2 Peter 2:1-3

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[0:00] 2 Peter chapter 2 will be where we're at. I want to encourage you, if at all possible, there's a lot of activities that we have going on here. Brother Mike is lining up opportunities with the Arise and Build to go help complete, or we believe it'll be on the completing side, the finishing work, of a home that someone will live in.

You don't have to be disaster relief qualified to do that, but you do have to have the code. We have a number of spots. If you can work it into your schedule, if you can go do that, I want to encourage you to go and to serve, and to serve not only this body, but to serve the body of Christ as a whole, and to serve alongside other brothers and sisters in Christ.
If you can't do that, if you could join with us on the Back to School Bash, and you want to serve in that capacity, I want to encourage you to do that. Listen, there is joy in serving.
There is joy in being still. There is joy in the moment of stillness, and I know the Word of God tells us to be still and know that I am God. And we have those opportunities.
This gathering, the Sunday morning gathering, is a time of being still, and it is my charge in Ephesians 4 to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry during this service.
[1:14] So this is the time where you are still, and I am laboring to try to equip you to do what God has called you to do. But there is joy in serving, and I don't want you to miss that joy.

There is joy in serving with other brothers and sisters in Christ. There is fellowship you will never experience until you labor together. It is tiresome. It is hard and difficult. Every calling God has ever placed on my life, and I tell the young people and the children this, every calling God has placed on my life, he did it while I was busy doing something.
He called me in the midst of my business and said, yes, I'll have you do this. I never thought I'd be a pastor. I never thought that I would leave the jobs I had.
But while I was actively doing what he had called me to do at that moment, he began calling me to do something else, calling me to do something else, calling me to do something else. So let me encourage you.
Find the area that you can serve in, and serve and see how the Lord leads in that ministry, because it is of great importance. We will see it in our text this morning, because if you know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you have a holy calling to steward, as Paul would say, the mystery that has been given to you.
[2:34] And you steward that by taking intentional activity to utilize it and to form it and to fashion it. And we are called to be wise, watchful stewards of the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Peter is introduced to this letter in the first couple of verses, and he has referred to himself in a twofold means. He said that I am a slave of Christ and an apostle.
I am both his servant and I am his apostle. He is my Lord, therefore he has purchased me off the auction block of sin. He has redeemed me, and therefore he is my Lord and Master.
You cannot have him as Savior without knowing him as Lord. And he will not be your Lord until he is your Savior. It is a twofold beauty of his name. He is both Lord and Savior. That is, the one who rules over us in Christ is also the one who redeems us and forgives us, and his loving kindnesses are new every moment.
And Peter says, he is my Lord. I am his servant. I am his slave. But he has also sent me out from his position. I am an apostle. That means to be a sent out one.
[3:52] Friend, if you know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, then you are his slave. And some of us hate that word. We pull back at that word. We loathe that word. But you are a servant of something.

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You are either a servant of Christ, or you are a servant of Satan. You say, oh, pastor, don't call me that. I am just telling you what scripture has said. You are not your own captain of your own ship. You are not the master of your own destination. You do not get to choose your ways. No matter how much we think we can, no matter how many great theologians and poets have said that we are able to, we do not get to dictate and determine our own outcomes.
Even if we're serving self, you're doing exactly what the enemy wants you to do. But if he is your savior, he is your master, and then he sends you out, he commissions you, that's a great commission, from his presence.
We do not believe in the apostolic office as a position any longer, but I believe that he sends us out. And then Peter says, to those who have received a faith as the same kind as ours.
[5:00] So that which was applicable to Peter is applicable to you and I as well. And he begins to lay the foundation, I'm catching you up a little bit in the first chapter, of what it looks like to possess that faith.

And he ends the first chapter speaking of how we can be faithful in that faith. And he begins to speak of the importance of scripture, that we hold to the reality. He says there in the last few verses of chapter one, so we have the prophetic word made more sure 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 rises in your hearts.
But know this first of all, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy has ever, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.
So he speaks of the power of God's word. And then he makes a great transition in chapter two. So if you are physically able and desire to do so, would you join with me as we stand together and we read 2 Peter chapter two, verses one through three.
2 Peter chapter two, verses one through three. The word of God says, but false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.
[6:32] Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned. And in their greed, they will exploit you with false words. And their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for this day. We come before you and we say, we long to know the truth in its clarity and its sincerity.
We ask that you would speak your truth into our hearts, that the word of God would resonate within the very being of who we are, that there would be no hindrance, no obstacle, no cause for stumbling.
But Lord Jesus, that you would have your way with your people for your glory and yours alone. We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. Amen. The word of God calls us to be watchful stewards stewards of the truth that we have been entrusted with in Christ.
The reasoning of Peter's authorship of this second letter, this second epistle to the same individuals that he wrote 1 Peter to, the whole motivation behind this letter was to prepare them to resist false teachers.
[7:56] But before they could know what it looks like to be watchful, to be guardians of the truth, before they could understand who the false teachers were, they needed to know who they were in Christ.

And they needed to have the secure foundation of their own existence. They needed to know where they could turn to for wisdom and guidance. And namely, he tells us that it is the word of God.
Your experiences may mean something. He talks about the experiences there at the end of the first chapter. We did not read it. He said that on transfiguration, he saw the heavens open up.
He heard the very voice of God declare, this is my son in whom I am well pleased. And he had literally a mountaintop experience. And that mountaintop experience affirmed the reality in Peter's eyes of who Jesus was.
It was Peter who said, it is good for us to be here. This is amazing. Let us build three tabernacles. And then God interrupted what Peter was saying. Peter had had a number of experiences.
[8:57] He had walked on the sea until he sank. And then Christ called him up. He had had the miraculous catch a fish, not once, but twice. Peter had cut off Malchus' ear only to see Jesus put it

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back on.

Peter had had experience after experience after experience. But Peter tells us, if we read it in this proper language, and we read it in the context, that his personal experiences did one thing to affirm the reality, but the very word of God goes far beyond that.
Because see, the truth of the matter is this. Whether or not you get goosebumps, or the hairs on the back of your neck stand up, or you see the heavens open up and hear the angelic voice of God, it is the word of God that gives us the foundation, not the personal experiences we have.
Now I've had a number of personal experiences in my life. I've had a number of them that people would think that I was crazy on. I believe that I've heard God audibly call me by name.
And I'm not talking about in my spirit, I mean I believe he audibly called me by name. People think I'm crazy. I've seen things happen which in the Baptist circle would, you know, we don't need to talk about it.
[10:12] It's a little too much Pentecostal for most Southern Baptists. I've seen God do things that only he could do. I've seen prayers answered in a moment, I've seen demons bound in an instant, and I've seen God work in miraculous ways.

I've had the ability to stand before people, lay hands, and have healing. I've had the same ability to lay hands and there not be healing, but God bring peace and comfort. I've had a number of experiences, but those experiences do not compare to the truth of the word of God.
For it is the word of God that affirms the reality of the experiences because the world can give you experiences. I mean, I was in Orlando last week.
There's experiences down there, and it's all made up. Now, how is there a volcano in the middle of a city? Well, it's not a real volcano, but there's fire coming out of it, but it's not real.
I had the privilege of watching our little granddaughters run up to the princesses. They're not in here, are they? They won't hear me. Maybe they're watching me on TV in the back. They say all I do is stand up and go blah, blah, blah, so it's okay.
[11:26] I watched, I've got the videos on my phone where they ran up to the Disney princesses and touched the dress to see if she was real. And she was real.

There's 20 other ones around the park, too, that are just as real, all wearing the same dress. But they're real. This world can give you an experience that will justify your thoughts, appeal to your senses, appease your feelings, but it is the truth of the word of God that is there to give us the foundation on which to stand.
And Peter says that we ought to be good stewards, watchful stewards, of the truth of scripture. I do not have to defend my experiences, and you may tell me that they're wrong and misconstrued, and they very well could be.
I could have been caught up in an emotional sensation. But if the word of God declares it, there's nothing you can do to convince me that it's wrong. And I do not have to be a watchful steward of my experiences, but I do have to be a steward of the word of God.
And the reality is, is because we are called to watchfulness. And he transitions this. He tells us the reason for that is because of the presence of the false teachers.
[12:54] Notice what it says. But false prophets also arose. Now this is the very same word, by the way, that he used in the verse that preceded it. But know this, first of all, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation.

For no prophecy was ever made by the act of the human will. So two times in referring to the word of God, he refers to it as a prophecy. And the very same Greek word he uses to describe the false teachers.
But false prophets also arose. I've been asked questions, and many of you remember when we went through our eight essential discipleship time on Sunday school, we had a Q&A, and one of the questions that I was asked during the Q&A, someone asked, Pastor, do you believe, because there's some historical Christian doctrine that I disagree with, and not historical Baptist doctrine, anyway, let's get an offside note, they said, do you really believe that for 1600 years the church could be wrong?
And I said, yes. And they said, why? Well, the good answer to that is because Peter says, as soon as the truth was declared, so too was the lie.
If you go back and you study church history, and if you go a little bit more narrow and you begin to study the history of Scripture, friend, it is only a matter of years before false prophecy begins to

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arise when the Word of God is being penned.
[14:25] Most books that are contentious, that people say, oh, well, they should belong in Scripture, were coming into existence at the very same time that the Word of God was being written.

And that should not be surprising because Peter said that it was so from the very beginning of the faith that was the presence of the false teachers. And they were actively present.
He says, but false prophets also began to arise. You need to affirm this reality in your own life, that the moment you receive the truth, the moment you acknowledge the truth, the moment you know the truth, the enemy will begin to implant false teaching as well.
The moment the truth exists, the lie begins to permeate. But notice where they were present. He says, not only were they there, but he says, they were among the people.
Among the people. Friend, when we read Scripture and we're opening up the pages of the New Testament, every letter written in the New Testament is written to a local group of believers referred to as the church.
[15:39] And we read these letters that are written to the church and God is giving instructions, some in doctrine and much application. There's great theological truths and there's great, this then is how you shall live.

But the reason that we have Scripture is because of the false teachers that were among the people. We have it because as soon as the truth took root, the enemy began to sow lies and do it among the people.
Satan got in among Adam and Eve there in the garden. You remember that, right? He said unto Eve, did God say?
And if you have your theology right, you will know that Adam is present and Adam was quiet and I don't know what kind of man will let a snake talk to his wife and not say anything, but that's exactly what Adam did.
For some reason, he thought it was okay. But he was there. He was in attention. He was listening. But what happened is the enemy got in between them and started to divide them and started to speak to one side and got beside him and began to lay this lie beside the truth.
[16:54] Notice the presence of the false teachers. He says, the false prophets also. And just in case we believe this is a past occurrence, we notice the persistency of them as well because look at what he says.

Just as there will also be false teachers among you. Peter here is writing to the saints that are scattered abroad.
We get that in 1 Peter. The saints that are part of the diaspora, he refers to them, that are not all confined to one geographical location.
And it is probably written as circular letters that be shared with this church and then sent to this church and then sent to this church and then sent to this church and so that each one could receive it, much like the book of Revelation.
You had Revelation to the seven churches and that book of Revelation was sent to each of those seven churches and so when you read those seven churches in chapters two and three, that was the intended audience of that book.
[17:54] And it was going all around Asia Minor there and it was going to all the saints in the known world. And so what Peter is writing to is to the church at large. And to the church at large, he makes this profound statement that when the truth of scripture came out, the false teachers came to and they could say, well, that was a Jerusalem problem.

That's what happened over there. And that was what was happening with the early church. But Peter goes a little further. He says, but they will also arise among you because they are persistent. And it is a truth which resonates throughout the ages. Everywhere you find declared truth, you also found or you will find a declared lie.
Every time you find a teacher and proclaimer of the word of God, you will find a proclaimer of false doctrine. And you will find them among you.
It is much easier to resist an attack that comes from without. The blood of the martyrs has been sown for the seed of the truth and the gospel.
[19:08] We know that. Do you know that everywhere the church has been persecuted, the church has stood strong. Persecution has never killed Christianity. Never. It's killed a number, thousands

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and myriads of thousands of Christians, but it's never killed Christianity.

As a matter of fact, persecution strengthens Christianity. There are believers around the world who are praying that persecution will return. I had a four or five hour meeting one day with a pastor from Romania.
I was going to go have coffee with him and it turned into like six hours later. I came home and ended up having a grilled out hamburger on somebody else's back porch. It was the strangest day ever, but it was awesome. And he was talking about how in Romania, when it was against the law, he was ridiculed for the faith.
He was mocked in front of his school by the public officials. He was all of these things and how it was illegal for him to be a believer and yet the church was thriving. But then he was mourning because he was going back to where now it's legal and it's hard to get people as excited.
Why? Because when the enemy is outside, we know who we're fighting. But it's when it is among us that the church begins to crumble.
[20:32] And we see the persistency here. There will also be false teachers among you. And in case we believe we live in a day that this will no longer happen, my friend, we ought to be watchful stewards of this reality.

I know Satan's end and you do too. We know the enemy's end and it is clearly detailed. We can say as many pastors have said before, we've read the end of the book. We know how it goes. So too does he.
And he knows that he's got limited time and as his time draws near, his work gets stronger. And the rise of false teaching increases the ladder we go in days.
The book of Judges is a grand picture of the history of man. I've told you this for years. When you read the book of Judges, you start out doing all right. There arose another generation who knew not the God of Joseph and who knew not the God of Joshua and who knew not the God of the fathers. And that was fine because they just didn't really know. They knew about him but they didn't know him. And then by the time we get to the end of the book, we're cutting people in pieces and we're sending them out among the nations and we're having a civil war.
[21:43] Why? Because in those days there was no king in Israel and every man did what was right in his own eyes. And as we read Judges, we have this downward spiral. Friend, if you were to look at history, man is not progressing, we are digressing.

No matter how you slice it, no matter how you look at it, we are not getting better as people, we are getting worse. Society is not increasing in godliness, we're running away from it because the enemy's presence is a reality and he knows his day is limited.
And unfortunately, there's no king in the believer's lives and every man does what is right in his own eyes. You don't need to do what is right in your eyes no more than I need to do what is right in my eyes because what is right in my eyes may not be true.
We need a king to rule over us. And we see this. He is persistent. And he has priorities.
What are the priorities of the false teacher? How do we mark them? How do we know them? How do they stand out? Look at what it says.
[22:48] They arise among you who will secretly introduce destructive heresies. The first thing you need to understand is the enemy no matter what mouthpiece he uses.

I do not believe that Satan is omniscient nor omnipotent. He cannot be all places at all times and he is not all powerful but he's got a pretty good size army. And he utilizes different means in different ways.
But they all have one aim and it is destruction. They begin to secretly introduce destructive heresies. That is they begin to lay down beside the truth something that's kind of a half truth.
The word picture here is that they are secretly laying beside the truth something that is just veering just ever so slightly a little off. Just a little here just a little there.
And they know it. And it doesn't take much before you get completely off course. It's just a small deviation but they want to destroy.
[23:53] It goes on a little bit further. Many will follow in verse 2 it says their sensuality and in verse 3 and in their greed.

What are the priorities of false teaching? The first thing is a destructive heresy. And you can look throughout history you can look even in modern days false teaching is always appealed to the sensuality it is sensual.

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That is it pleases the flesh. Do you know how many world religions are all about the pleasure of the flesh? Every one but Christianity.
Every one. There is a goal to make you feel good. Only Christianity says you ought to deny the flesh.
To crucify the flesh. To pick up your cross and follow after Christ. Every other one there is some appealing elements. Some great reward.
[24:59] You may temporarily lay aside your flesh but it's because ultimately you gain this great appealing thing this sensual thing later on. It is sensual in nature because it gives you right.

Friend I want to just caution you. Be careful in any teaching in any doctrine no matter what name it has on it that tells you that if you follow this everything is going to be great.
Be careful. Be careful of adhering to anything that says you will feel better you will live better you will act better you will do all those things because if that's the case then why did Paul say I die daily?
Now will it be great? Sure in glory in that day of redemption but it's not our greatness it's his it's not our perfection it's his it's not our wonder it's his so be careful of anything that tells you it can be better now if you just do this all your troubles will be gone.
That's not true at all. Read church history read every bit of it your troubles are not always gone so we see that it appeals to that and it is appealing to greed their priority is greed what can I gain now?
[26:39] These are the priorities of the false teaching but I've got good news for you because there's a punishment awaiting the false teachers see what the word of God says it says even denying the master who bought them bringing swift destruction upon themselves you say well if it's so swift then why are they in existence?

This is all we need to know is that God will not be mocked verse 3 tells us their greed and their greed they will exploit you with false words but it comforts us with this their judgment from long ago is not idle and their destruction is not asleep I love the wording here their judgment from long ago that means that though we may be surprised by the rising up of false teachers God is not just as sovereign as he is and knowing the moment you will come to Christ and as sovereign as he is and leading you to Christ and as sovereign as he is and calling you to Christ and as sovereign as he is over you in Christ he is just as sovereign over the false teaching and the false doctrine and there's a day of judgment appointed unto them just as there is a day of judgment appointed unto us and we are called to be watchful not necessarily some of us say well I want to be the instruments of judgment but we ought to understand the reality of it may we bring comfort in the reality that God is sovereign
I don't ask you to do this much but turn me to the book of Deuteronomy 13 because I want to give you just a couple of verses of what it looks like for you to be watchful in this truth because you say okay pastor you told me they're going to be there you told me they're there so what protection do I have against them how can I protect myself against false teaching just in case you were wondering I will not say I will never say just stay with me and you'll be safe from it because that my friend is a key landmark of false teaching I seek to strive and follow after Christ but your security is not found in any man not me not anyone else your security is found somewhere else see this thought of false teaching arising among the people of God is not a new teaching in the New Testament it is something that God introduced very early on when he called eight particular people to be his people in the book of
Deuteronomy in the 13th chapter Moses is telling them about false teachers that will arise among them as a matter of fact it says in the first three verses verses one and two that there will be false prophets who arise it tells us in the word of God that there will be people arise among the people of God who will tell the future and the future will actually happen just as they said and God knows his people so he said even if they come true don't follow them even if they say I've seen a vision and this is what's going to happen and the truth comes don't follow them and he gives you a safeguard there in verse four one verse one means of protection to be able to be a watchful steward of the word of God you shall follow the
Lord your God and fear him there it is you shall follow the literal standard literal translation means you shall walk in the steps after the Lord your God and follow him and then it tells you how to do that how do you do that how do you make sure even when there's false teaching over here false teaching over there and it looks so close maybe even what they're saying is coming true how do I follow the Lord your God and fear him you shall keep his commandments you shall listen to his

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voice you shall serve him you shall cling to him how do you do it what protection keep his commandments listen to his voice serve him and cling to him keep his commandments it's pretty clear I read the word of
[31:10] God says I should do it okay listen to his voice that's prayer that's communion that's me saying oh father speak to my heart help me to understand my wicked ways search me oh God try my desperate thoughts Lord I want to hear from you have a relationship where you listen to him serve him that means actively do!

something with your! a faith without actions is an absurdity if you tell me you have faith in something but you do not do a thing with it then you really don't have faith at all serve him and cling to him hold on to him with all of your might with all of your strength because when the false teaching comes and the false word is there if you're clinging to him and you're holding to him it doesn't matter what's going on over here but if you're idle and you're not serving and you're not clinging and you're not leaning in then as soon as the word is whispered in your ear it becomes appealing it becomes easy to go on to how many of you know my life verse probably not many right some of you have been with me a long time might remember it
Deuteronomy 424 is my life verse my favorite verse it's a weird verse you're going to look it up now I'll go and give it to you for the Lord our God is a jealous God he is a consuming fire so that doesn't sound real good pastor what kind of life verse!
is that Deuteronomy 424 for the Lord our God is a jealous God he is a consuming fire you know it says in the book of Hebrews in that same passage of scripture Hebrews chapter 10 Jonathan Edwards preached that message sinners in the hands of an angry God really just read his manuscript and it said that the people were gripping the back of the pews for they felt like hell was opening up beneath them and that church up in Northampton people thought they were getting sucked into the depths of hell as Jonathan Edwards stood up and just read the transcript of sinners in the hands of an angry God it wasn't his eloquence it wasn't his fluency because his voice was really weak he had been up crying all night long and that's what broke out the great awakening in America but his text was Hebrews chapter 10 and in Hebrews chapter 10 it says!
for the Lord our God is a consuming fire two times in scripture it tells you that God is a consuming fire and the reason that's my life verse is because God is jealous over me and he's jealous over his people and he wants to consume everything in your life for his glory and he wants to set it on fire it was Jim Elliot who cried out he died!
[34:15] an early death as a martyr as he went to minister to the Indians in the Amazon it was Jim Elliot who cried out in his journal God set me on fire for all the world to see and when that spear went into his heart and it killed him and that fire began to spark throughout the ages he said give me neither long life nor length of days but set me on fire for so that the lie of the enemy doesn't tell me it's about me we're called to be stewards of this truth and to allow the Lord our God to consume us set us on fire with the presence of his glory let's pray father we thank you so much for this day I'm so thankful for your word

I'm thankful for the challenges it brings us and the comfort it provides and I pray now Lord that we as your people would stand before you and say what is it you want to do in our hearts and minds for your glory and yours alone and we ask it all in Jesus name Amen

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