

1This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, 2that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.

3Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, 4and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." 5For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, 6through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. 7But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

8But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. 9The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

10But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

My mother used to tell us; "Sticks and stones can break your bones, but words can never hurt you."

She was trying to teach us, knowing that children as well as her own, have a mean streak, an inherited sin nature, and can say awful things to each other. It does hurt. She was just trying to minimize the damage.

People saying things has a limited power. My little friends could make bold statements. They could pronounce me dead, but I wasn't dead. No words ever broke my bones or killed me.

Our words are just words. Sound waves in the air. They don't

ultimately cause material things to move. I can't hit that note that breaks the wine glass.

But God's words do have power to accomplish things. God spoke and the world was. God spoke and all of the universes were created from nothing. Ex nihilo. That is a latin word that means, out of nothing. God speaks and matter that wasn't, is. He speaks and the stars are formed in their places and they orbit where He tells them to go, for all time. Until time is used up, because He owns that too.

Peter is speaking to a group of christians in Asia minor who are stuck in a particular place in a particular time and the world around them is beating them up, and false teachers have come in telling them that what the apostles told them isn't working out right.

Here's a brief breakdown of what the apostles taught. We were with Jesus. He was the Son of God. He died in our place. He took the punishment that we were due. He did that so that He could purchase us out of this fallen world. He gives us His perfect righteousness. He takes away our sin. On the third day He rose from the dead. He ascended back to His Father in heaven where He sits at the right hand of His glory.

He owns this world where a usurper, Satan is reigning in rebellion with the sons of Adam that he has captured. And He promised to return in Glory, to depose Satan, to set up a kingdom of righteousness on David's throne here, and to reign in righteousness, with us His saints.

The church, those folks, and us too, have lived with the belief that Jesus could return for His people at any moment. We are waiting for that moment when we hear His shout.

Rev. 4:1 After this I looked and saw a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had previously heard speak to me like a trumpet was saying, "Come up here,

We're waiting for a voice like a trumpet that says *Come Up Here*, and we will rise to meet Jesus in the air.

Those first generation christians were waiting for that call. Waiting for Jesus to return for them. Waiting, waiting . . . They're in their third decade of waiting. No Jesus. And some of their beloved ones, their dear saints, beloved christian friends, had died.

And Peter was fading fast. The apostles are starting to die. Peter will soon be gone. This is his last letter. And the false teachers are just waiting for the apostles to be gone so they can move in and create havoc. And Rome is creating havoc.

What do you tell those folks? What do you give them they can hold onto?

And what about us? 20 centuries later. Waiting, waiting, waiting, no Jesus.

I was listening to a tape on my way to Los Angeles and John MacArthur was talking about his books. 150+ books he has written. And he says the only one that he's still upside down with the publisher, they never sold enough that the publisher got out of the red and started making a profit, is the one about heaven.

21st century evangelicals are not interested in heaven. You talk to christians and nobody's waiting for an imminent return of Jesus. In fact sometimes I get the feeling that evangelicals sort of hope He doesn't come and end the great time they're having here. I get that sense.

Somewhere along the way, the church has lost that sense of longing for Jesus, of waiting for something infinitely better than here, of hoping that maybe today is the day.

The church in the 21st century is the picture of the virgins that have gone to sleep while they were waiting. Nobody's looking for an imminent return. Jesus coming for His bride is the last thing on anybody's mind.

We need these words from Peter as much and perhaps even more than

those confused, weary discouraged saints in first century Asia minor. Peter's going to take us out of our day to day existence with all of it's concerns and pressures, and talk about the big picture.

1This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, Stop right there. The greek words are wonderful.

I wish I had been a better student of languages. I didn't have the attention span to do it. I began years ago to take a class in classical greek and it was impossible because I don't know my own language. nouns and verbs and adjectives and adverbs and pronouns and whatever else there is. It's like torture for my brain. 30 seconds in and I'm like the dogs in the cartoon. SQUIRREL!

Peter says This is the second letter for the same purpose. The word that is translated stirring up, is literally to awake from slumber. And the word translated sincere, is the word for the idea of taking something out into the bright light so you can fully see it.

We watch that show, American Pickers. I'm a junk collector. You knew that. Well those guys will be inside some cave of a building looking at some old motorcycle and invariably, if it's expensive and they're getting serious they'll ask if they can take it outside into the light, so they can examine it fully. That's the word translated sincere. Full light.

Peter says, I'm shaking you folks awake, for the second time now, and how I'm doing that is with full illumination. I want you to wake up and I want you to listen to what?

Words. Words. That's why I introduced this section talking about words. Sticks and stones words have no effect. But we have words out of the mouth of the person who spoke the worlds into being, ex nihilo, out of nothing.

We have a whole book full of those words! Peter says, Wake up, take the words out into the light so you can see them, and listen up. And he

says I'm going to do that by way of remembrance. Reminder. This isn't new information for you. It's information you've heard before, but you've gone to sleep.

Wake up. Listen. Remember. In full sunlight. Your thinking is foggy. This book will put your thinking in bright full enlightenment. The light of this book causes right thinking.

2that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.

You're worried about Rome. You're worried about your status in the world. You're worried about persecution. You're worried about your earthly treasure. You're worried about all these kinds of pressures, but Peter says, you need to wake up and your brain needs to start thinking clearly, fully illuminated about what's really important.

This is sort of the big picture wake up call. And boy do we need to hear this. We're worried about everything *but* this. We've got 24-7 news feeds blasting this worlds momentary troubles at us and it has a numbing effect.

Like these first century christians, we lose sight of what's really important. God's words get put away in a dark corner, forgotten. We need to take them out into full light. Otherwise all of the worlds stuff molds us into that shape.

Peter's going to remind us. Words. Spoken by prophets and spoken by Jesus, the Savior and relayed to us by His chosen apostles. These are the very words of God. They hold in common that they possess the same power that brought the worlds here in the first place.

Listen to the writer of the letter to the Hebrews talk about this same phenomenon; Hebr. 1:1 **God**, after He **spoke** long ago to the fathers in the **prophets** in many portions and in many ways, 2 in these last days has **spoken** to us **in His Son**, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. 3 And He is the radiance of His

*glory and the exact representation of His nature, and **upholds all things by the word** of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,*

The 24-7 news cycle has hypnotized us into a daze of sleepwalking. We never think about what's really important.

Will Donald Trump get us into a shooting war? Is our civilization collapsing from within? Crumbling? Will our way of life be radically changed? Should I buy an AK47 and stockpile ammunition? Are any of these silly elections as important as the talking heads say they are? What really happened in Syria? Why are there dead children laying on the floor with white foam coming out of their mouths? Who did that?

I'm starting to sound like Stephen Stills: The worlds paranoia.

*There's something happening here What it is ain't exactly clear
There's a man with a gun over there Telling me I got to beware
I think it's time we stop, children, what's that sound
Everybody look what's going down
There's battle lines being drawn Nobody's right if everybody's wrong
Young people speaking their minds Getting so much resistance from behind
What a field-day for the heat A thousand people in the street
Singing songs and carrying signs Mostly say, hooray for our side
Paranoia strikes deep Into your life it will creep It starts when you're
always afraid You step out of line, the man come and take you away*

That was 1966. 52 years ago. I was there. It's worse now.

How important is that? Is that what we focus our attention on? The worlds concerns and paranoia? Or is there a bigger picture that should have our rapt attention?

Jesus spoke to this same problem on a much smaller scale. In Luke 10: Martha and Mary. Martha's busting it in the kitchen trying to get everything ready for supper. Mary's not helping. Martha gets to the boiling point like an old Ford going up a long hill. Ka-blew-y. She

boils over.

Lk. 10:40 But Martha was distracted by all the preparations to be made. She came to Jesus and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her to help me!" 41 "Martha, Martha," the Lord replied, "you are worried and upset about many things. 42 But only one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, and it will not be taken away from her."

We, like Martha, are worried and upset about many things. But only one thing is necessary. Mary was sitting at Jesus feet listening to **words** from God.

Peter's going to shake us out of our hypnotic slumber, our eyes are dazed over watching fox news, and Peter's going to remind us about what's important. For the second time.

And God instituted preachers who are empowered by the Holy Spirit to shake us awake for about the billionth time.

Wake up. Open the Word of God. The light will come on in your brain. You'll see the bigger picture.

*1This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, 2that you should remember the **words** spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the **commandment** of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.*

Within that little paragraph we have the fullness of what encompasses the definition of what is scripture. God's words spoken through holy prophets, and the commandment of Jesus, remembered and written down for us by His chosen apostles.

Old testament. New testament. That's it. That's all. It is God's word and just as powerful as the words that created everything that we're so worried about.

But Peter has a specific thing that encompasses the big picture that the

prophets and Jesus spoke of in this book. And he's going to hone in on that in vs. 10. *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.*

God has a purpose that is bigger than this world. God transcends this world. God lives outside of our time / space continuum. God spoke this world into existence for a purpose and when His purpose is complete, He'll speak it out of existence.

Don't waste your time worrying about Donald Trump. Don't waste a second worrying about global warming. Don't waste time worrying about a thermonuclear holocaust. We have a bigger picture. A bigger purpose.

You say, goodness, what is that? Here's the big picture. God, in eternity past, before the foundations of this world were spoken into existence by the word of His mouth, wrote down the names of His elect that He would call out of this world to be His.

When that final name has been called out of this place, this world will be destroyed and a new heavens and a new earth will be created. And we will dwell with God forever in a place beyond description.

Our purpose is one thing. To live outside this world, we're citizens of the Kingdom of God, and to proclaim to others that Jesus has purchased eternal life with God in heaven by His blood, for them too. Come out of this perishing world. Flee this place. Come to safety in Christ. Soon He's returning to judge this world, to depose Satan and to crush all evil.

That's a reference point for what the prophets and the Lord through His apostles has taught.

But meanwhile, back to Asia minor, 1st century AD, and those folks are beset with real time troubles and concerns and problems, and false teachers telling them every kind of lies that Satan and the demons can dream up. And they need to grab hold of this bigger truth. Because all of that is very real, and it hits our little boats like a massive side wind

and threatens to capsize us.

You are called. Jesus is coming to get you. This world is perishing. But meanwhile, here's some words from Peter that can help stabilize your little boat in the world's storms.

3Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, 4and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."

Mockers? Scoffers? What? Do tell?

One of my favorite past times is watching the liberal left wing press who are beside themselves trying to figure out how in the world did we get this nut job of a president. How did that happen?? How could that happen?

So I read a piece in Newsweek last week where this guy is trying to figure this out, and he says, it's the evangelicals. The evangelicals did this. And the reason they did it is because they want the end of the world to come. And they believe Donald Trump is God's man to cause that to happen.

That's why he's breaking the peace process in the middle east. Declaring Jerusalem the Jewish capital. Destroying any hope of peace. The evangelicals are behind that. They want world war 3.

Well, that's very entertaining and it was fun to read, and I won't completely discount some of his conclusions. But the evangelicals are powerless to do anything to bring the end of the world. And so is Donald Trump.

And honestly, he's giving most of the evangelicals I talk to more credit for deeper thinking than they deserve. Most evangelicals just want Donald Trump to give them a pay raise so they can go to Costco and buy more stuff.

And I also know something about peace in the middle east. This book speaks about that. *Peace! Peace! When there is no peace.* There will never be peace there until Jesus comes and crushes evil and deposes Satan and sets up a thousand year kingdom of peace. In Jerusalem.

Sovereign God is in full control of Jerusalem, and it's enemies, and peace, and Donald Trump, and whatever else is happening. I'm just standing on the sidelines with my book watching it all unfold. It's exhilarating. I can't tell you if Donald Trump has a bit part or not, but I can tell you how it's going to end.

Meanwhile scoffers will scoff. Mockers will mock. That newsweek guy has a pretty low view of evangelicals. Them and their ridiculous sky God. And Donald Trump starting world war 3 with them rooting him on.

You read that and it's comical in a way, but in another way, the underlying storyline is that evangelicals need to be eradicated from the earth.

Mockers and scoffers are always around. And they take whatever the current thing that's happening is and scoff and mock God and God's people about whatever's current.

In Peter's case, the next big thing, about 25 - 30 years into this deal, is that the apostles are going to start dying off. And the mockers are going to come saying, I thought Jesus was going to come and get you guys. Wake up call. Your apostles are dead, and nothing happened. Idiot evangelicals.

Peter is prophetic here. He's telling his folks ahead of time, what the mockers will say. And they've been saying it ever since;

3Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, 4and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."

I want you to quickly notice their motivation here. There's a reason they're mocking. Do you see it there in vs. 3? *following after their own lusts*

The underlying reason to disbelieve in God, is lust. Fallen man is broken. They want what they want. They want to satisfy their lusts with every kind of deviant activity they can imagine. And they don't need some sky God telling them that's sin and He will judge them for it.

Bottom line driving force. Man wants what man wants. Some sky God in some book says he can't do that. Sky God has to go. We'll have our sin at any cost.

Mockers and scoffers are rebelling against God and His commandments. That's their driving force. Their motive to eliminate God is so they can do anything they want.

God spoke the worlds into existence. Mockers are trying to speak God out of existence. Who do you think will win?

And here's their argument. Here's their proof. Everythings the same. Always has been. Always will be. Sky God didn't come. Tomorrow will be the same as today. Yesterday was the same as tomorrow will be. *“Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation.”*

The apostles are dead. Jesus didn't come. Nothing's changed since creation. You evangelicals are idiots. You need to get with the program, or get out.

Peter is going to engage that argument in the most interesting way. Oh? Your argument is based on the idea that nothing has ever changed? Really?

Vss. 5, 6 *5 For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, 6 through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.*

Nothing's changed? This world is in it's third eco-system. Garden was first. Then pre-flood where it was a mist, it never rained, then this one post flood. Peter's a little tongue in cheek here. A little bit cynical. Maybe even snarky. OK, probably not snarky. He says; *it escapes their notice*

Peter uses what we call apologetics. Apologetics tries to debate a point with undeniable evidence that proves the one arguing is correct.

Peter argues, you say that everything remains the same. From creation. And then he says, let's talk about creation. It was your word. *all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation*

Creation 101 ala Peter; *by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water,*

The scoffers are scoffing because they want to eliminate God, so they can follow their lusts. But Peter says, let's talk about creation. Pinch yourself, there you are. How did we get here.

In the first century there was no argument against creation. It was universally believed that an intelligent higher power created the worlds. No one argued that. It took us 20 centuries to get that dumb. Trillions and trillions of years, it happened by chance. That's incredibly stupid, and not only stupid, but openly rebellious. Against the creator. Nothing accomplished this. Nothing made everything.

At least Peter didn't have to argue with someone that stupid. His opponent believes in creation, it's undeniable, and he'll acknowledge a creator. He just did *all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation* Not so

Then Peter builds on that basic building block. God spoke the heavens into existence. Long ago. And then Peter tells him, the earth, our earth, was formed out of water, and by water. *by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water,*

It's almost a direct quote from Genesis.

Genesis 1: 1 *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.*

God formed the earth out of water, and by water. That's fascinating. We could not know that except it was revealed to us by a gracious God in scripture.

Then Peter takes his listener to a second truth. Everything stayed the same since creation? Not so says Peter; *6 through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water.*

Nothing changes. Don't worry about God. Everything's the same.

I wonder how many times Noah heard that argument while he was building the ark for 120 years. *all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation* That was the argument in Noah's generation.

Peter reminds his antagonist that not only is everything *NOT* the same, but God has already judged this world once, with the very water that He used to create and form it.

The argument that everything remains the same since creation was the support for the rest of the mocking. The apostles are dead. Jesus didn't come. The whole thing is a big phony.

Peter says; Everything's certainly *NOT* the same. God judged the mockers and scoffers once already. In the flood. 100% of mankind perished, minus 8 persons. All drowned.

Now is he bringing his argument to a logical conclusion? God did this then, therefore, God will do this, now. Something like that? Yes, Peter's a good arguer.

Vs. 7. It's so wonderful, we'll take it a phrase at a time. Because it is so

very pertinent to our current generation; *7But by His word*

The same word that accomplished creation of the heavens, all of the universes, all of the solar systems. Every star in it's place doing exactly as He commanded. *By His Word.* That word.

the present heavens and earth are being reserved

I really love this part. I got so excited this week studying this. God is in the preservation business. God is preserving this earth. That's so wonderful.

All of the green earth people can relax. We're not going to destroy this earth with carbon or global warming or anything else. Sorry humans. You don't have that capacity, and even if you did; God's word, in 2 Peter chapter 3 verse 7 says explicitly that God is preserving the present heavens and earth. *the present heavens and earth are being reserved*

reserved. It's the same word tereo, and it means to keep, guard, observe, watch over. God is keeping watch over this world. He's guarding this world.

Jude says in Jude 1:1 *Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ:*

And Peter says in 1 Pet. 1:3-5 *3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

The elect are kept. Protected. Ever worry about losing your salvation? If you are truly saved, God is protecting you. Guarding you. Watching over you. Keeping you. Same word. And Peter uses that word in vs. 7. *the present heavens and earth are being reserved*

Why is God preserving the present heavens and earth you ask;

for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

That's Peter's argument with the scoffers and mockers. God destroyed this world once with the same water He used to form it, and He's keeping the current world intact, waiting for the day in which He'll destroy it with fire.

That's a good word for this current generation of scoffers and mockers and arrogant global warming worry warts. Sovereign God owns this world and is keeping it. Guarding it. Saving it for fire.

On March 23, 2018, in California, Assembly bill AB2943 was proposed in the general assembly. Makes it illegal to sell a book that would in any way cause someone to change their sexual orientation. Let me quote Al Mohler because he says it so much better than I could.

"Yesterday in the nation's most populous state, California, the General Assembly adopted legislation that would make it illegal to sell, for example, a book that represents traditional Orthodox historic Christian teaching on gender and sexual orientation. Under the guise of consumer fraud legislation, assembly bill 2943, passed yesterday by the General Assembly and now sent on to the California Senate, would make it a so called unlawful business practice to engage in, here's the legislation's language, "A transaction intended to result, or that results in the sale or lease of goods or services to any consumer that would, for example, offer to engage in or do engage in sexual orientation change efforts with an individual."

Can you think of any particular book that might be the target of such a law? And it gets better. A preacher teaching from such a book is also committing consumer fraud.

The state of California is mocking God. 120 miles east may not be a wide enough buffer zone.

But actually we have a promise in this fraudulent old book that God will remove those who belong to Him before fire consumes it. What a great time to live.

Well, our time is gone and we'll pick up the rest of this passage next week. Meanwhile, study this book so that your thinking will be in full light. And go tell your neighbors this world is perishing and the only safe place is in Christ.