

The Sinful Denial Of The Return Of The King

Kyle Swanson

2 Peter 3:1-7

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Good afternoon, chosen few and elect of the 11:55 crowd. It is so good to see you all. My name is Kyle. I get to be one of the pastors here. Todd and I are different people, telling every service that again and again and again. Just making sure... Todd hosted, and I love Todd. He looks like my older brother, but I guarantee you he's not. He is older than me, he is taller than me, better-looking than me, but you can tell the difference between us because he wears color, and I don't, okay? So if you're ever just wondering which one of us, you're talking to, "Is he wearing black?" that's Kyle.

Okay. That's probably most likely true. Well, it's my privilege for the next couple of weeks to be taking us back to our series called Established in Truth in our study of 2 Peter. But before I do that, I want to take a moment, while I have a microphone and you don't, to invite you to a class that I'm going to be teaching in two weeks. So on February 28th, Friday night and March 1st, Saturday morning, we're going to be doing one of our Equip Core classes.

I have the privilege of overseeing our classroom ministry, unless you'd be intimidated by classes. Anyone in here taking an Equip class before? Were you scared and intimidated, or did you have fun? We had fun, right? We try to have fun in those classes. I want you to walk away, enjoying the content, and so we're going to be studying a class called The Church Throughout History. What I want to show you is that the true church that was started at Pentecost has existed all the way up until the modern age. Know the Protestant church did not start 500 years ago.

So I want to show you how we are connected to the True Apostolic Church, found in the New Testament, and I hope you'll be encouraged by that. So please do come if you can. Shameless plug out of the way. You can go ahead and open your Bible to 2 Peter chapter 3. If you got one of those blue Bibles from the ushers, you'll see that on page 1121, and we'll carry over onto the next page as well.

Well, as we get back into 2 Peter, it's always a good idea for us to reorient ourselves to where we have been so we can see where we are and where we're headed. A while back in our Church family, we started a series, going through this little letter verse by verse. As a side note, if you're newer with us or you've missed out on anything, you can always go on our app, or our website, or our YouTube channel, and you can catch up on any sermons that you've missed in the past. I know that sounds like the funnest thing in the world, I catch up on sermons, but you can familiarize yourself with maybe some gaps in your understanding and see the series as a whole, especially a series like this is spread out throughout the year. So you can do that, and I would encourage you to do that. You can see all of Pastor Jon's old sermon series as well, including any you might've missed from the Gospel of John in our current study.

Well, as we've been looking at 2 Peter over the last couple of years, we've learned some fascinating things. First, we remember that this letter is the final letter that the apostle, Peter would be writing to his little group of churches that he was overseeing throughout Asia Minor. Asia Minor really is modern-day Turkey, if you think about it in terms of geography. We know this would be the final letter that Peter would write because he would be put to death very soon after this letter, and that was something that Peter also knew, and it also drove the heart of his letter as we learn in verses 12 to 15 of chapter 1. Peter's intent, his thesis, his purpose in this little letter is to remind us to be established in the truth, to be reminded of the precious and very great promises of Christ, and to be equipped so that after his departure or his death, as he describes it, that we would be able to recall and to know the truth of Christ and to live out our Christian faith before a lost and dying world.

Now, I say we, because even though this letter had Peter's original audience in mind, the faces and people that he knew, he actually addresses this letter directly to every Christian. That's not always the case. Sometimes we open books of the New Testament and it says Paul writing to a specific Church, to a specific people, in a specific place, and we learn from that letter by reading over their shoulders and gleaning truth, and making it applicable for ourselves today. But this letter, in verse 1 of chapter 1 says, "From Peter to those who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours." So we learned that this doesn't refer to a faith of status. He's not referring to other apostles, but rather, a mode of faith, any and all who have obtained salvation by grace from God through faith in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins and for reconciliation to God.

If that is you, Christian, if you are a true biblical Christian, then it is as if Peter wrote this letter directly to you and placed it in your mailbox. You can be encouraged by that, because that means that Peter's words in this letter are directly applicable to your life and circumstances. So then, as a reminder, 2 Peter can easily be broken up into three sections of study, and the translation editors in pretty much every Bible have done this for you, and they are chapters 1, 2, and 3. That might seem very obvious, but it's not always the case. Sometimes themes and sections carry over chapters, but it's a very nice, easy break in 2 Peter.

So we learn then in these three sections what Peter wants us to learn in each chapter. Chapter 1, Peter teaches us, the Church, all Christians, the nature of the Christian life. We were given Peter's final sermon, wherein the Holy Spirit preserved for us for all time this all-important sermon, final sermon of Peter's life. Now, if you stop and think about it, Peter wrote two letters in the New Testament. He probably wrote thousands of correspondence to his friends and family, and preached thousands of sermons to churches over the course of his ministry, but none of them were preserved, except for what we have, so that makes this sermon very special. Some of the things we learned in this sermon are in verse 3, about the sufficiency of scripture.

We have everything we need for a life of godliness. We learn about the divine and precious promises of God, that He will fulfill in our lives in verse 4. The supplemental virtues that we are to practice in our Christian life, in order to be godly people in this present age in verses 5 to 7, and then a reminder to be diligent in the same manner that Christ was diligent with our witness

so that we remain effective for gospel ministry in verses 8 to 11. We also saw Peter's purpose, his thesis for this letter in verses 12 to 15, which stated again, remind us that he spent his final words, his final effort to encourage us, to remind us, and to establish us in the truth, truth that we already know if we are faithful Christians, but all the while, truth that we are called to continue to excel still more in excellence and practice of these things. Peter then finishes chapter 1 with an incredible personal recounting, this telling of his own testimony of seeing the glory of Christ, the glorified Christ on the Mountain of Transfiguration, and yet, encouraging us to rely even more so on the perfect, inerrant, sufficient, and God-breathed word that is sitting in the Bible on your lap, or maybe more likely in the cellphone on your lap.

That's okay too. It's not the mode, it's the words that matter. So then, the second major break we see, the second major section is in chapter 2, and that is the warning against false teachers. That's where we've been most recently. Now, many false teachers over the history of the church have warned us against reading 2 Peter, saying, "Oh, it's a dark, obscure corner of the New Testament."

"We can't really prove that Peter wrote it. It's not got anything valuable in there for you." I think that's fascinating, because what is Peter doing in this letter? He's warning us exactly about those people. Stands to reason that they don't want us to read 2 Peter because he's showing us exactly what they look like.

What are their tactics? What's their character, and what is the enticing nature of their false and licentious, Pseudo-Christian faith that leads their unsuspecting followers into destruction. We also learned about the fate of these wolves, these false teachers that Peter teaches us about and their followers who follow them into that same fate, of judgment before God. Finally then, the third section of this letter, which we'll begin to encounter today and in next week and in the following couple of weeks in the future, will show us the certainty of Jesus Christ's earthly return. The certainty of His return.

This is critical, because as we will see, false teachers and false converts will expose their true hearts by mocking and disregarding the reality of the return of the King. By doing so, they imagine, anyway, falsely that they have license to live however they choose and without consequence. So that brings us to our text for today, 2 Peter 3:1-7. I've entitled these next three sermons; kind of a mini-series called The Return of the King. The three sermons are entitled The Sinful Denial of the Return of the King. That's what we'll see this morning.

Then next week, the Divine Assurance of the Return of the King, and in the future, Living in Light of the Return of the King, and that'll take us through the first 13 verses of this chapter. As I've stated before, this little letter plays itself out like a three-part drama, kind of like a trilogy of films. I referenced Star Wars quite a bit in chapter two, thinking we're in this dark middle section like Empire Strikes Back. It looks like the bad guys are winning, right?

But as we turn a corner now into this third chapter, also, very much like Lord of the Rings, like Return of the King. The movie begins with a hopeful tone, rather than a dark tone, but much like

these films, just because we're now in the third act doesn't mean the bad guys have gone away. We still have to contend with them. So the first part of this third chapter deals with the last calls for vigilance against these scoffers we're about to meet, who will most certainly appear to deride and degrade the truly faithful followers of Jesus in their practice. And so now, as we focus on these first seven verses of chapter 3, the heart of Peter shifts towards this hopeful tone.

But before we realize that hope that is portrayed in this chapter, a final warning is given. A final battle is waged. A final plea is portrayed, as Peter's final words reach their climax of instruction, and in his attempt to give fortification to the souls of the faithful. So in these seven verses, we will see the following truth. Peter starts this third section of his letter with a reminder to be vigilant in the knowledge and practice of the Word of God by giving us three mindsets of readiness that will prevent Christians from falling victim to the ridicule of false converts.

Those three mindsets will be the three points of your outline that you see in your note sheet. So with that understanding, what we're going to do is read 2 Peter 3:1-10, where our section this morning is 1 to 7, but I'm going to read all of 1 to 10 for context, and I'll tell you what I told all the other services. I brought the wrong Bible. This text is too small. I can't read it anymore, and so I'm going to put it on my iPad. Like I said, the mode doesn't matter, it's the words that matter. So please stand with me if you're able for the reading of God's Word. If you're new with us, we stand out of reverence. We mark a difference between the words we hear sitting down and the words we hear standing up. These words are the words of God are more important than anything else I will say.

2 Peter 3 says this, "This is now the second letter that I'm writing to you, beloved. In both of them, I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. They will say, 'Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.' For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water, and through water by the Word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word, the heavens and the earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and the destruction of the ungodly. But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years is as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done in them and on it will be exposed." That is God's Word. You may be seated.

As always, it's foolish to approach a study of God's Word without asking for His wisdom to understand His intended meaning and His purpose for it. So please pray with me for that, if you would.

Father, as we approach this text, as we approach any part of Your Bible, may we never again say, "What does this mean to me?" Father, may we always ask, "What is this meaning from Your mind? What do You intend us to learn?" Every passage has a meaning, and every passage has a way to be interpreted, and we want to do that with accuracy. So Father, please help me, and please help us in our study to understand Your heart and Your instruction for us. We ask in Christ's name. Amen.

Well, as you can see, this chapter begins with a slightly different tone than chapter 2. We start to take a move towards that hope that I was talking about. Yet, even though we are, the apostle still, through his instruction is calling us to fortitude, and that's what we will see. We've been introduced to a new group of people. There's a bit of an overlap from this group of false teachers, these wolves and they're followers that we saw in chapter 2, and this new group is called the scoffers.

Now, I can define for you what scoffing means, but I think you know. Christian, Church, Bible. I can't believe you would buy into that. It's been disproven many times. You know how many men have meddled with that book? It's garbage. They're the ones who mock your faith. Their action is the sound of the word, right? That's what describes them. They mock you. They mock your trust in God, and mock your hope, that Jesus, some divine King will ever come back to rescue you?

That's what scoffers do. So as we get into our texts, Peter's heart is to protect you, is to fortify you by giving you a mindset of readiness, and that first mindset is found in verses 1 to 2, and that is this, *point #1), You Must Remember To Trust In God's Revelation*. You Must Remember. How do we practice this mindset? Well, we see that in these verses, beginning with a personal note from Peter.

He expresses to the reader that this is, in fact, the second letter that he is writing to them. Now, anyone who ever questions authorship of Peter is wrong, because Peter claims authorship in chapter 1, and he reminds them, "This is the second letter that I'm writing to you." To do what? To accomplish what? What's his reason? I'm stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder.

Now, that's exactly what he did in 1 Peter. He points to old examples, examples like Abraham, of God fulfilling His faithful Word to them. This is the sincere reminder that I want to point you, to believing in what I'm about to ask you to do. This is Peter's pastoral heart. He doesn't come in, demanding obedience and fealty. He says, "Look to the Word." I want to stir you up by way of sincere reminder. I don't want to command you; I want to stir you up. So in his final will and testament, Peter, as a humble follower of Jesus, pours out the heart of God on the page, because God doesn't just tell us, "March, slave." He says, "Follow Me, and I will bless you. I'll tell you why, and I will show you, My goodness."

Peter takes a posture here of a loving Shepherd, and of a protective Brother, not of a demanding, despotic ruler, and that is such a good thing for any man who desires to go into pastoral ministry, to know and to learn, and to understand that's the heart that we need to have. So he stirs us up by way of reminder, in our sincere mind, knowing, by the way, and assuming that we have a sincere mind. How do you know if you have a sincere mind, Christian? What are we called to do in Christ? We're called to obey His commandments, to follow His Word, right?

Verse 2, Peter does exactly that in his appeal to authority in verse 2. He says, "I want to stir you up by way of a sincere mind, that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles." This is his way of saying that you should know the Word, that you should be in the Word. But what specifically is he talking about in the Word in this passage? You see, that's a good question to ask, and it helps us to rightly divide the Word.

We ask good questions of the text. We don't question the Bible whether it's true, but we ask good questions of it so that it will give us answers that help us in our study. So then, the answer to this riddle lies in the immediate context of the content of the next few verses. The scoffers will mock and deny the return of the King. They will ignore the predictions of the holy prophets about fiery judgment coming on the world in recompense for all rebellion, all evil, all scoffing. They will reject the promises of God, that He will return and He will execute judgment on the wicked, and He will pour out blessing on the righteous, and they will scoff at your simple mind for believing such idiotic things. But hey, you can only believe what you know, right? Stand to reason. So we must know what the holy prophets say. We must know what the apostles say.

So we start with the holy prophets. That is the righteous prophets set aside in service to God, who wrote the Old Testament writings for us. What do they have to say? These men are set apart for God, differentiated from the false prophets, that we met earlier in this series in Jeremiah 14 and Isaiah 30. Those prophets were men who stole the office. They did not work for God. They did not speak for God. They prophesied, as Jeremiah said, their own lying visions, their own lies to deceive people. These are men who told people what they wanted to hear, as we learned in Isaiah 30. The people go to them and say, "Don't prophesy about destruction anymore. Tell us illusions. Speak to us soothing things."

Folks, that's in the Bible. That's what the heart of the Israelite nation was doing when they were living in rebellion to God. "Tell us lies. Speak to us soothing things." Does that sound familiar in the church today?

So then, what did the holy prophets predict about this very subject of future judgment? This matters, by the way, because we all must live knowing that the Lord will not only vindicate the righteous and build His kingdom to bless us forever, but He will fiercely judge the wicked and those who mock His Word. There are simply too many Old Testament passages to quote to get a full picture of, though, we can get a sampling to get a full picture to prove that Peter was right to call us to remember these things. So we'll start in Deuteronomy 32:22. It says this of God, "For a

fire is kindled in My anger, and it will burn to the depths of Sheol. It devours the earth and its increase, and sets on fire the foundations of the mountains."

Psalm 11:6 says, "Let him rain coals on the wicked, fire and sulfur and scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup." When is this going to happen? Psalm 21:8-9 adds, "Your hand will find out all your enemies. Your right hand will find out those who hate you. You will make them as a blazing oven when you appear."

Isaiah 66:15-16 teaches, "For behold, the Lord will come in fire, and His chariots like the whirlwind, to render His anger in fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire the Lord will enter into judgment, and by His sword, with all flesh, and those slain by the Lord shall be many." Remember Jesus saying, "Many will say to Me, 'Lord, Lord, did I not prophesy in Your name?'" Ezekiel 38:22 says, "With pestilence and bloodshed, I will enter into judgment with him." That is the antichrist. "And I will rain upon him, and his hordes, and the many people who are with him torrential rains and hailstones, fire and sulfur."

Final example from the holy prophets here, Daniel 7:11. "I looked then because of the sound of the great words that the horn," that is the antichrist, "was speaking. And as I looked, the beast was killed, and its body destroyed and given over to be burned with fire." Not to mention, in Daniel 7:9, just two verses earlier, Daniel describes the very throne of God as a fiery flame and with wheels of burning fire.

Guys, is there any ambiguity in those passages? Any missing information, where these scoffers say, "Hey, wait a minute, holy prophets. You didn't make the picture clear." How could I possibly know what was going to happen? Well, they didn't know because they didn't read. They didn't submit.

Okay. So now then, let's look at what Jesus said through His apostles and through His own ministry about the return of the King and the judgment awaiting these wicked scoffers. Matthew 3:12 says this. John the Baptist, who's kind of that hinge pin prophet from Old Testament, old Covenant to new, he says this of the Messiah, "His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will clear His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn, but the chaff He will burn with an unquenchable fire."

Connected to that, Jesus taught in Matthew 13:40, when He's giving the Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds, or the Wheat and the Tares, He says, "Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so it will be at the end of the age." In 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8, to couple with what Peter will teach later in chapter 3, Paul says this, "The Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of Jesus Christ." Christian, there is zero ambiguity about what will happen upon the return of the King. Jesus, the King, granted all authority from the Father, will return, and claim His kingdom, and restore His people, and when He does, He will execute fiery judgment on all of the wicked, all the scoffers, all those who are standing in opposition to His

gospel of grace, and peace, and forgiveness, and humility, and obedience to His will and to His Word. Do you see why fiery judgment is so necessary?

God, the Holy Divine Judge is saying, "I'm offering you a way out," and scoffers say, "No. I'll do it my way." That demands judgment. So our brother, Peter, by way of stirring up in our sincere minds, by way of reminder, calls us to remember these things. Why?

Well, not only to believe them and live in light of them, but to prepare ourselves because of what comes next, and if we're not careful, it will destroy a weak faith. So Peter gives us the second mindset of readiness. *That's point #2*), in your outline. The second fortifying mindset, ***You Must Prepare For Your Faith To Be Mocked***. If we're not ready for this, it can destroy you.

I want you to make no mistake, Christian, this world hates you, and it's not because you're different. It's not because you believe something they don't. It's because your testimony, your proof of the transformed life of the gospel of Christ makes incursions into their territory, and it is warfare against their stranglehold on the lost and dead souls in this world. So Peter warns us to be prepared in verse 3, by telling us that scoffers will show their true colors. This world is not full of your friends, and if it is, Christian, friend, I ask you to check your own heart and see whether or not you're in the faith.

These people are defined by this characteristic. Their true colors are shown. Peter says, "Know this first of all." Not like, "Maybe this is kind of another character." "Know this first of all, that scoffers will come and scoff at you for your faith."

How do I know that they're brothers, that they're false converts and not just the wicked? I'll get there. But have you ever been mocked to your face for your faith? You know what this looks like. I can't believe you would believe in some ancient book. Science has disproven all of this. God doesn't care what you do in your life. He's too busy. Yeah, maybe He started the clock, and then He just let it go. We're here to figure it out for ourselves. God's who you want Him to be. This is a defining characteristic of these people. They deny the truth.

Why? Because if they believed what the Bible actually said, then they would need to live in fear of it. They might not straight out come out and tell you that they are rejecting the Bible. They might not just openly mock you in that way, but their lives will. The fruit of their lives will tell you whether or not they believe the return of the king is imminent and whether or not they fear righteous retribution.

So we learn this, put it on a bumper sticker, scoffers going to scoff. Your faith will be mocked to your face, that is assuming you are living with your faith flag flying. It's easy to hide from these people and to pretend you're one of them, but we'll learn later on why we shouldn't do that. This mindset of preparation will help to fortify your position when these attacks come. Why do they do this? I think it's a good question to ask and answer. Providentially, Peter gives us the answer as to why their scoffing is so bad, and so that we can understand how desperate these people are in need of the Gospel and by the way, someone reminded me of this in the last service, how we all once were.

But by the grace of God, we were the scoffers too, and so also, that we don't fall victim to fear because of their mocking. Anyone ever brought up something about your faith or about the Christian faith that you just didn't know how to answer and you're like, "Maybe I am believing something wrong?" how do we do that? Verse 3 concludes this; we understand why they scoff. They do so, following their own sinful desires.

I love that God exposes their whole game plan right there. The whole purpose of this is so that scoffers can revel in their sin. Now, the best visual example I can think of reveling is like a pig rolling in the mud, just like ... Just rolling in filth. That's what revel ... I'm so happy to just be in the muck, right? So one commentator puts it this way. These scoffers have modeled their life after a desire to live for their sin. I wake up in the morning and I figure out, "How do I set my day so I can sin?" That's what they do.

In other words, they've sold their soul, their eternal soul for the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life. How foolish? How stupid can you be to take your eternal soul, this treasure that God has given you, to enjoy His glory forever and sell it for anything short of that, to waste the value of this precious gift God has given you on anything but His full glory? Scoffers are fools. You just find the dumbest person in the room and follow them around and be like, "I'm just going to do what they do. I'm going to care what they think about me."

No. If we understand that they're fools, then we'll be less affected by what they say and do. They are, as Ephesians 2:1-3 describes them, dead in their trespasses and sins, in which they walk, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, that is Satan. They're slaves. They're spiritual zombies. They don't know any better. They're stuck in their condition, they need our prayer, they need the same gospel that God gave to us, and we should not listen to a word they say. We should be giving them words of eternal life instead. These fools will mock you. They will come, but fear not.

Christian, the truth will guard your heart and your soul, and the King will avenge you upon His return. How are scoffers going to call to question your faith? Well, we see that in verse 4. Scoffers are going to mock your trust. They're going to come up to you and say, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation."

Now, how do we know that these are false converts? They're acknowledging the fathers, the forefathers of their faith, and that God created the world. So they have a pseudo belief system, and this future audience who will most assuredly come is going to mock you for trusting in God's promise, and of course, there might be, "Is there a nugget of truth in here?" "I don't know. I mean, in my life all things are kind of continuing on." "I haven't seen divine judgment. Maybe it's not coming." Maybe there is a nugget of truth. Well, not exactly, because upon closer examination of their truth claim, what did they say? "For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation."

But their claims here show that they're seriously deficient in their knowledge and grasp of the Word of God, the revealed truth. It's easy to see how the playing out of their worldview, how they think they're going to get away with what they're getting away with now forever, when we look to verses 5 to 7, and that's *point #3*, in your outline. The third mindset of readiness is this, ***You Must Understand That Scoffers Disregard Consequences***. Scoffers, by their nature, are dead in their sins. They're ignorant of the truth, or they blatantly disregard the truth, as Peter really suggests here, because of what they just said, everything's continued on, like it has since the creation, right?

But what do we see in verse 5 and 6? We see that scoffers are actually ignorant of past judgment, whether willfully so or without having studied. Verse 5 and 6 say this, "For they believe that because they deliberately overlook this fact that the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the Word of God." By the way, that Word, who's the Word?

Jesus. The divine Word, the logos, Christ created the world, and that by the means of these, the world that then existed was deluged with water and what? Perished, dead, gone. So have things continued, has they have since creation? No.

1,500 years after creation, a flood wiped out all of existence. Scoffers don't sound very smart or competent after we read that, and oh, you know what? The Bible actually gives us answers to every scoff. But it's important for us to understand we don't just go to the flood because it happened, we go to why it happened. God didn't destroy the world on a whim.

Genesis 6 tells us that of all the men, billions of people, yes, I said billions of people on the earth, at the time of Noah, Noah was the only one found righteous of all the others. All the other billions of men, the thoughts, and motives, and intentions of their heart were always evil continuously, okay? A tertiary level, surface level study of the ancient pre-flood world shows us that it was sin sick, it was twisted, it was wicked, evil, violent, rapacious, idolatrous, horrific, and it needed to be destroyed by righteous judgment. But do these scoffers acknowledge that judgment? No.

Neither did the forefathers of these scoffers who scoffed at Noah while he was building a boat on a planet where it had never rained. Noah was about 600 years old when he started building the ark, and it took him 100 years to build that boat. 100. So for 100 years, this herald of righteousness, that means preacher, is calling people to repentance, and they're ... "It's never going to rain, you idiot." "It's been 90 years, and you're still building that boat. Nothing's going to happen." And that's how they acted, until the rain started falling. When we look at the text, who sealed the ark? God sealed the ark.

It was too late. So not only do we learn that scoffers reject past judgment, but verse 7 goes on to show us scoffers live in rejection of future judgment. Continuing on, Peter says in verse 7, "But by the same Word." By what same word? By the Word that created the world, and that exposed to us the judgment in the flood, and that came in the flesh, and told us everything about His

kingdom. "By the same Word, the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for," what? Fire. Just like we learned from the survey of the holy prophets and the apostles, right? It's not hidden. It's not a mystery. But what's the last phrase here? Being kept. Who's keeping it? Who's in charge? God. "Being kept until the day of judgment and the destruction of the ungodly."

Now, we'll learn more about why that is next week, but the idea here is what? In the next verse, don't count the patience of God as some count, taking too much time. This is God's heart here of grace. He's giving time for the fullness, the completeness of the harvest to be brought into His barns, and that's why we haven't seen the judgment yet. But some will mock saying, "Well, you haven't seen the judgment yet because it's not coming."

No. The patience of God has held back His hand. So, my friends, do you know why scoffers sinfully deny the return of the King? Why they deny that He will ever return? Because at His return, glory for His people. Every spiritual blessing and kingdom promise for His people, reward for the righteous, perfect joy, perfect salvation, perfect kingdom forever, and fiery judgment for them. You see, scoffers not only don't want God's judgment. They don't want you blessed. "You're no better than me." The King shows up.

"What? Was He going to bless you and not me? Oh, what? Is He going to curse me?" I disagree. I reject your gospel, because they reject God's perfect grace, that this gospel wasn't given to us because we earned it, it was given to us because we needed it.

Last week, Pastor John said something pretty wise, "It happens." Happens quite often, but in particular, he said something pertinent to our study, and he said this. You might remember this. "Assume all Bible teachers are false until they prove to you otherwise." Do you remember him saying that?

There's some deep wisdom in that statement. I think Peter would say the same. In 2 Peter chapter 2, false teachers identify themselves by presenting to you a different faith that looks the same, a faith of salvation in Jesus, but with no repentance.

A faith of blessing from Yahweh, but without sacrifice to him, a faith of gifts from God Almighty, but not a life of holiness, a faith that says, "You can have Jesus and your sin," and I'm here to preach to you how. So Christian, the question that you have to ask in contrast to that type of ministry is, "Have I been a false teacher this morning or this afternoon? Have I proven to you a message worthy of Christ?" You see, Peter implores you to listen, to know and to obey the Word of God given through the holy prophets and the apostles, that is a faith lived by the Word of God, the perfect and errant, unchanging, sufficient Word of God, and we here at Redeemer Bible Church, every last one of your pastors, would tell you the same thing. Anything that we say that disagrees with God's Word, disregard it and trust what God's Word has to say. Don't follow a man, follow the Man.

This is a faith of repentance from dead works, and trust in the complete work of Christ on the cross for your behalf, and up to the complete dead work of Christ in His fulfillment of His promises in the second coming, when He will return in His kingdom glory, with the glorified

Church behind Him to execute justice, and righteousness, and judgment, and wrath upon a wicked world full of scoffers, and to institute His righteous and eternal reign in His perfect kingdom with His saints, as His inheritance, the kingdom's our inheritance, forever in blessing. Not to jump too far ahead, but in this chapter, I want to give you a small preview because Peter's heart here is so incredibly clear. It's so wonderful. See, in verse 11 and in verses 14 to 15, we hear the heart of an apostle who is about to die a martyr's death. Somebody's last words carry a deep weight of significance when they're speaking truth.

So what is his last words? Well, he asks a question. Based on everything that we've learned, he goes, "What sort of people ought you to be?" Now, he precludes your answer, qualifying it, saying in holiness and godliness, not just, "What sort of people do you want to be?" "What sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness?"

He says later on, he says, "This is what I desire for you, be diligent." Be diligent, not just like the old college try. Be diligent. Give everything you have to be found by Him. Now, that's either at His return or at your death.

How, Peter? How should we be found by Him without spot or blemish, and at peace? At peace. Not caught up in the rebellion of the scoffers who are shaking their fist at God in anger, but at peace with God, at peace with His plan, repentant from your sin, restored to God, forgiven by Christ, obedient to His word, trusting in His sovereign promises, waiting for that blessed hope we hear about in Titus, "Eyes to the skies, ears to the ground," boots on the march, working for Christ as ambassadors for His Gospel, reconciling men to God. Be found without spot or blemish and at peace, and be found by the Master at work.

My friends, with these protective mindsets of readiness, given from the pen of a dying apostle, meant to fortify and establish you in truth, will you believe Him? Will you heed the warnings from this brother in the faith? Will you fix your eyes on Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame? Will you do so, laying aside every sin and encumbrance, and gaze upon Him and run your race with endurance? As you'll learn, the rewards for doing so are immeasurable.

You can't even comprehend the glory of God that awaits you. Paul says that in Romans 8:18. What are you suffering through, Christian? It's almost like Paul's ... It doesn't matter. I consider it. Whatever you're going through, the sufferings of this present time are not even worth comparing to the glory that is to be revealed to us in the new heavens, and the new earth, and the glorified Christ, reigning on his throne. Won't you seek that Christ? Won't you believe in Jesus, the returning King, the conquering Hero, who will bring you into His kingdom? Won't you, those of you who have not yet bowed the knee, trust Christ today, see Him for what He is, the King of glory? Who is the King of glory? The Lord of hosts, God Sabaoth, the Lord of armies, who can forgive you, who can restore you, who can give you new life and His kingdom forever. My friends, the King is returning. The King is returning. The King is returning. We best be found faithful and ready. Amen? Let's pray.

Father, what an incredible little letter this is. This obscure dark corner of the New Testament, no, this beautiful, bright, shining lamp of truth that teaches us so much about how to live a life that honors You, how to defend ourselves against false teachers, and how to live in the hope and of the glory of Your return. Father, may our Church be strengthened by the study of this letter. May any in this room who do not yet know Christ, Father, may You cause them to see the truth. May You open their eyes. May You grant them faith and repentance, and Father, forever make them part of Your kingdom. We desire that they share in this blessing. That's why we share it. But Father, Your will be done. May Christ receive all honor and glory. Amen.