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II Peter 1:16-21

16. “For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

17. For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majesty Glory, ‘This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased’--

18. and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

19. *So* we have the prophetic word *made* more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.

20. But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation,

21. for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”

Peter, who was inspired to write these words of Scripture, is the one to whom Jesus gave the keys to the kingdom of heaven, according to Matthew 16:19. So when Peter writes in verse 20, “Know this first of all,” this indicates what follows is of utmost importance!

“That no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation.”

The primary meaning that God wants us to understand here is that the Scripture, His word, was not interpreted or subjectively paraphrased by the people He had to write it down for mankind. But instead, the inspired prophets spoke and wrote down the message from God word for word, as the Holy Spirit carefully directed them.

I Corinthians 2:13 states that the New Testament prophets received God’s word “not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.” So the written Scriptures we have today are verbatim from God Himself--not a man-made interpretation or paraphrase.

Likewise, on a secondary level--like unto a two-edged sword--this passage serves to warn us about interpreting the Scripture. Our subjective handling of Scripture, “one’s own interpretation” so to speak, is just that: our personal opinion. Yes, it is valid and good to have our own opinions and personal application of Scripture--but not to teach our interpretations as the equivalent of God’s word!

Jesus Himself said in Matthew 15:9, “But in vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrine the precepts of men.” It is “vain,” that is of no redemptive value, to teach the ideas of men as commandments from God.

In II Timothy 2:15 Paul instructed the young evangelist Timothy to “be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth. Here the teacher of God is admonished to “accurately handle” the word of God.

And, according to II Peter 1:20, so also should all Christians. We must objectively study out God’s intended meaning from His word as stated. We must let God’s word define His own terms: the spiritual thoughts contained in spiritual words. All Scripture verses must be rendered to consistently fit with any and all other passages in God’s word.

Then and only then can we hope to make God’s joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.

I challenge my listeners to find any Biblical example of a lost person reciting a prayer to gain salvation under the New Covenant. If you find even one example of a sinner’s prayer, contact us. We need to know.