

## II Peter 1:20-21

Peter says in II Peter 1:20, *Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.* I trust that you'll have your Bible open as we study the Scriptures verse by verse as we go through the Bible. But notice that verse 20 says that we're to know something first. The first thing that a person needs to know is that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There is none that doeth good; no not one. We are all sinners. We've come short. We've fallen short of the mark that God has set. There is no way for us to save ourselves according to the Scriptures.

And then we see that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. That's the first thing. The first thing that a person needs to know is that they need to be saved. They can't save themselves and that, if they'll call upon the name of the Lord, He'll save them. Knowing this first, Peter says, but now he's speaking to the saved people here. He says knowing this first, that the understanding of Scripture is no secret, just as the unsaved person needs to understand that there is no secret concerning the Bible.

God wants all to be saved. He's not willing that any should perish but that all should come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. God wants you to be saved if you've never trusted Christ. It's no secret according to the Scripture. The understanding of Scripture also is no secret to the saved person. No individual has a monopoly of understanding of the Scriptures.

In I John 2:27, it says, *But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.*

And then in John 16:13-14, the Bible says, *<sup>13</sup>Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. <sup>14</sup>He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.*

Does that mean that a person is not to listen to a preacher? Does that mean that a person is not to listen to a man of God who stands and proclaims the Word of God? No, he's not saying that. As long as that person is proclaiming the Word of God, then the Christian, according to these verses that I've just read, that Christian will be able to discern the things by the Spirit of God. That's another reason that I ask you to have your Bible open as we study the Word of God. It's because the Word of God is what does the work. It's the Word of God that teaches us. It's the Word of God that leads to salvation, and it's the Word of God that helps the Christian to understand the things of God after salvation.

Now, notice in verse 20 there, it talks about prophecy. This prophecy refers not just to predictions of the future but to any divinely inspired utterance, therefore, to all, the holy Scriptures. In other words, this prophecy, the prophecy in this book, any prophecies concerning this book are of no private interpretation. One person does not have a monopoly on interpreting the Word of God.

Dr. Henry Morris says this about John 16:13-14, and those verses, once again, remember I just read, it talks about the Spirit of truth. Dr. Henry Morris says this, and I quote: "Christ had yet many things to say, according to John 16:12. He had many things to say to

his disciples, but these would be revealed through the coming of the Spirit of Truth. Not only would the Holy Spirit enable them to remember all Christ had said but would eventually, through divine interpretation by the Spirit, reveal all truth needed for the future ministry of Christians in the world. And these promises amount to Christ's promise of the continuation and completion of God's written Word. He had already on various occasions authenticated the Old Testament. We see this in Matthew chapter 5 and Luke chapter 24. And now He also authenticated the yet to be written New Testament." End of quote by Dr. Henry Morris.

So we see that in the Word of God, the New Testament had not been completed yet and the Holy Spirit was the One who was going to interpret the Word of God when it was completed. Now, the Old Testament is still the Word of God. The New Testament is the Word of God. They are both, the Old Testament and the New Testament, they are the Word of God. And might I say that the Old and New Testaments together, not separated, it is the Bible. One book, the Bible, the whole book. The Old Testament needs to be understood that it has not been done away with. It is the Word of God. The New Testament has not been done away with. It is the Word of God. The completed Word of God has been given for our admonition, to lead and guide us through the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

As we sit before a preacher, before a pastor, before an evangelist, before a man of God who is reading from the Scripture, we grow in the grace and knowledge as the Holy Spirit imparts the truth that that preacher, evangelist, or man of God is giving forth. We get that not simply because that man is standing there telling us. We get the truth because the truth is found in the Scripture that the person is reading or quoting.

If you want to know the Word of God, first of all, you need to get saved and you need to ask Jesus to come into your heart. That's the first thing you can understand, remember, and the second thing after you're saved is you can be led into all truth, joy, peace, and understanding by getting into the Scriptures, by letting the Holy Spirit lead and guide you through the Bible.

Now, notice II Peter 1:21. It talks about prophecy once again. It says, *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* It's the same Spirit that Jesus promised would come and lead us into all truth. In verse 21, it tells us how the Scriptures came about. The prophecy didn't come from man, but the prophecy came from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit used man to prophesy. God still uses men and women to tell other men and women how to be saved, how to go to Heaven. The prophecy still goes on, and it's not because of a person that this prophecy is true. It's because of God.

A person who stands and says, "I have a vision," or "I had a vision and this such and such was going to happen." Well, the Bible says that if it is not 100% true, if it does not come to pass, that person is not of God. Well, I've got news for you. Nobody is from God who's going to stand up and say, "I had a vision and this vision is going to come to pass." God's vision that we need to pay attention to is the vision that is in the Word of God. God reveals them to saved people, the vision of a lost and dying world. That world, men, women, boys, and girls need to be saved. They need to be on their way to Heaven.

That prophecy tells us that there was coming a Savior who would give His life for this lost and dying world, that whosoever would call upon Him would be saved. That is the prophecy that

God has given to us as people of this world. Remember, there's no prophecy of private interpretation.

Someone says, "I just can't understand the Bible." First, you need to get saved. Secondly, if you're saved and you don't understand the Bible, you need to read it. You need to get into it and you need to study the Scriptures. Might I say this also that some in the past have tried to take advantage of people by saying that they're the only ones who can understand the Scripture. Well, that's false because Peter has already told us here that the Scripture is of no private interpretation. No man has the right to say that he is the only one who can tell you what the Bible says. That is totally false. If you're saved, get into the Bible. Let the Spirit of God lead you and teach you the things of God.

Now, as we go into II Peter chapter 2, the focus of II Peter chapter 2 is to beware of false teachers. In verses 1-3, Peter first describes the destructiveness of false teachers and then we see that illustrating the doom of false teachers. When doing this, Peter reminds his readers of what happened to the angels who sinned, the ancient world destroyed by the flood, and the fiery end of Sodom and Gomorrah, verses 4-9. And Peter then discusses the depravity of false teachers, verses 10-17, and finally, Peter describes the deceptions of false teachers. As we stop and think of this, it reminds me that God is no respecter of persons. It makes no difference who you are. We all have to give an account to God, and that first account is whether we've trusted Jesus as our Savior. And if you've never done that, you need to ask Him into your heart right now.

And if you are a Christian, if you've trusted Him as Savior, is your life full of joy? Are you living for the Lord? You say, "Well, I'm just

not having a good time. I'm just not joyful and I can't do anything for the Lord." Well, you need to start doing things for the Lord. First, you need to get into the book and you need to ask God's forgiveness for not studying His Word. You need to ask God's forgiveness as a Christian for not living for Him, for not doing the things that He would have you to do as a Christian.

I find so many Christians today are unhappy because they're not listening to the Lord. I'm not talking about listening to a man. I'm talking about listening to the voice of the Lord and that voice comes through the Scripture. Now, God can use a man to quote the Scriptures and explain some of the Scriptures as you listen. There's nothing wrong with that. To know the real meaning of what God has for you personally, you need to get into the Scripture and you need to pray and ask God for His guidance through the Holy Spirit to help you understand the Scriptures and to live for Him as a Christian.

Are you unhappy today as a Christian? You need to get things right with God, and you need to fall on your face before Him and say, "God, forgive me. I'm saved. I know I'm on my way to Heaven, but God, help me to live for You today, tomorrow, and the rest of my life."

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