**Do Not Twist the Scriptures**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**2 Peter 3:14-18**

**Wednesday Evening**

**August 2, 2023**

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14 Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; 15 and account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation--as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you,

16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. 17 You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked;

18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

**14 Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;**

Saints, because believers can trust God’s promise to bring them into a new earth, and because they are waiting for these things to happen, they ought to live a pure and blameless life.

**Philippians 2:12-18**

12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

14 Do all things without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

17 Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. 18 For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.

Saints, to say it another way, only this powerful hope could entice us to live righteously. God’s Kingdom will be characterized by peace with God; therefore, believers ought to practice peace with God now, in preparation for living in the Kingdom.

**Ephesians 5:1-14**

1 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. 3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints;

4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

7 Therefore do not be partakers with them. 8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9(for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), 10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.

12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. 13 But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. 14 Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."

We should not become lazy and complacent just because Christ has not yet returned. Instead, we should live in eager expectation of his coming. What would you like to be doing when Christ returns? That is how you should be living each day.

**Titus 2:11-15**

11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. 15 Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

**15 and account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation--as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you,**

Saints, as the believers waited, perhaps impatiently, for the Lord’s return, Peter reminded them that the Lord is waiting so that people have time to be saved.

God’s patience means salvation for many more who will have the chance to respond to the gospel message. When reading the various letters of the New Testament, it is interesting to study the interrelationships among the writers.

**Ephesians 4:1-7**

1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. 7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift

Peter was one of Jesus’ twelve disciples. He later became the undisputed leader of the church in Jerusalem.

Paul came along later, after he was converted on the Damascus road by a vision of Jesus Christ.

Paul was also considered an apostle. Peter and Paul had great respect for each other as they worked in the ministries to which God had called them.

By the time of Peter’s writing, Paul’s letters already had a widespread reputation. Peter backed up his words with the believers’ apparent knowledge that Paul had also written to them about this very topic.

Peter recognized the value of Paul’s letters in the growth of the church, for he described Paul as writing them with the wisdom God gave him.

The teachings of the apostles were never distorted by the person or area of ministry. Whether the letter came from Paul or Peter, the message could be depended on to be the same, for it had come from God himself.

Notice that Peter wrote of Paul’s letters as if they were on a level with other parts of Scripture. Already the early church was considering Paul’s letters to be inspired by God.

Both Peter and Paul were aware that they were speaking God’s word along with the Old Testament prophets.

**16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.**

Sometimes the letters were copied and then passed on. The believers regarded these writings to be as authoritative as the Old Testament Scriptures.

Some readers may have been put off by some of Paul’s comments that were hard to understand. But the cure is not to listen to those who would twist the truth, but instead to continue to increase in the knowledge of Jesus.

The better we know Jesus, the less attractive false teaching will be. The false teachers twisted all of Scripture to mean whatever they wanted. However, this would result in disaster.

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**1 Thessalonians 2:13**

“For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe”

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**17 You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked;**

Saints, Peter wanted his readers to be warned ahead of time about the danger of false teachers, explaining the false teachers’ tactics and future destruction.

Being forewarned, the believers would not be carried away by the errors of the false teachers.

**1 Corinthians 15:57-58**

57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

To “be carried away” means to be led astray into error. The word pictures a person following along behind a crowd.

**2 Timothy 3:13-17**

13 But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them,

15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

The implication is that keeping company with false teachers or those who follow them will inevitably cause the believer to also be led astray and lose his secure footing.

**18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.**

Saints, Peter concluded this brief letter as he had begun, by urging his readers to grow (the verb is a present imperative, meaning “continue growing”)

in the special favor and knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—to get to know Christ better and better.

Saints, believers “grow in favor” as they understand that they are living by God’s grace alone—so everything they do is a result of that grace.

Believers “grow in knowledge” as they search and study the Scriptures, pray, listen to sound teachers, and apply that knowledge to their daily lives.

If they do these, they will not need to fear being influenced by false teachers. Christ is Lord, divine and omnipotent; he is Savior, the one who accomplished humanity’s salvation.

To him be all glory and honor in this age and in the new eternal age to come. Amen, so be it.

Saints, Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray! Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.” In Jesus Name**