank You, Lord.

Kapono, come on up. Why don't you stand, and we'll close in prayer.

Father in Heaven, thank You. This is tough stuff, but so needed. I readily admit and have openly confessed that this is not something that I would have picked as a topic to teach on.

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But thank You, God, that it's the whole counsel of God, verse-by-verse, so we can't get away with skipping over something as important as this.

So Lord, thank You for the warning. Lord, I just want to pray for any who have really been upset and affected, impacted by this Lord. I just pray that You'll settle their hearts, that they would - their focus would not be on that or this or them, but on You.

So that like with Isaiah, oh, I love it. What a what a profound promise. "That You will keep the one in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You."

Oh, Lord, don't let the enemy distract our minds by getting obsessed with this. Lord, help us to focus on You and You alone. Thank You, Lord, that we can. Thank You, Lord, for the truth. Thank You, Lord. In Jesus' name, amen.