

December 31, 2023

## 2 Peter 1:19-21

by Ken Weliever

“The Bible is not an end in itself, but a means to bring men to an intimate and satisfying knowledge of God, that they may enter into Him, that they may delight in His Presence, may taste and know the inner sweetness of the very God Himself in the core and center of their hearts,” wrote A. W. Tozer, in *The Pursuit of God*.

“The primary purpose of reading the Bible,” opined James Merritt “is not to know the Bible but to know God.”

Then you’ve got to love Justin Peter’s advice, “Want to hear God speak? Read your Bible. Want to hear God speak audibly? Read your Bible out loud!”

Of course, not everyone agrees with these assessments. The 19th century infidel Robert Ingersoll called the Bible “a fable, an obscenity, a sham and a lie.” He further asserted that the “Christian creed [was] the ignorant past, bullying the enlightened present.”

Our text today offers some encouragement and assurance regarding the Bible’s reliability and authenticity.

*And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will 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, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

Bible commentator Warren Wiersbe

offers this simple, but powerful 3 point outline regarding Peter’s proclamation about God’s Word.

### It is a Sure Word.

This affirmation is reminiscent of several statements from the Psalmist about God’s Word.

“Your testimonies are very sure” (Ps. 93:4).

“The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple” (Ps 19:7).

“The works of His hands are truth and justice; all His precepts are sure” (Ps 111:7).

Ours is an age of doubt, skepticism, and cynicism. Especially as it relates to spiritual matters. To the existence of God. The historicity of Jesus. And the reliability of the Word. For centuries critics of the Bible, like Ingersoll, have tried unsuccessfully to find fault with it. To undermine its accuracy. To cast doubt on its dependability. And mock its moral standard.

Some people act as if the Bible is filled with fictitious stories and fanciful fables. Like the fairy tales that begin “Once upon a time, in a far away land...” Professors in universities belittle the Genesis record of creation, question the account of the flood, and laugh at the narrative of Jonah.

Yet, at every turn the critics have been confounded and the Word has been proven right. Secular history verifies the Bible account of nations, kings, geography and even Jesus himself. Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian, who lived at the time as

## Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

**We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.**

## Important Dates

**Ladies’ Class** - Tuesday, January 9 at 10 a.m.

**Memorial Service** for Harold Hammons is scheduled for January 13 at 10:30 a.m. at the building

*If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.*

Jesus, or the first century Roman writers, Pliny, Tacitus and Suetonius all give credence to the life of Jesus, the spread of Christianity, and the Bible's historical accuracy.

Don't be disturbed by the dubious claims of doubters. Don't doubt your faith. Doubt your doubts. The Word is real. Accurate. Reliable. And sure.

### **It is a Shining Word.**

The word rendered "light" means a lamp or a torch. It is the type of light described by the Psalmist when he penned, "Your word is a lamp to my feet

and a light to my path" (Ps. 119:105).

The world was a dark place in Peter's day. Schaff suggests "dark" means squalid or gloomy. It's the picture of a dismal, murky swamp. And it's no less dark today. We live in a corrupt culture. Filled with filthy talk, lawless deeds, wicked imaginations, and deviant, sexual desires.

Yet, the Word shines brightly. It serves as a caution light. A warning light. A guiding light. It dispels the darkness, exposes the devil's deises, and reveals God's righteousness.

As "children of light" let us hold forth the lamp of Truth unashamedly, unapologetically, and uncompromisingly.

### **It is a Spirit-given Word**

Sadly, this passage has been misunderstood, misinterpreted and misrepresented. Often by those seeking to discourage individual study and suggesting the Word can only be understood by a "clergy class" of ordained ministers.

The text is affirming that the God's Word was not the product of mere men. It was not of human origin. The prophetic Word was divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit. Paul affirmed that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

The Old Testament prophets confirmed

their message was from "the mouth of the Lord." Over 800 times in the Pentateuch, Moses made this assertion. More than 4,000 such expressions refers to God speaking to and through these prophets are found in the Old Testament

The Word is literally "God-breathed." Peter, Paul, the prophets and the apostles were all guided by the Spirit in their writing to reveal God's Word. Word for word. Exactly as He wanted us to have it.

E. Paul Hovey was spot on when he quipped, "[People] do not reject the Bible because it contradicts itself but because it contradicts them."

## **Prayer Requests**

**Jack Wilson** is still struggling with pain and limited mobility.

**Jerry Richardson's** lymphoma has returned and is suffering cognitive and balance issues.

**Dinah Williams** continues to have mobility issues.

**Don Simmons** is still struggling with his breathing; he is on oxygen at all times. **Alene** is having hip issues.

**Debbie McMurray** has undergone her last immunotherapy treatment and is recovering.

**Terry Behrns** is recovering at his sister's home

**Syble Hargrove** has covid.

**Elaine Kersh** is undergoing tests and waiting for a treatment plan for cancer.

*If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.*

**"praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,"**  
**(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)**

The Oaks West church of Christ is a group of individual Christians who have been added to the Lord's body through baptism (Acts 2:38, 47; Gal 3:26, 27), and have joined themselves together (Acts 2:42ff) in an effort to do the Lord's will.

We are not a part of any larger organization - we do not follow any man-made creeds and we do not answer to anyone other than the Lord.

Our standard of faith and practice is the Word of God. We believe in the God of revelation (Eph 3:1-7; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and follow his instructions in an effort to have an ongoing relationship with him (1 John 4:7-11; 5:3).

Our times of study and worship are open to all, and our members are happy to meet with interested individuals or families for study.

### **Evangelist**

Darrell Trammel  
512-756-4493 Office  
Darrell@  
oakswestchurchofChrist.com

### **Elders**

George Gresham  
Darrell Trammel

## **Contact Us**

Address:  
P.O. Box 675  
Burnet, TX 78611

Call:  
(512) 756-4493

E-Mail:  
oakswestchurch@gmail.com

Website:  
oakswestchurchofchrist.com