

**2 Peter 1:20-21 (Week 04)**  
**09/24/2023**  
**Insight Into Understanding Scripture**

**This is my message written prior to being preached. Please excuse the bullet point format and any grammatical mistakes. This is meant to be spoken.**

### **Introduction & Review**

- Today we continue our series through **2 Peter**.
- If you have your Bible and I hope you do, turn with me to **Chapter 1**
- We'll be focusing on the last two verses (**20 & 21**).
- But to understand and apply these verses we must first be reminded of what has gone before.
- In **verse 2** Peter tells us who he is writing to...
- Specifically, those with

### ***a faith of equal standing***

- He's writing to those who have faith in Jesus Christ.
- And in **verses 3-4**, he lays out what God has done for them.

### ***<sup>3</sup> His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness,***

- God gives us everything we need to live an abundant godly eternal life.
- And he does this...

### ***through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,***

- As we grow in the **true knowledge of God, of Jesus Christ, of the Spirit** we grow in life and godliness.
- And the knowledge of God comes through the word of God
- Specifically, his promises...

### ***<sup>4</sup> by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises,***

- And for what purpose?

### ***so that through them (through trusting in them) you may become partakers of the divine nature,***

- We become more like Christ.

### ***having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. (2 Peter 1:3-4)***

- And we overcome the sin of this world.
- So, **verses 3-4** focus on what God has given us that we might live godly lives.

- Then in **verses 5-11** Peter focuses on **the qualities** of a **Godly life**.

***<sup>5</sup> For this very reason,***

- The reason, God has given you everything you need to live a godly life...
- Is so you can and will live a godly life.
- So, you can and will...

***make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, <sup>6</sup> and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, <sup>7</sup> and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. (2 Peter 1:5-7)***

- Peter lists the qualities that we, by God's grace and power at work in us, are to strive for.
- **He then goes on in verses 8 – 11** to describe both what it means when these qualities are increasing in your life and what it means when they are lacking.
- **Let me summarize:**
- If these qualities are increasing, then...
- **Verse 8 says**, you **won't** be ***ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ***.
- You will **know Christ and your life** will be effective and fruitful for Him.
- **Then Verse 9 says**, if you lack these qualities, you will be **spiritually blind** to such an extent you will **forget the work of Christ in your life**.
- And in **verses 10 and 11** we learn that having these qualities **confirms our calling and election**.
- And that if you practice these **election confirming qualities**, you will **never fall**,
- **You will persevere in the faith**.
- And God through Christ will provide for you **an entrance into His glorious Kingdom**.
- This is Peter's main point in these early verses...
- **Basically, the ability to practice and increase in these Christ-like qualities proves that God has done a work in your life giving you everything you need for life and Godliness.**
- **Then in verses 12–15** we learn that Peter's death is approaching,
- and with his remaining time, he wants to stir up his readers by reminding them of the **Christ-like qualities (verses 5-7)**
- and Christian truth they have already been established in.
- **He then goes on in verses 16-19** to focus on the established truth, of Christ's **promised return**.
- Apparently, some were calling into question, both the **reality of the second coming** and Peter's authority to ***"make known the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"***
- So, Peter both defends his authority and the reality of **Christ's coming**.
- He first presents his credentials as **an eyewitness to Christ's Majesty**.
- Specifically **(in verses 17-18)** recalling his **eyewitness experience** of the **Transfiguration**.

- When Peter and James and John saw the transfiguration, they were given a glorious glimpse of what Christ would be like when he comes again.
- Then in **verse 19**, he reminds us that Christ's return was prophesized,
- he calls it a **prophetic word**.
- In the beginning of **verse 19** he writes...

***<sup>19</sup> And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed,***

- The prophetic word (of the Old Testament) was confirmed by Peter's own experience of Christ's majesty on the mount of transfiguration.
- Then in the **second half of verse 19** Peter calls his reader to pay attention to this **prophetic word** of Christ's return.
- He does this with a picture...

***<sup>19</sup> ...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, (2 Peter 1:19)***

- The **prophetic word of Christ's return, given both in the Old Testament and now in the New Testament by Peter and the other Apostles**, is like a lamp shining in the darkness of this world.
- And therefore, we must **pay attention** to the fact that Christ will return...
- We should allow the truth of Christ's return to give us hope **in this present darkness...**

***until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, (2 Peter 1:19)***

- Until Christ (the bright and morning star) returns and brings about our final transformation.
- **So that's a summary of what we have seen thus far.**
- And that brings us to our passage for today, **verses 20 and 21**.
- Where, Peter continues his argument for both the **reality of Christ's return** and his **prophetic apostolic authority to make known the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**.
- He's said in **verse 19** that Christ's coming is a **prophetic word**.
- But as we will see in **Chapter's 2 and 3**, there were (or there would come) false teachers,
- false prophets who questioned this **prophetic word**.
- In **Chapter 3** Peter writes...

***<sup>2</sup> ... you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, <sup>3</sup> knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. <sup>4</sup> They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming?" (2 Peter 3:1-4)***

- So again, there were or would be **scoffers** who questioned both the **holy OT prophets** and the **NT apostles regarding the coming of Christ**.

- And Peter, knowing this, gives a **general defense of all prophetic Scripture**.
- In **verses 20-21** he writes...

***<sup>20</sup> knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. <sup>21</sup> 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. (2 Peter 1:20-21)***

- In these verses Peter is speaking specifically about “prophecy of Scripture”.
- But I believe his defense can be applied to **all Scripture** whether we label it **prophecy** or not.
- Because as **Paul wrote to Timothy**...

***<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is breathed out by God... (2 Timothy 3:16)***

- **All Scripture** (not just prophecy but narrative, history, prayer, poetry, wisdom)
- **All comes from God** through men.
- Therefore, today, as we look at Peter’s **defense of the prophetic word**,
- **We can and will gain Insight into Understanding all Scripture.**
- And the **first thing** Peter wants us to see is...

## **1. The Proper Interpretation of Scripture**

- Now to have a proper interpretation of our passage we need to back up to **verse 19**
- **Because verses 19-20** are all one sentence.

***<sup>19</sup> And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, 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, <sup>20</sup> knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. (2 Peter 1:19-20)***

- We’ve already mentioned that that Peter is defending the reality of Christ’s return by pointing to the fact that **the prophecy of the Old Testament has been fully confirmed by his eyewitness account of Christ’s Transfiguration**.
- And that we need to **pay attention** to this prophetic word **as to a lamp shining in a dark place**.
- Peter then in verse **20** continues, **knowing this first of all...**
- He’s saying, **you will do well to pay attention to the prophetic word as to a lamp shining in a dark place**.
- **Knowing this (what follows) first of all,**
- Basically, Peter is saying, this is what we need to understand,
- This is where we start as we seek to **pay attention to (understand correctly)** the prophetic word of Christ’s return.
- That is...

***no prophecy of Scripture (including the prophecy of Christ’s return) **comes from someone's own interpretation.*****

- Now if this is of first importance, then we need to understand what it means.
- And interestingly enough, **this verse** which speaks to **the interpretation of scripture**,
- has a number of different **interpretations**.
- Let me point out three ways this verse has been understood.
- **The first is the typical Roman Catholic interpretation.**
- They have generally said **that what Peter means is no private individual can interpret prophecy on his own.**
- But instead, **the Scriptures have been entrusted to the church**, (the holy Roman Catholic Church)
- and therefore, individuals must look to the **official pronouncements of the church** to know the true interpretation (understanding) of Scripture.
- The authority to **interpret Scripture**, that is to tell what it means,
- is reserved for **Church Leaders** not the **individual believer**.
- Which results in **church leaders, church tradition, not Scripture** having the final authority.
- And we should be clear that this is not the case in the **vast majority of Protestant denominations** and churches.
- One of the major differences between **Protestant and Catholic faith** is that **the church** and its **ministers** are judged by **Scripture**, and not vice versa.
- The **final authority** resides with the **word of God**, not with **pastors or elders or denominational leaders**.
- So, the first way, the Roman Catholic way, **verse 20** has been understood is that **that only church hierarchy has the authority to interpret Scripture**.
- Now the second way this has been understood is that Peter is speaking of **how OT prophecies are to be interpreted**,
- therefore, some **translations** (like the NAB) render this verse,

***No prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation.***

- According to this view, Peter is saying that one **must interpret the OT Scriptures** as they are interpreted by the **apostles**,
- and so, the interpretations of **the OT** by the false teachers should be rejected.
- The **authority therefore** lies with the **Apostles**,
- And even though this view is **grammatically possible**,
- and we do believe that God gave **special authority to the Apostles of Jesus**.
- I think the **third view** fits better with the immediate context and Peter's overall emphasis on the authority of Scripture.

- That is...

**no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.**

- means no **individual should interpret prophecy according to his own personal desire.**
- Put simply, you can't just give Scripture any old meaning you please.
- There is one **true meaning,**
- **Which** (according to v. 21) which **comes from God through the prophet.**
- Therefore, a proper interpretation of any Bible passage seeks to understand this one true meaning.
- **And how do we seek this one true meaning.**
- Well, when I studied **Hermeneutics** (that is rules for understanding and applying the Bible)...
- One of the **key principles** I learned was, **"Authorial Intent."**
- That is, when you're seeking to understand (interpret) what a passage of the Bible means,
- The **First thing** you want to **get at** is not what you (as the reader) think or want or believe it means,
- but what the **Author Actually Meant.**
- What did the Human Author, who is speaking from God, at his time in History,
- In His Culture, writing to a specific group of people, writing in Hebrew or Greek,
- writing in the context of other Scripture, **what did he actually mean.**
- That is the **One True Meaning.**
- And to get at this meaning **often takes time, effort, and study.**
- **So, I think what Peter is saying in verse 20 is** that you can't just read a passage and come up with your own desired interpretation.
- **Which is unfortunately what people often do...**
- For example, when Paul wrote...

***<sup>13</sup> I can do all things through him who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13)***

- I've heard this verse used and abused by many.
- I've seen it tattooed on people's bodies.
- And what people **usually mean** when they quote or tattoo this verse is something like this...
- With Christ to strengthen me and give me power, I can reach any goal I put my mind to,
- I can become a professional athlete, I can start a new successful business and become rich.
- I can overcome this sickness, etc....
- But that is not what **Paul** (the author intended), that is not a correct interpretation or application.
- How do I know that, because of another **principle I learned in Hermeneutics.**
- **That is Context is King.**
- You must understand **any passage of Scripture in light of its context.**
- That is the verses around it, the book as a whole and its place in all of Scripture.

- So, with regards to properly interpreting **Philippians 4:13**,
- You need to see its context.
- And sometimes it's as simple as reading the verse before or after.
- In **verse 12** Paul wrote...

***12 I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. (Philippians 4:12)***

***13 I can do all things through him who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13)***

- Now the interpretation becomes clear.
- Paul is not talking about reaching any goal he puts his mind to.
- He is talking about being content in all circumstances.
- He is saying that God will give him **strength** to **endure the difficulties and hardships of life**.
- I can do all things means I can face all circumstances through Christ who strengthens me.
- And this is just one example of how people, instead of seeking the one true meaning of any Scripture passage, assign to it the meaning that they desire.
- Which is what I believe Peter is warning against in **verse 20**.
- And why do I believe that, well because of **the context of this letter**.
- Peter is writing in the context of false teachers who apparently **did not deny the inspiration of the prophets**,
- but instead twisted the prophetic writings to suit their own false teaching.
- We know this is the context because the very next sentence in **2:1** says,

***1 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, (2 Peter 2:1)***

- So, there are false teachers among the believers.
- Also, the **key text** for understanding how these false teachers related to Scripture is found in
- **2 Peter 3:16**.
- In **3:15** Peter says that the apostle Paul has written about similar things in his letters.
- Then he says,

***16 ...There are some things in them (Paul's writings) that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. (2 Peter 3:16)***

- This shows how the **false teachers** related to the **Old Testament Scriptures**.
- They don't reject them.
- They don't deny that prophecies came from God.
- They twist them to suit their own private purposes.
- Therefore, since Peter is concerned, in this letter, with false teachers who twist the meaning of Scripture to fit their own personal desires,
- In context, the most likely meaning of **verse 20** is that the prophetic Scriptures may not be handled that way.



## No prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation,

- means then,
- **"No individual is entitled to interpret prophecy, or Scripture generally, according to his personal desires,**
- **He must seek the One True Meaning, what the Author (Human and ultimately God) intended.**
- Okay, Peter has given us some insight into the Proper Interpretation of Scripture.
- Then in the beginning of **verse 21** he reinforces this with....

## 2. The Powerful Inspiration of Scripture

- **Verse 21...**

***<sup>21</sup> 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. (2 Peter 1:21)***

- Men spoke from God; they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.
- There is power in God's interaction with, inspiration of the Human authors of Scripture.
- And this gives a **powerful Exclamation Point** to what we saw in our last point.
- We can't treat Scripture as though its meaning is whatever we (or someone else) thinks it means.
- Interpretation of Scripture cannot be a matter of personal desire.
- because ***"no prophecy was every produced by the will of man.***
- On the contrary, ***men spoke from God.***
- In other words, as **John Piper** wrote...

***The reason we may not interpret the words of Scripture with our ideas is that God has filled them with his ideas. The meaning of Scripture is not like clay that we can mold according to our desires. It is the work of the Holy Spirit and carries a solid, firm, divine intention or meaning. (John Piper)***

- The glorious truth of **verse 21** is that...

## in Scripture God has spoken and not merely man,

- and therefore (**as verse 20 says**) our aim must be to hear *God's* meaning, not our own.
- But we must also recognize that God has chosen to speak through men.
- Even though **no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man.**
- That is, the authors of Scripture did not think up the prophetic words of the Bible.
- ***However, men are involved, men spoke from God.***
- This (men speaking from God) is the concept of **Inspiration.**
- The other passage that speaks most clearly of inspiration is **2 Timothy 3:16-17**



- We touched on it earlier...

***<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)***

- In these verses Paul tells us the **nature of inspiration**.
- That it is breathed out from God, Scripture comes from God, it is inspired by God Paul says.
- And Peter adds the how and the who, the method of God's inspiration.
- the method God uses to reveal his word.
- And that method is through men (the human authors of Scripture),
- He breaths, he inspires (he works in and through) men to write down His word.
- As Peter said, these men did not think up what they wrote on their own.
- Scripture is not, as he says in verse <sup>16</sup> **...cleverly devised myths**
- God is the origin of what they wrote, what they prophesied.
- However, since God chose to use men, **there is a Human element to Scripture**.
- Inspiration does not mean God completely took over the minds and hands of the men who wrote the Bible,
- What it means is **He powerfully inspired them**,
- he was surrounding, leading, guiding, directing everything they wrote.
- But they wrote using their own words, their own style, their own language.
- They wrote based on their experiences, their culture, their personalities, their audience.
- And God powerfully worked so that their words were exactly what God wanted them to be.
- Inerrant, perfect, the Word of God.
- Peter gives us further insight into the powerful inspiration of Scripture when he says...

***<sup>21</sup> ...but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:21)***

- Clearly the Spirit of God was at work in the inspiration of these men.
- But what does it mean that they (the authors of Scripture) were carried along by the Holy Spirit.
- Well, that word carried provides us with some insight.
- It is the Greek word **phero**, it includes the means of carrying a burden, bearing, to bring forward.
- It's where we get our English word ferry. F-E-R-R-Y.
- To ferry cargo or something, to carry it from one place to another.
- And this provides a good illustration of what Peter is saying.
- That the writers of Scripture were carried (ferried) along by the Holy Spirit.
- We can imagine them as cargo aboard a ferry.
- Each one got on the ferry each one appeared to be doing his own thing
- each one delivered his own distinctive word.

- But at the same time the owner of the ferry, **in this case God**, made sure they all landed exactly where he wanted them to land.
- By the power of His Spirit God carried each author of Scripture through the writing of their books, letters, gospels, poems, songs, history, etc....
- **And he brought them to the destination he planned.**
- And one of the ways we can be assured of God's **powerful inspiration of all Scripture** is just how **cohesive and unifying** it is.
- Especially considering that the Bible was written by **approximately 40 men of diverse backgrounds** over the **course of 1500 years**.
- **Moses** what a prince who became a shepherd.
- **Isaiah** was a prophet,
- **Ezra** was a priest,
- **David** was a Shepherd who became a King.
- **Matthew** was a tax-collector,
- **John** was a fisherman,
- **Paul** was a Pharisee and a tentmaker,
- **Luke** was a physician and a possibly even a Gentile.
- Despite being written by different diverse authors **over 15 centuries**,
- the Bible does not contradict itself and does not contain any errors.
- The authors all present different perspectives, but they all proclaim the same one true God,
- and the same one way of redemption through trusting in the promises of God which were ultimately and completely fulfilled in the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ.
- The **unity of Scripture** attests to the **power of its inspiration**.
- That each and everyone of these human authors were carried (ferried) along by the Holy Spirit, bring them **exactly where God desired**.
- That God himself with the Author behind the Authors.
- So, Peter has given us these important truths regarding the proper interpretation and powerful inspiration of Scripture.
- Now let's take them back to the context of **2 Peter Chapter 1**,
- I want to show how these **verses 20 and 21** fit into the context of this chapter as a whole.
- and then I want us to see several implications for our lives.
- **I want us to see...**

### 3. The Personal Implications of Today's Scripture

- First the context...
- **We summarized Chapter 1** in the beginning but let me remind us of a few things.
- **First**, Peter's main purpose in this chapter is to help us **confirm our call and election (v. 10)**.
- He wants us to **enjoy the assurance of our salvation**.
- And to do that he reminds us that **the genuineness of saving faith** is proved by whether it produces virtue and knowledge and self-control and patience and godliness and brotherly affection and love (**vv. 5–7**).

- But he also reminds us that God has already given us the power needed to live this way (v. 3).
- And he's told us that **this power becomes effective** in our daily lives through **God's precious and very great promises**.
- **So, as we trust in the promises of God, as we live by his promises.**
- we are by his grace and power kept from **the sinful desires of this world**,
- we are being **transformed into the righteous image of Christ**.
- and our **eternal destiny in his presence is confirmed**.
- Also, throughout this **first chapter** Peter has emphasized the **importance of the "the knowledge of God"**, that is a **correct understanding** of who God is and what God has done for you.
- **Verse 2** says that grace and peace are multiplied to you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus Our Lord
- **Verse 3** says that God has granted us **all things pertaining to life and godliness** through the knowledge of Him.
- **And one more thing to note about Chapter 1,**
- Peter emphasizes the importance of the prophetic word,
- specifically, the prophetic word of Christ's return.
- **And so, I ask, where do we find God's promises?**
- **Where do we find the knowledge (correct understanding) of God?**
- **And where do we find the prophetic word of Christ's return?**
- Well, I'll give you a hint, they are all found in the same place, that is the Scripture.
- **The word of God.**
- So, in context, Peter **is calling us to go to God's Word**.
- Go daily. Spend time memorizing and meditating on the word of God.
- Find knowledge about God, promises from God, and prophecy of Jesus Christ.
- All of which leads to **peace and grace and life and godliness and hope and**.
- But as you spend time in the Scriptures, understand what you are reading...
- Understand these are not the mere words of men; they are the words of God.

***men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:21)***

- Therefore, seek and pay attention to God's *one* true meaning and you will find that lamp shining in the darkness of this world.
- You will find a sure hope to live an abundant godly life in this dark and hostile world.
- For as the apostle Paul said,

***<sup>4</sup> For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (Romans 15:4)***

- Find instruction, encouragement, and hope as you seek the proper interpretation of the powerfully inspired Scriptures.

- Now I want to close with three personal implications **of verses 20 and 21**.
- First...

### **A. You Need to Study to Understand the Scripture**

- **Why?**
- Because understanding scripture doesn't simply mean reading it and assigning whatever meaning comes to you.
- It means seeking out **the one true meaning**...
- As **Paul wrote to Timothy**

***<sup>15</sup> Do your best (study) to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)***

- We need to study so that we can rightly handle the word of truth.
- That we know the right meaning and therefore the right applications.
- Now sometimes this isn't difficult, there are passages that are pretty clear and straightforward.
- If we read **Jesus went up a hill to pray**, it means that **Jesus went up a hill to pray**.
- But other passages are more difficult,
- If you were with us for the study of the second half of Daniel you know what I mean.
- And as Peter said of Paul's teaching ***There are some things in them that are hard to understand...***
- We found that true in our study of Romans.
- Therefore, we need to not just read Scripture but **Study Scripture**.
- The meaning that God ends for us to understand comes to us through **the written word**.
- And that word is written in **human language**.
- ***Men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke (in Hebrew and in Greek) from God.***
- And God, by his grace has given us scholars who study **Hebrew and Greek**.
- There are those **who translate his word into English** and the other languages of the world.
- And that's just the beginning, because even though we have Scripture in our own language.
- For us to understand the Author's intended meaning,
- we often need to understand things about his culture,
- we need to know the historical context he wrote in and more.
- And again, we are blessed with men and women who study these things,
- who write Bible Dictionaries, and Bible Encyclopedias, Commentaries and Study Bibles.
- If you don't have a study Bible, a Bible that has brief notes to help you understand the meaning of a passage, **I would recommend you get one soon**.
- The ESV study Bible is super helpful!
- And you don't have to be a Bible scholar to understand it.

- So, we are blessed with great resources to help us study God's word.
- To understand His meaning.
- And finally, God has given his church **people** who are gifted in teaching his word,
- Pastors and others who spend considerable time studying the Scripture that they might communicate God's intended meaning to their congregations.
- **So first**, study the Scripture personally.
- and second avail yourself to the study of others.
- Come to church, go to your small group, learn from your Pastor and from one another.
- **Bridges** is filled with **men and woman** who study and know God's word.
- And therefore, we can help one another **Understand the Scripture!**
- But along with study, or in the midst of study, you must have humility.
- That's our second implication.

## **B. You Need Humility to Understand Scripture**

- This is the word of God, ***men Spoke from God.***
- Therefore, we should approach it with a sense of **reverence and humility**.
- Scripture is not mere human thought or wisdom.
- Therefore, it cannot be dismissed as opinion.
- It is wholly different than any other writing that has ever existed.
- For it is what it claims to be, the word of God,
- Then it must have complete authority over your life.
- Now we do not worship the word, **we worship God**,
- But he has **chosen to communicate** to us through Scripture.
- Therefore, we must **humbly bow before him**, and submit to his word.
- In humility (as we study) the word of God and determine God's meaning.
- We must trust in and submit to **that meaning**, whether we like it or not.
- **The other day I heard a guy say, "I don't believe in Judgement."**
- Well, part of me understands where he is coming from,
- I don't find judgement, especially the judgement of an eternal hell appealing.
- But that's what the Bible teaches, that's what Jesus taught more than any other person in the Bible.
- At the end of the parable of the sheep and goats... Jesus said of the goats...

***<sup>46</sup> And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."  
(Matthew 25:46)***

- So, in humility, I must accept the truth of an **eternal Judgement** for those who do not trust in Christ.

- We all must, in humility, accept all the truths of Scripture over our own clever reasoning, our own thoughts, our own rationale or and especially today over the lunacy of our culture.
- **You need humility before God to understand and apply his word.**
- And finally, and most importantly...

### **C. You Need the Spirit to Understand Scripture**

- Paul makes this very clear in **1 Corinthians 2...**

**<sup>12</sup> Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. <sup>13</sup> And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. (1 Corinthians 2:12-13)**

- Paul makes it clear, **spiritual truths are taught by the Spirit.**
- Theologians call this **illumination.**
- The Spirit **illuminates, sheds light on the meaning of Scripture than he inspired.**
- Someone without the **Spirit** could study the Word of God their entire life and still not understand it as God intends.
- **The Spirit of God that dwells** in all who believe is crucial to the understanding of God's word.
- If he does **not work in our hearts**, to overcome **our pride and rebellious nature**,
- we will never submit to **the true and sometimes hard meaning of Scripture.**
- Without the Spirit we will **ignore or twist the meaning of God's word.**
- But with the Spirit, as we yield to the Spirit, we can receive, understand, and obey the word of God with joy.
- Therefore, and I close with this,
- I would encourage every one of us, every time we open our Bibles to read, to study,
- that we begin with prayer,
- asking God that he would give us humility in the face of his awesome word.
- And that his Spirit would illuminate his word to our minds and hearts.
- That we might properly understand and apply his word in our lives.
- That we might, again by his power, know and humbly submit to God's meaning of His inspired word.
- Would you join me in Prayer.