

# Denying the Master who bought them

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[ 0 : 00 ] He's done it his whole life. The truth is, it probably takes super intense physical preparation, massive mental fortitude and precise technical skills to pull off what he does.

! And he's probably increased in all those skills his whole life to do the extraordinary things that he does do. It's essential, isn't it, that a guy like that does those things or if he fails and it only takes one fail, he'll fall and he'll never get back up again.

And if you've seen him on the shoreline, you often see the plane go down below the tree line and you think, this guy's going to hit the water, but every single time he comes back up again. Well, last week, Dave reminded us that increasing in qualities of faith is essential and not optional too.

If we don't pursue growth, we can fall so easily. Change can come without you even seeing it at the time. It can be just the ability to stand up under pressure, show calm resolve, mature in our faith with godly character, have a sure focus on eternal things, and ultimately show and display a love for God and others around us.

Well, today we're looking at what this very strength and hope rests on when Dave brings his sermon later, and that is the word of God. It's the goodness and necessity in being our authority for how we do life.

[ 1 : 27 ] So we'll dig into that a bit later. But first, I'm going to invite the musos up. We're going to sing our first song. And as they're coming up, how about we just start by praying together? Father God, your word is living and active, sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Lord, we thank you for your word, for the Bible, for the story of your great rescue plan with Jesus, the promises we can hold on to, the hope for eternity, and how it shapes us every day when we saturate our minds in it.

Help us to listen today and hear what you have to say to us through your word and as we worship you together. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. The passion of our Savior The passion of our God The passion of our God Death of our God desde desde desde Death of our God desde life that sets us free, leads death to death and life for me.

I give my whole life to honor this love by the Lamb who was slain and forgiven.

[ 4 : 48 ] The sinner's Savior, crown Him forever. For the Lamb who was slain, He is risen.

I give my whole life to honor this love by the Lamb who was slain and forgiven.

The sinner's Savior. We're reading from 2 Peter chapter 1 verse 16 through to 2, end of chapter 2.

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.

For He received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to Him from the majestic glory, saying, This is my Son whom I love. With Him I am well pleased.

[ 5 : 51 ] We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with Him on the sacred mountain. And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

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.

But there were also false prophets amongst the people, just as there will be false teachers amongst you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them.

bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed, these teachers will exploit you with the stories they have made up.

Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping. For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment.

[ 7 : 07 ] If he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others.

If he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly. If this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials, and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.

This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature, and despise authority. Bold and arrogant, these men are not afraid to slander celestial beings.

Yet even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not bring slanderous accusations against such beings in the presence of the Lord. But these men blaspheme in matters they do not understand.

They are like brute beasts, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like beasts, they too will perish. They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done.

[ 8 : 32 ] Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their pleasures and while they feast with you. With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning.

They seduce the unstable. They are experts in greed and a cursed brood. They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam, son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness.

But he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey, a beast without speech, who spoke with a man's voice and restrained the prophet's madness. These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm.

Blackest darkness is reserved for them. For they mouth empty, boastful words, and by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error.

They promise them freedom while they themselves are slaves of depravity. For a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him. If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning.

[ 9 : 55 ] It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. Of them the proverbs are true.

A dog returns to its vomit, and a sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud. Well, good morning, everyone.

Will you pray with me as we come to God's word? Amen. Heavenly Father, whether we are new to the faith or been walking for many years, we all need to be reminded and be further convinced of the truth and goodness of your word.

I pray this morning that you would do just that for each one of us, by your Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name. Amen. Well, the Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.

So says the 1689 Baptist Confession, along with every Reformed confession that biblical churches agree to. Now, I don't think it's enough to simply tick the box that you intellectually agree with that statement.

[ 11 : 42 ] I think we need to be persuaded deep in our hearts that this is really, really good news. Why is it a good thing that the Bible is our only authority?

Now, who likes talking about authority over you? Like, we are creatures of our culture, I suppose, ever since the fall. No one has wanted to think about authority over us.

Why is it a good thing? Let's compare it to something else that could be our authority.

Why can't our feelings inside be our authority? Now, there's a pastor, Tim Keller. He gives two helpful thought experiments.

Here's the first one. Your 18-year-old self looked at your 14-year-old self as pretty foolish, making some poor choices.

[12:44] But then your 30-year-old self looks at your 18-year-old self as pretty foolish and making some poor choices.

Like, I thought it was a great idea putting a loud muffler on my car. I thought I was really cool and annoying my neighbours to no end.

But I regretted that by the time I was 30. Now, it might slow down a bit, but your 50-year-old self looks at your 30-year-old self. Some of those choices you thought you were pretty certain about, you deeply regret now.

Now, whatever age you are in the room right now, here's what you can know. You're making foolish choices. Our feelings, our intuitions let us down just a few years ago.

Here's the second thought experiment. There's a man in a traditional honour and shame culture, and he looks at his feelings, and he's got two really strong feelings.

[14:00] One is when people wrong him, he feels aggression. How dare you do that? I'm a man of honour, and that's a good thing.

I should protect my honour and dignity. But then there's these sexual desires that don't fit with the expectations, and he suppresses that. That's not me.

Now, there's another man with the exact same desires living in our culture. He looks at his aggression when people wrong him, and he goes to see a counsellor.

I need help with anger management. And he looks at his sexual desires and goes, that's me. I'm going to embrace that.

We all are creatures of our culture, is the point of that thought experiment. The point of this is we all have authority. We're all living under authority.

[14:59] No one is their own authority. If it's your feelings, they were unreliable just a few years ago. And you accept or reject some of those feelings based off the culture around us often.

But we're often blind how much we're doing that. Our social environment is controlling us. That's why it's really good news that we have the Holy Scriptures.

Verse 19 of chapter 1 says, It is a lamp shining in a dark place. There's a darkness even in our desires sometimes.

There's a darkness in the environment, in the world we live in. And we have a light. We would be lost without this light. Now the day when Jesus returns, all our doubt, any doubt we have, all the uncertainty, all the wrong influences will be gone.

We are living in a time of current darkness. But Peter is saying the person who looks to the word of God, the morning star appears in their hearts.

[16:24] Like Venus coming up just before the dawn. That day, that day, that shining day, the dawn, is already having an impact inside you. That first light is shining.

If you love the fact that the Bible is God speaking to you. Nothing will more directly impact the way you and I live than what role the Bible has in your life.

The reliability of the Bible. We're given two sets of sources here in these verses. Verse 16 to 21.

That we can know for sure that the Bible is God speaking. We've got the apostles, the eyewitnesses of Christ's glory and his resurrection. And we've got the Old Testament prophets.

When they spoke, it wasn't their opinion. They were carried along by the Holy Spirit, by God himself. This isn't just Peter's view. This is Jesus' view of the Bible.

[17:31] Jesus doesn't believe in red-letter Bibles. Now, if you've got a red-letter Bible, like, I'm not, that's not my main point. But you can't go, oh, when God spoke on Mount Sinai, that's in red.

And then this part, I suppose, is Mark. This one's Luke talking. This one's Moses. He didn't do that. Jesus quotes Genesis about marriage. We looked at this last year.

He quotes a comment by Moses. It's just an editorial comment. It says, God instituted marriage. He sees all of it. As red-letter.

More than that, he based his entire life on the Bible. When he was tempted in the wilderness, how did he fight that temptation?

It is written. He based his entire life. When he's dying on the cross, the darkest moment in his life, what is he thinking about? He's quoting Psalm.

[ 18 : 36 ] My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? This is Jesus' view of the Bible. He based his entire life on it. Now, there's some inside the church that Peter is writing to who are rejecting the apostles and prophets.

Now, in particular, they're rejecting the idea that Jesus is coming back to judge. We see that in verse 16. The power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When Peter, James and John were up the mountain, the mountain of his transfiguration, they heard the voice with their own ears.

This is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased. They saw his face shine brighter than the sun. And that reminds us of Moses when he met with God. Moses' face shone, but it was reflected glory. And it faded. Whereas Jesus' face, it was permanently glorious. It was intrinsic to who he is.

[ 19 : 47 ] It's that divine majesty is in the person of Jesus. And Peter said, I saw that with my very eyes.

And the whole world will see that when he comes back. And this is what the prophet said. God will come at the end. God's king will come at the end of history.

These people were in the church saying, I don't think Jesus is coming back. Now, I doubt anyone in this room is going to be taken in by someone saying, Jesus isn't coming back.

If you heard that, your radar will go, no, that's not right. But how much in our daily thinking and our outlook on life can you and I just assume life is going to just go on as it is?

The sun will rise tomorrow. I've got plans for 2027. It's as if we don't believe it. We just push it out of our mind.

[ 21 : 02 ] I'm saying we do believe it. I'm just saying functionally, how much do we think about it? There are websites of churches. They will have their statement of faith on their website.

And they'll say, Jesus is coming back to judge the living and the dead. But week after week, their sermons aren't based in scripture.

You're not going to hear about sin. You're not going to hear about judgment. It's too negative.

It's too gloomy to talk about such things. The sad thing is, you stop talking about judgment and you lose grace as well.

You lose the wonder of God's love for us in purchasing us. Well, in verses 1 to 3 of chapter 2, Peter gives a really quick preview that the rest of the chapter fleshes out.

[ 22 : 09 ] The danger is not coming from outside. It is inside. It is inside. You can see people attacking Christianity from the outside of the faith, atheists and so on.

That's easy to spot. But there's a danger inside confessing Christians. Just like in Old Testament times, there were false prophets who rejected the idea of God's judgment.

They preach what people want to hear. Peace, prosperity, blessing. We should expect false teachers. Don't be surprised.

But we should be distressed by it. That this happens. Now, verse 1 says it's secretly bringing in these destructive teachings. I don't think they're hiding what they're saying.

I think they're hiding how much it contradicts with the Bible. They are motivated by greed. The scriptures say a lot about leaders.

[ 23 : 20 ] They cannot be in it for shameful gain, Peter says at the end of chapter 5, speaking to elders. Do not appoint someone who's in it for shameful gain.

Leaders are not to feather their own nests. But these people are motivated by greed. Now, the impact they have, many will follow them.

It's going to appeal to the sinful desire to just don't worry about moral constraints. It's such a positive message. Many will follow them.

But the impact is destructive. The reputation of Jesus, the reputation of Christianity, of the church, it'll be brought into disrepute. It'll be blasphemed. And they themselves will be eternally destroyed by God.

And it's going to be swift. It's certain. It's going to soon take place. This is a strong warning. I don't particularly love preaching a strong warning.

[ 24 : 27 ] But we need to hear it. Peter isn't addressing sincere believers who disagree on many secondary doctrinal things and we all come together to search the scriptures.

He's not addressing that. He's not talking to people who are struggling with doubt or struggling with guilt.

He's not talking to you. We can apply Peter's warning to people who take half-truths. They'll use biblical language.

But they deny the very heart of Christianity. They are leading people to destruction and they themselves are on their way to destruction.

So verses 4 to 10. It may appear God is letting them just thrive in the church.

[ 25 : 31 ] Like where's the Old Testament versions of judgment coming down on these people? It may not look the same as what it does today, God's judgment. But verses 4 to 10 say here's what God is ready to do.

We've got three examples of what God did in the past. If God did not spare... First we've got angels who rebelled.

To be honest, we don't really know a lot about that. He didn't even spare angels who rebelled. If God did not spare the world in Noah's day but flooded the whole earth.

If God did not spare Sodom and Gomorrah when fire came down. You'd expect him to say he's not going to spare these people.

But even Peter wants to talk about the positive side. He goes on to talk about Noah and Lot. Keep pursuing righteousness.

[ 26 : 35 ] God kept those who listened to his word. Think of Noah.

It took 120 years before the flood actually came. From the promise of the flood, 120 years. You can imagine after 50 years, neighbours are just watching him build that ark.

50 years ago God said the flood will come. Not a drop of rain in sight. I could think of a better way to spend a Sunday morning than what we're doing now.

Let's go to the beach. Let's sleep in. He preserved Noah though. Even Lot in Sodom.

Now that's surprising. Lot is very compromised. He was compromised. He didn't do a lot to speak against his culture.

[ 27 : 38 ] But Peter the Apostle says he was deeply distressed. The immorality around him still shocked him.

That's a mark of true belief. You're not fully compromised. You may not be doing much about it. Now we should be doing more. But he's deeply distressed. Now verse 9 is his conclusion. God is able to both keep those who are rebelling against him under punishment until that final day of punishment, while at the same time saving those who are listening to his word, still pursuing righteousness.

God can be handing people over to their sinful nature, keeping them ready for that punishment. But don't follow them.

You keep pursuing growth. Keep paying attention to the only light. Well that's God's opinion of these people and what's going to happen.

[ 29 : 00 ] Who are these false believers? Verse, second half of verse 10 through to 16. Like what, what characterizes them?

We've got a two-fold description in the first part of verse 10. The lust of defiling passions and they despise authority.

At the end of the letter, he describes them as lawless people. That phrase lawless kind of summarizes them. Lawless in two senses. They are lawless in that God's moral laws, they delight in disobeying them.

And they are lawless in a deeper sense in that they're rejecting any authority over them. They're lawless. They're their own law.

So in terms of being their own authority, they are bold, blaspheming the glorious ones. Now it's a bit tricky to know exactly what that means, isn't it? It could be the most obvious thing of angels.

[ 30 : 09 ] They're somehow speaking against angels. But what we do know is they're completely pushing the prophets and apostles aside. They're saying the exact opposite.

And they're probably speaking against believers who listen to these, who take the Bible seriously. They are so bold in speaking against truth.

But then the angels who have more authority than them, they're even silent. They just hand judgment over to God. God will take care of it.

God will take care of it. God will take care of it. God will take care of it.! by it. They prey on unsteady souls, either new converts or those struggling in life.

They're looking for what they can take from people, not what they can give. If they can get sex, if they can get money, if they can win attention, people can follow their doctrines.

[ 31 : 41 ] They're open about this. They're not ashamed of it. They are like the prophet Balaam, who was supposed to say and to stick with what God says, don't deviate one inch, but he was allured by what the world offers. He wanted the money.

They're lawless. They openly don't care about God's morals. And they boldly reject God's authority over their life. They're lawless.

Now in verse 19, we seem to have their slogan, freedom. What a positive message. You want to be free? Freedom. They promise freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption.

At the end of the letter, it says that they're taking Paul's letters and twisting it. And you can imagine them taking Galatians 5. For freedom, Christ set us free. Stand firm, therefore. Don't submit again to a yoke of slavery. Get rid of all these rules. You're not under law, but under grace, who cares what we do with the body anyways. They just take a half truth. It sounds so right.

But then they use it to say the exact opposite of what the scriptures are saying. Freedom. Let's be positive.

[ 33 : 31 ] Freedom. I was in a conversation with two men many years ago, and I was shut down in, well, I suppose I chose to be shut down, but they put a lot of pressure on me because I was saying we need to examine our motivations with our choices. Like, is it sinful motivation or is trying to try to please God? And they just found that so negative. They wanted to focus on the victory of Jesus. They want, let's just, just the delight, the power. Think positive. All this talk of sin and sinful motives, that's just restrictive. That's, let's be free. Let's be positive.

That's, that's, that's the Christian life. Now, maybe, I want to concede, maybe I was too negative.

Maybe, maybe I did need some balance. But both of these men have wandered from the faith.

Think positive. The gospel is about freedom. It is. We are born in a way of freedom.

Born again with a new nature that delights in God's ways now. You're free to delight in his ways now. We are free from condemnation and guilt and shame that keeps us in that pit of despair. We're free from that pit. It is about freedom. We will one day be free of the presence of sin. The gospel is about freedom. But they take a half truth and say, indulge the sinful nature. When it's really, be free to voluntarily love one another and serve one another. Now, Peter's saying that the true state of these people is obvious that whatever overcomes a person to that, he is enslaved.

They're claiming to be saved by Jesus. They are enjoying disobeying Jesus. And it shows they're persistently just enjoying going against what Jesus says. It shows that they'll never really change.

They're going to change deep down. There can be an outward behaviour change for a time. But deep down, they haven't been changed. And I think that's why he quotes the proverb in verse 22.

The dog returns to its own vomit. It's a lovely image. And the pig, I don't know how to say that word, so I'm saying pig, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire.

[ 36 : 36 ] Those who know more about the Bible and then reject it are even worse off before they even knew it. Their fundamental nature has never changed. A dog or pig just does what's natural to them. They're still enslaved to their old sinful nature.

Remember, these are people boldly disagreeing with the Bible and they're unashamed of what they're doing. The true picture of a Christian is a Christian who struggles with their sin.

That's what Galatians 5 pictures. The spirit wages war against the flesh. The elect will never be content with their sin. Not over a period of time.

They know God's call. Come partake of my divine nature. They rejoice of being washed in the blood of Jesus and they long for the full day to dawn when the presence of sin is gone.

I think the phrase that shows the extent of these false believers is verse 1 of chapter 2. Why does he say it like that?

[ 38 : 11 ] Peter knows they haven't been redeemed from their sinful nature. Why put it like that? I think he's putting it like that because they're claiming salvation in Jesus.

There are some who dare to take the name of Christ as their master, but they don't listen to his holy word.

They claim his cross, but they deny the very reason he shed his holy blood. Professor Brian Cox, he says there's about 200 billion stars in the Milky Way galaxy, each with their own planets, with two trillion galaxies.

And he says, I challenge anyone to be able to picture that. That's what we know so far. Now one day the majesty of the one who created all that is going to come for all to see.

And he's going to come in such power that those stars are going to melt away in his presence. You don't treat someone like that as your personal assistant, where I like that advice, I don't like that advice.

[ 39 : 59 ] You don't. It's dangerous if you can utter the Apostles' Creed with no feeling whatsoever about what you're saying you believe.

He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. And from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

But you marvel at the fact that such a one would give his blood to purchase you.

You don't give in to any other voice. Even the voice of your own feelings. You look to his word, even if you don't understand it.

The only light, the only light in this dark time. As a church, we need to help each other become tall trees that are planted by the word of God with deep roots.

[ 41 : 16 ] Like I remember the storms in Newcastle. There was trees that just easily blew over because their roots weren't deep. We need deep roots in the Bible. We need to help each other with that.

We need to ground new believers deeply in truth. It is not enough for people just to walk in the door. We need to know our Bibles. We need to help new believers.

We need to help our children have deep roots in the word. When someone seeks your advice, it is not loving to say follow your heart.

If their heart, if their desires are contrary to seeking his divine nature, it is not loving. It feels good, but it's not.

When someone knows their Bible really well and contradicts the heart of who Jesus is and the cross, it's not loving to be tolerant.

[ 42 : 25 ] If they're making a mockery of this glorious one and his blood. this master has called us this master has called us to share in his divine nature.

He's called us upward, out of the world, to share in his light. Keep progressing. Keep pursuing growth.

Keep accessing his divine power through his promises. Through his promises. The only light shining in a dark place. Will you pray with me?

Let's pray. Let's pray. Father, we thank you that you love us enough to warn us so that we're not taken in by some imitation.

We know that Satan comes dressed in light sometimes. So we thank you for your love in warning us. And we thank you most of all for the blood of your son cleansing us of all sin, setting us free from slavery to sin.

[ 43 : 49 ] Lord, fill us with the hope that one day we'll be free from the presence of sin. Father, help us to expect the coming of your son in power and glory and the light that we see we get to share with him.

Help us feel the wonder of that so that we won't compromise and we'll keep progressing. Lord, help us to be a community that truly loves one another and pushes each other to keep growing in your word.

in season and out of season. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.