

0 **The Firm (Prophetic) Word (v)**

2 Peter 1:19-21

1 **General Considerations**

- Peter has set up for us a point of contrast
 - On the one hand, we have the imagination of “men’s” hearts expressed by “cleverly devised tales/myths”
 - On the other hand, we have the revelation of God
 - Makes knowledge possible
 - Makes getting on in this world possible
 - Makes understanding this creation possible
 - Makes understanding our place in this world possible

2 **General Considerations**

- Peter exhorts us to “pay attention to it”
 - Why?
 - Because the world has a murky darkness to it
 - This murky darkness has a “substance” of sorts to it
 - In order to “see” appropriately, one must have the proper kind of light
 - It must be able to pierce this kind of darkness
 - And it must be something that we “pay attention to”
 - Which is to say, we must take it to heart
 - And it must serve as our sole means of guidance and interpreter

3 **The More Sure (Firm) Prophetic Word**

- So where, in Peter’s thinking, is he leading us?
 - He is leading us to think about that time when the potent light of Christ will shine forth into the world dispelling the murky darkness.
 - It is an anticipation of both an objective and subjective experience – the return of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ

4 **The More Sure (Firm) Prophetic Word**

- So where, in Peter’s thinking, is he leading us?
 - He is leading us to think about that time when the potent light of Christ will shine forth into the world dispelling the murky darkness.
 - Jesus our Lord is both the MorningStar and the day that will dawn in the world and arise in our hearts

5 **The More Sure (Firm) Prophetic Word**

- So where, in Peter’s thinking, is he leading us?
 - He is leading us to think about that time when the potent light of Christ will shine forth into the world dispelling the murky darkness.
 - It is in that day that the light of Jesus will shine and give us clarity in a murky dark world in its fullest measure

6 **The More Sure (Firm) Prophetic Word**

- So where, in Peter’s thinking, is he leading us?
 - He is leading us to think about that time when the potent light of Christ will shine forth into the

world dispelling the murky darkness.

- But not only that, Peter says that it will arise in our hearts.
 - And what I think he's getting at here, is that the knowledge of the Lord and the light of the Lord will illuminate our hearts so that we may see things as they are

7 **Whose Interpretation?**

- We pose the question here this morning asking, whose interpretation do we follow?
 - This question gets at two important points.
 - The first point has to do with how we handle the Scriptures themselves.
 - In other words, are we allowed to simply form our own interpretation of the Scriptures apart from any known procedures that have been handed down to us through the years in the church?

8 **Whose Interpretation?**

- We pose the question here this morning asking, whose interpretation do we follow?
 - This question gets at two important points.
 - The first point has to do with how we handle the Scriptures themselves.
 - You may have heard debates or discussions reduced to things such as "well that's just your interpretation" (ad infinitum)

9 **Whose Interpretation?**

- The second point with which we have to do is related to how we go about interpreting reality, ultimate commitments and our place in the world
 - Stories can be fun things but when stories become myth and legend to convey truth, are we allowed our own interpretation of things?

10 **Whose Interpretation?**

- The second point with which we have to do is related to how we go about interpreting reality, ultimate commitments and our place in the world
 - A corollary to this has to do with receiving and communicating truth
 - So now the question before us has to do with the weight we give to fables or myths or legends or tales or the Scriptures

11 **Whose Interpretation?**

- Now remember Peter is very concerned about leaving something for the church in making sure that the church has something firm and sure so that they might remember the important teachings of our Lord through the apostles
 - I believe Peter is alluding to the fact that there will be a written document or documents by the apostolic authority to give to the church

12 **Whose Interpretation?**

- Now remember Peter is very concerned about leaving something for the church in making sure that the church has something firm and sure so that they might remember the important teachings of our Lord through the apostles
 - So that, in the words of Peter, "the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you" (1 Peter 1:11)

13 **Whose Interpretation?**

- And Peter knew that in his day the church had to deal with "cleverly devised tales" that sought to undermine the apostolic authority

- Peter is writing in effect to demonstrate the difference between them in terms of authority and ultimate commitments and the manner in which the truth of God is conveyed

14 **Whose Interpretation?**

- And Peter knew that in his day the church had to deal with “cleverly devised tales” that sought to undermine the apostolic authority
 - So listen now to what Peter says in verse 20
 - 2 Peter 1:20 But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is *a matter* of one’s own interpretation

15 **Whose Interpretation?**

- Peter wants us to understand at the forefront of all things or the chief of everything else is that when you look at prophecy in the writings it is not as a result of one’s own interpretation or explanation
- Let’s tackle the phrase “prophecy of Scripture” first of all

16 **Whose Interpretation?**

- What is he referring to when he speaks of the prophecy of Scripture?
 - Some interpreters limit this phrase to those prophetic utterances or writings speaking of the coming of Christ
 - Some view it as specific Scriptures speaking of the first advent of our Lord

17 **Whose Interpretation?**

- What is he referring to when he speaks of the prophecy of Scripture?
 - But I think he’s arguing more basic than that
 - I think Peter is arguing in terms of what is fundamental to every prophecy written down
 - So if we maintain the contrast between “the cleverly devised tales” and what Peter is going to provide the church after his departure then he must be referring to that which comes through the apostolic witness in written form

18 **Whose Interpretation?**

- Now when we add the next phrase after it so that we read in full “that no prophecy of Scripture is of one’s own interpretation” we need to ask again what is Peter getting at?
 - Some use this as a defense to argue that personal interpretation is forbidden in the Scripture
 - The Roman Catholic Church would tend to view it in this way saying that interpretation is a matter not of private interpretation but a matter of church teaching and tradition – [the Magisterium]

19 **Whose Interpretation?**

- Now when we add the next phrase after it so that we read in full “that no prophecy of Scripture is of one’s own interpretation” we need to ask again what is Peter getting at?
 - However, it seems to me that that misses the point
 - Having said this, it is true that we are not supposed to give Scripture our own interpretation but to draw out from that the original intent of the authors as much is possible

20 **Whose Interpretation?**

- Now another way of looking at has to do with what Peter was up against
 - Certainly he was fighting against those who present “cleverly devised tales” to the church who took great liberty in incorporating myth into the church or taking what was already there and

twisting it into cleverly devised tales

21 **Whose Interpretation?**

- So another view espouses that those who promulgated “cleverly devised tales” were twisting the Scriptures to their own ends
 - That is, they were giving their own interpretation to them or to their own understanding of “god” and the world around them

22 **Whose Interpretation?**

- So another view espouses that those who promulgated “cleverly devised tales” were twisting the Scriptures to their own ends
 - And so Peter is arguing that the Revelation of God and its interpretation are of the same cloth
 - And cannot be twisted to its own ends

23 **Final Considerations**

- We look forward to the personal return of Christ in splendor and power and glory
 - It will be at that time when the morning star rises and the day dawns in its fullness
 - However, God has given to us his glorious word, which is able to pierce the darkness right now

24 **Final Considerations**

- We look forward to the personal return of Christ in splendor and power and glory
 - But, in handling this “more sure prophetic word” it is not left to us to handle it according to our own imaginations
 - We must correctly handle the word of God to effectively have a sure grounding and handle the darkness and effectively deal with the teachings of false teachers