

“The Lamp of Truth – God’s Word”



2 Peter 1:19-21

Theme: Believers trust the truth of God’s Word more than anything else to guide them in life.

I. THE RELIABILITY OF GOD’S WORD – 1:19

A. It Is the Supreme Source of Truth – v. 19a

1. Peter continues with the theme of the reliability of God’s Word – comparing it to the audible voice that the apostles heard when they were on the mountain of transfiguration with Jesus.
2. He says *“So we have the prophetic word made more sure ...”*
3. *“more sure”* [βέβαιος] – is an adjective describing the *“prophetic word”* – meaning that it is something that can be relied on not to cause disappointment, abiding as such over a long period of time and thereby demonstrating its value.
4. As reliable and awe-inspiring as Peter’s experience was, the *“prophetic word”* of Scripture is *“more sure.”*
5. This *“prophetic word”* of God is inerrant and infallible – needing no human confirmation or authentication – *Psalm 119:160; John 17:17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13*
6. Some may point to supposed visions, voices, and ventures even into heaven itself as a source for truth; yet an Apostle here declares that Scripture exceeds such experiences for reliability and authority.
7. If this is true, we are looking to inferior resources when we allow our faith to be informed by such things – things that are unverifiable and unrepeatable and are thus undesirable in comparison to the Word of God.
8. Thus, the *“prophetic word”* refers to the Scripture¹ as provided through the inspiration by the Holy Spirit and give to us “everything pertaining to life and godliness” – cp. *2 Peter 1:3-4*.

B. It Is the Sustained Source of Truth – v. 19b

¹ Here Scripture clearly refers to the Old Testament Scriptures, but would include the New Testament as well as they were also inspired by God – cp. 2 Peter 3:15-16

1. The sustained source of truth reference already through the phrase *“made more sure”* above continues to be emphasized throughout the remainder of v. 19.
2. Peter declares: *“... to which you do well to pay attention ...”* – especially in light of the chaos and confusion that false teachers were foisting upon them through their contrived and cleverly devised fables.
3. The more the false teachers corrupt the faith through their teaching, the darker things become, yet the Scriptures serve as *“... a lamp shining in a dark place”* – cp. ***Psalm 119:105, 130***
4. Yet in contrast to the darkness and ignorance resulting from the dusk of falsehood, the truth of God brings the *“dawn”* of *“day”* and comprehension of the truth of the Gospel.
5. He says: *“to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.”*
6. Peter here declares that until Jesus returns Scripture remains the thing to which God’s people must *“pay attention”* in a sustained, enduring focus without the distractions of inferior “revelations.”
7. Jesus is *“the morning star”* – [φωσφόρος] literally “phosphorus,” “light bringer” – reference to “... the planet Venus, which precedes the morning sun in the sky, and is used here for Christ, whose coming inaugurates the promised millennial kingdom and the establishment of His kingdom.”²
8. The temporal reference to *“until ... arises in your hearts”* – anticipates the powerful impact of Christ’s return, which will transform believers into the perfect conformity to Christ and His image – ***Romans 8:29; 1 John 3:1-2*** .

II. **THE RARITY OF GOD’S WORD – 1:20-21**

A. **The Unique Source – v. 20**

1. Continuing to contrast the truth delivered through the apostles compared to the false teachers, Peter declares that unlike the false teachers, the prophecy provided did NOT originate in men.
2. He says: *“But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation.”*

² MacArthur, p. 64

3. The phrase “... *is a matter of ...*” [γίνομαι] means what “comes into being” or “originates” – conveying the “*no prophecy of Scripture*” originated in men.
4. “*interpretation*” [ἐπίλυσις] – explanation that is sourced not in men but in the one who supplies the truth.
5. The significance of this emphasis is that Scripture is unlike what the false teachers have to offer, alleged truth that originates in their own minds and depraved hearts; whereas Scripture is not from men, but God.

B. The Unique Supply – v. 21

1. He gives explanation – “*for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.*”
2. “*moved*” [φέρω] refers to the writers of Scripture being continually carried” or “borne along” by the Holy Spirit.
 - a) This term is used to describe the impact of wind on the sails of a ship – cp. **Acts 27:15, 17**
 - b) This is the closest we have to a description of the process of inspiration – the Holy Spirit filling the hearts and minds of the authors, directing them as to what they were to write without dictating it to them – cp. **2 Timothy 3:16**.
3. Thus, Scripture is not the word of men, but the Word of God – supplied directly through the Holy Spirit.