**Never In The Will Of Man**

**2 Peter 1:16-21**

Transfiguration of Our Lord

01.29.2023

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Peter writes in our text, “We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.” He is talking about the Transfiguration, for he was on the mountain when Jesus was transfigured. He wrote about what he had seen and heard.

But Peter was more than a witness, as we learn from our text. *Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

It isn’t very difficult, all of Scripture is God’s Word, not man’s word. This is not some book culturally dictated and skewed by the beliefs and cultures of those who wrote it. Yet, that is exactly what some people would like you and me to believe.

Some, when confronted with God’s Word, will say, “That’s just your interpretation.” I have heard people make the excuse that they don’t want to attend Bible Study because they believe that everybody is allowed to have their own interpretation of Scripture. They do not come because their interpretation is different than the pastor’s.

Dear friends, God is unchanging and His Word endures forever. When people have this sort of attitude, it is sad. Why? Because they believe that that Bible is just one of many guides for daily living – a guide for daily living to keep God happy.

This is problematic because it that is a form of works righteousness It makes Jesus work pointless, making all about what you do or don’t do. This is a confusion of Law and Gospel. Such an approach makes Christianity all about the Law and what we do, rather than the Law being the servant of the Gospel. In the correct model, the Law shows us our sin and God’s wrath against it so that we flee to God’s Christ and the forgiveness He purchased.

Most people who do not like the idea of letting the Scripture be the final authority, usually don not realize they really rejecting the Gospel. God gave both, His Law and His Gospel.

Let me read to you a portion of our text again. *Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

What do you believe? Today, in our world, you are encouraged to believe whatever you want. There is no final authority in regard to moral issues nor in regard to religion. Everybody is encouraged to believe whatever feels right in their own heart and mind – those are ultimate final authority. Such Christians will hold strongly to certain beliefs that are in the Scriptures – and others that are in direct violation of God’s Word.

We need to point out this problem. Why? Because such people have chosen not to let the Scripture speak clearly, that it is a matter of interpretation. What did Peter say? *No prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

This is as important today, as it was at the time of Peter, and even before, in the Old Testament era. Jesus talks about the fact that the prophets were killed and stoned. Why did that happen? Because the people did not want to hear what the prophets said.

Jesus was crucified. Why? Because the people did not like what he had to say. Peter and all the other disciples, except John the Evangelist were killed for what they proclaimed. Why? Simply put, because the people did not like what they had to say.

Many do not like to hear any pastor preach with authority and finality on issues. Many who do not like what the Scripture says, make the claim, “that’s just your interpretation.”

Paul warns Timothy that this would happen when God inspires him to write: *Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.* (2 Tim. 4:2‑4 ESV)

And why is this happening? Why are people turning away from the truth and turning to myths? Because, like all of us, they live in sinful flesh and are enticed by the world. Many are not willing to open their eyes to read the Bible and let God speak, “That’s just your interpretation, Pastor... Everything isn’t always just black and white, Pastor.”

Peter said what? *No prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

A young pastor got into a discussion with someone. They claimed to know what was right and the pastor was wrong. When the pastor asked, “Do you remember what Jesus said about that when He told His disciples...” He was cut off, the person said, “I don’t know my Bible very well, but I know what I believe Pastor, and I’m sorry, you are wrong.”

I know what I believe??? That is exactly what Peter is saying is not supposed to happen, for prophecy ***NEVER*** has its origin in the will of man. Did you hear it, he person told the pastor he was wrong, but admitted that they did not know the Bible? In fact, they did not ***want*** to know what the Bible said. In essence, they saying, “God, shut up!”

Dearly beloved of God in Christ, where do we learn God’s will for our lives? Can it be based upon the will of man? Can it be based upon anything at all except the Scripture? If it is my feelings, then where is the common ground for us all? If it is about what I feel is right, what happens if my feeling change? What if I become depressed and think, “Well, I know I’m not good enough!” Where is confidence and hope?

For the Christian, there is no other authority except the Scripture – for the Scripture, Old and New Testaments – always point us to Christ, not ourselves.

To put it bluntly, there is no grey area, it is all in black and white. Unless you have a Bible where the words of Christ are in red. Maybe it is a good idea that I have challenged you all to read the Scripture. It is quite an eye-opener to see what God says.

Too many people have their own opinion. And, I say opinion, because it isn’t even an interpretation of Scripture, for to say it is an interpretation would mean that there is some basis for what they believe, to be found in Scripture. Too many base their opinions about what they believe about God. Maybe on some nice things they may have heard about God’s love, basing their opinions partially on that. Some base their beliefs about God on quotes which they “heard” out there – some claiming to be quotes from the Bible. Usually they are misquotes, often entirely out of context, or things that have nothing to do with Scripture altogether.

God is unchanging, His Word endures forever, and He has revealed Himself to us in a way that is both Law and Gospel. Too bad that too many people hear the Law and then tune out the Gospel, especially when the Law kicks them in the teeth. God’s Law is supposed to be a wake-up call! It awakens us from our complacency! It shows us our sin and calls us to repentance.

On the mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah appeared and spoke with Jesus. Moses is the Lawgiver and Elijah is the prophet exemplar. They gather to talk with Jesus about the upcoming events in His life, how He has fulfilled the Law with His perfect life and will continue to do so in His offering of Himself as the sacrifice. Also, He fulfills the prophets by His suffering death and resurrection. Jesus does not abolish the law, He fulfills it, for God’s Law never changes.

Christ fulfilled it, to remove the punishment God’s Law demands. He fulfilled it and took the punishment upon Himself. He was baptized into our sins and crucified for our justification.

It is for this reason that Peter proclaims the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ without cleverly invented stories. It is why there is never any prophecy or interpretation in Scripture that found its origin in the will of man, for God’s will surpasses ***all*** understanding.

We like the will of man. We like to soften the blow. We like to think that bad things should not happen to good people, and we ***are*** those good people. But there are no good people, for none have kept God’s perfect demands.

Peter proclaims that which Christ accomplished, specifically because it has no origin in the will of man. Man would like to save himself from destruction. Man would like to say that portions of God’s law are not as strict as they appear to be in Scripture. But it is not up for interpretation.

Your salvation is not up for interpretation, nor does it find its origin in the will of man. Christ meets with Moses and Elijah to discuss how He is going to fulfill what they have foretold. He is going to purchase forgiveness, eternal life, and salvation. He dies to bring freedom from the law and salvation from the doom prophesied from ages past.

In Christ Jesus, God the Father looks down at you and says, “This is my Son whom I love; with Him I am well pleased.” Never in the will of man would someone give Himself unto death to pay for the crimes of another. That is so far-fetched, it is beyond incredible. Never could that idea have its origin in the will of man.

And that is precisely the purpose for Christ. You and I do not need to change the law. We do not need to interpret away the consequences. We do not have to come up with our own ideas about God, for God, as revealed in Scripture is greater and wiser than any idea that originates in the will of man. It is the will of God that you live without fear of God’s Law, not because God’s Law is not to be feared, but because it is fulfilled for you in Christ.

And as you are in Christ, the Father says of you, “with you I am well-pleased.”

Dear friends, that is **not** my opinion!

That is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus!

It is not up for interpretation. Thanks be to God! Amen.