The Eyewitness and the Prophetic Word

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[0:00] Since the first pages of inspired scripture appeared on the scene, there's been a war going!

By the authenticity of the Word of God. And sometimes it has been referred to as the watershed movement or the watershed moment. And I'm going to assume not everybody in here understands the concept of a watershed. There are uncountable watersheds in the world, billions, billions on planet Earth.
I have them on my farm. That's just 12 miles that way. It is 100 acres. Most watersheds are obscure. Some are quite famous. One such watershed, which I've drawn here expertly, I might add, is in the Andes mountain range of South America. They're starting their summer right now.
It's reversed because they're south of the equator. But in the winter months, and it gets really cold up there, snowfalls. And I want to talk about two snowflakes that land on the top of the peak.
And they look different. I'm not going to draw them, but you know, no two snowflakes look the same. So they've landed on the top. And imagine these two snowflakes, in terms of distance from each other, they're about one fifty thousandth of an inch from each other. They're right up there on the top.
[2:03] And eventually the warm summer sun returns. And it'll be next few months.

And the warm sun finally warms up the top of the Andes. And the snowpack up there.
And these two snowflakes melt. And now you've got two drops of water. This is all science. And so they've melted. I'm glad I have bad hearing. I can't hear the comments.
But they're up there. Now two drops of water. And one drop of water is barely on the western slope of the Andes. And the drop of water that's right next to it is on the eastern slope of the Andes. And so those drops are going to start descending down their respective sides.
The west here, the east there, corresponds to how we're situated. And gravity begins to take these drops of water on a journey.
[3:34] I don't know how long it'll take. Maybe take centuries. I'm not sure. They may never make it to the bottom. But the one on the western slope, which is over here, given enough time and some luck, it finally will reach the Pacific Ocean, which is west of the Andes.

Now the other drop of water, it's traveling down the eastern slope of the Andes. And given enough time and a lot of luck, that other drop, which has been traveling down that eastern slope, will eventually reach the Amazon River.
And it will be joined by an unknowable number of drops of water. The Amazon is some 4,000 miles long.
There's a dispute whether the Nile is longer or the Andes is longer. I'll let them duke that out. But they're traveling down that slope, and they get into the Amazon Basin.
And now our two drops of water are worlds apart. One is in the Pacific, and the other, the Amazon, flows into the Atlantic eventually.
[5:10] And what determines where they come to is up there where they started.

One barely on the west, one barely on the east. That's a watershed, and it determines the flow of water.
On my farm, I have a little land like that. That's a watershed. Some water goes that way to Noata County. Some goes that way to Osage County. You never know.
So, here we have the watershed, the great watershed of the Andes. The watershed of the evangelical world is our view of Scripture.
How do we view Scripture? And we may actually begin close to each other.

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[6:25] We might begin close to each other. But actually, where we end up is determined by other factors, and we may end up worlds apart.

One guy begins his journey on the watershed of the evangelical world, and he's really not sure of Scripture, and his parents kept him in a real liberal church.
Well, you know, some of that's true, but a lot of it's not true. And the other guy is on fire for the Lord. Believes every word of the Word of God.
They started together, and they end up worlds apart. And the man that's grounded in a proper understanding of Scripture, who's been taught the Word of God, and learns that it is inspired and authoritative and inerrant, will grow in his spiritual life in safe harbor.
There was, not too long ago, a few centuries, a concerted effort to destroy the Bible as the Word of God.
[7:51] That really gained traction in the 17th century of a period of time that became known as the Enlightenment.

And it was anything but enlightening. There were men behind this movement. You may recognize some names, others you won't. The bad guys, in my view, Spinoza, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard, who's, to this day, people read his books and think he hung the moon, Nitschke, Bultman, Heidegger, and Wellhausen.
And if you come across those writings, my best recommendation to you, just throw them away. I cleaned my library out a few years ago, and I took a whole trash bag to the dump.
I don't know how I ended up with some of that stuff. But God raised up men in that same period to protect the faith.
And God raised them up. And they stood for faith and the inerrancy of the Word. And it was people like Jonathan Edwards, Charles Hodge, B.B. Warfield, J. Gresham Mason.
[9:16] In our day, in our lifetime, most of us, God raised up John MacArthur and R.C. Sproul and James Montgomery Boyce. And now they're all with the Lord.

Never underestimate how important the Reformation was and bringing us back into the fold of evangelical thought.
It was vitally important. This is a quote from Dr. Tom Nettles. He's still around. He recently retired from Southern Seminary, but he's out writing and lecturing.
I've got several of his books. This is from Dr. Nettles' book, Baptists and the Bible. The Reformers believed Scripture to be God's Word written.
It was trusted and not doubted. It was studied and not ignored. It was taken as the final authority with regard to those matters on which it spoke and made affirmations.
[10:23] God has not revealed everything. Like John said in his Gospel, the world couldn't contain all those books. The Bible did not expressly contain all truth that could be known, but what the Bible did teach was believed to be completely trustworthy.

Truth in any other area would not contradict biblical truth. Starting from one Scripture, one could find the true knowledge of reality.
That's Dr. Nettles. Well, today we're going to look at a passage written by the Apostle Peter in 2 Peter 1, beginning in verse 16.
We're going to go to verse 21, which by the way brings us to the end of chapter 1. And we'll move on from there next week. But we're going to begin by looking at verses 16 to 18.
And this is what they say, For we did not make known to you the power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, following cleverly devised myths, but being eyewitnesses of His majesty.
[11:48] For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the majestic glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

And we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the Holy Mountain. By the way, He's talking about the Mount of Transfiguration there.
And Peter, of course, along with John, were there. They heard all that. Well, why did Peter write these inspired words? And why did they become so vitally important to the Reformation?
The answer is quite easy to grasp. When this epistle was written, the church was being bombarded by false teachers and false teachings.
The goal of Satan was to undermine the trust that people had in the Scriptures. Some of those people were founders of the Reformation, like Luther and Zwingli and Knox and Calvin, to name a few.

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[13:07] And let me say this, it is important to all of us to be able to recognize those who propagate evil and false teaching in the church.

But we must not stop there. We must also have a battle plan to defend the members of the church against the errors of the false and fierce wolves that might come in.
So what is our weapon? Has God given us a weapon to defend the church against such attacks?
And the answer is yes, He has. It's called God's Word.
It's God's Word. Let me say this, I joined this church in 1980. My wife and I, January of 1980.
At that time, I was a young, thin FBI agent with hair. And all that's changed now. I'm 77. There was a very real possibility the Southern Baptist Convention, as we know it, was going to go away.
[14:18] Your dad was a defender of that faith. He defended that against those guys. And, I mean, it was bad. In Nashville, it was really, really bad.

They had their own news media there at Nashville in the convention. And, they were publishing heretical books and articles.
We were going the way of the Episcopalians. The liberal Episcopalians. That was the direction we were taking. Well, there was a group of men that began to meet.
And I can't even remember all the names. You'd know all of them if I could remember. The Baptist Press, which was very liberal, was following them so they could report on who was there.
They couldn't go into the meeting. And these guys were dodging them. And that's when they got Judge Pressler out of Texas. He met with them. He said, I'm going to tell you how you could save your convention.
[15:24] And he met with them several times. Well, one of the critical meetings, very interesting, because it touches this church the building we're in. They were having trouble hiding from the Baptist Press.

But they were succeeding. And they found a church history professor that they dearly loved. And he was sort of not widely known.
And he agreed to open his house to them. And they could go in there out of view. They ditched the Baptist Press.
They got lost on the highway. And they went into this house. And this professor of church history, he brought with him his daughter and son-in-law.
His son-in-law was a young pastor. And he served coffee and cookies and Kool-Aid or whatever, you know. And they met all day.
[16:29] And this young preacher boy got to listen in. He didn't interject anything. But he got to listen while he was serving them. And the professor that opened his house to him was Dr. Crozier.

and his son-in-law was Mike McBride, our pastor for 17 years here. And Mike got to hear all that. And he told me the story.
It was just amazing. It was absolutely amazing to listen to Judge Pressler hatch a plan. This is how we're going to take back the Southern Baptist Convention from these guys.
and we were under attack. We were going to go away. And these guys rose to the occasion. And actually there's a book been published and it's called A Hill to Die For.
It's a combat term. In war there are certain things you're willing to die for. And Judge Pressler wrote that and he said this was a hill to die on.
[17:41] It was worth dying for. And these guys prevailed. And they started putting up men as president of the convention.

One being Tom Ella former member here. And a lot of others. And they took back the agencies in Nashville.
They got rid of the Baptist Press. Those guys went to work for the New York Times and the Washington Post. And it was quite a history. Quite a history. Well the passage that I read to you already this is a foundational passage that the reformers back 2,000 years ago well not that far back 1700s clung to.
They clung to this. And Peter writes these inspired words 2,000 years ago they became vitally important when the reformation was launched by Luther when he tacked the 95 theses on the door of the church at Wittenberg.
these passages were instrumental in that because there were false teachers and there were false teachings and Satan was bombarding and it's absolutely imperative that we recognize those who propagate evil and false teaching in the church.

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[19:29] now not this church necessarily I don't think we've seen anything in a while long time but just bear in mind that they're everywhere and they're all over television these charlatans are everywhere on television and we have to be able to recognize them and deal with them using God's word another truth that I would like to make concerning the reformation this church alongside like-minded churches we may not understand it fully but we're here because of the reformation this church is here because of the reformation without the reformation this church and our country and the world would be totally different for one thing we would probably have a cross with a figure up there of Jesus and maybe the thing would be in Latin because without the reformation most of us would be

Roman Catholic the reason we're not we had a reformation the reason pilgrims came to America was because they fled the guys that were fighting the reformation in northern Europe well these guys got on boats and came over and started a new life here we have a country because of the reformation now as we study this second epistle of Peter we need to periodically remind ourselves that this comes to us from the standpoint of an eyewitness I did my whole life in criminal justice in law enforcement I was a detective before I was an FBI agent I was an FBI agent before I was police chief eyewitnesses are really good you can put together a circumstantial case
I've done it but boy you can't beat an eyewitness if you've got an eyewitness you're strong with the jury our eyewitness in this block is Peter the beloved disciple what I call foot and mouth Peter he was always putting his foot in it but what a great guy in the second part of verse 16 the Holy Spirit inspired Peter to tell us that he was an eyewitness to the majesty of Christ he had seen him and then in verse 17 Peter reports that he heard the father from heaven stating stating that the Lord Jesus was his unique beloved son with whom the father was well pleased I mean can you imagine hearing those words and not only did
Peter hear that but the other apostles that were present heard it as well and they all received supernatural revelation all of them and I'll tell you when you read it the words of second Peter remind me of the words of the apostle John in the opening words of his first epistle let me read those to you first John chapter 1 verses 1 to 3 what was from the beginning what we have heard what we have seen with our eyes what we beheld and touched with our hands concerning the word of life and the life was manifested and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the father and was manifested to us what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also that you may also have fellowship with us and indeed our fellowship is with the father and with his son
Jesus Christ what a way to start a book of the Bible 1 John first three verses now over the centuries the epistle of second Peter has come under criticism claims have been made that Peter was teaching lies to mislead some even said he wrote it out so he could make some money off the work product nothing could be further from the truth in fact Peter made it quite clear that he did not follow cleverly devised tales in other words he did not follow the deceptive approach of the false teachers and focus on those words cleverly devised two words in English it comes from one
[25:26] Greek word sephizo I don't know if that's how you pronounce it but neither does anybody else this is an expression that refers to anything that is deceitfully made the goal of false teachers has always been to deceive and then to devour the flock they want to deceive and they want to devour by sheep of course I'm referring to immature believers very vulnerable people false teachers master their words to make them appear to be divine truth Peter speaks of cleverly devised myths the false teachers made up stories they talked about legendary gods and heroic figures that did not exist never existed all based on lies and deception there was a lot of pagan mythology that came from these guys and

Peter also refers to the coming of the Lord Jesus unquestionably he makes reference to the second coming of Christ when he will return in power and glory and dominion and Peter wrote about the return of Christ 2000 years ago how much closer are we to that event in 2025 I mean it's all over the internet it's in newspapers not that that's going to hurry God up he didn't read that newspaper false teachers love to attack the return of Christ but he will return and he's going to return maybe in some of your lifetimes I would be derelict if I failed to make some additional comments about
Jesus as the beloved son and the father is well pleased with him we lose much in the English translation but the original readers of these words understood what was being said they understood it this is the father affirming that Christ as the son has the identical nature and essence with him and may I say with the spirit of God there are three persons of the Godhead one essence one essence

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one nature the trinity is described as the three persons and one essence as used here essence means the three persons of the trinity they operate in perfect unity and share divine attributes and purpose and then we have some additional words verses 19 to 21 again
Peter talking and we have as more sure the prophetic word to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in the dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts know this first of all that no prophecy of scripture comes by one's own interpretation if you got some guy wants to come talk to your church we had a lady do that one time she knocked on the door and Tom Kirk was still here and Tom handled it well she said God told me he wants me to preach in your church Sunday morning and Tom said well he hadn't told us that and she said well
I'm supposed to preach here she said I have a healing ministry so if you got sick people I'm going to heal them all he said okay come with me so he took her right out here he said you see that tall building over there that's Jane Phillips hospital you go over there!
[30:24] and you clean that place out you go to every room and you heal every person in that building and when it's empty I'll go over there and inspect it well you just don't understand and Tom said I perfectly understand get off our property prophecy does not come from the will of man but man moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God know this first of all that no prophecy of scripture comes by one's own interpretation it's not our interpretation for no prophecy was ever made by the will of man but men being moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God great passage in verse 19 the Holy Spirit writing through

Peter says we have a more sure prophetic word that is a clear reference to this being the word of God through the agency of the Holy Spirit the Bible reveals to us from whence it came and why 2 Timothy chapter 3 verse 16 and 17 all scripture how much scripture all scripture is God breathed theoponoustos in Greek and profitable for teaching for reproof for correction for training and righteousness so that the man of God may be equipped having been thoroughly equipped for every good work now we need to exercise some caution here the apostles gave us an eyewitness account they were eyewitnesses of the life and experiences of the
Lord Jesus while he was on earth but then Peter says something really interesting he says but there is an even better and more reliable source for truth wait a minute Peter these guys were there they saw they heard but Peter is writing by inspiration he says no there's a more reliable source for truth it is the prophetic word it's the word of God in other words what God wrote down and Peter says it's even better than his experiences than the other apostles experiences to validate scripture Peter had experiences when he was on the Mount of Transfiguration you can't go through that and not be changed but he's on the
Mount of Transfiguration that serves a great example but the prophetic word of scripture is even more sure throughout history the authorship of the word of God he has told us over and over my word is inerrant no mixture of error infallible and it is all it is the all sufficient source of truth the scriptures do not need human confirmation or human validation they speak for themselves in Peter's day the expression the prophetic word was believed to embrace the entire Old Testament but don't be misled by that word prophetic by definition the word prophetic goes far beyond passages that deal with predictive prophecy we're not just talking about end times or eschatology it includes all of the word of
God but especially applies and pertains to the coming of the Messiah and this is what Paul had to say Romans chapter 16 verses 25 to 27 now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past but now is manifested and the scriptures of the prophets according to the commandment of the eternal God has been made known to the Gentiles leading to an obedience of faith to the only wise God through Jesus Christ be glory forever amen now you have a benediction in
[35:53] Romans and this is what the Lord Jesus said in John's gospel John 5 39 Jesus speaking you search the scriptures because you think you have in them eternal life but it is these that bear witness about me M.R.

Dahan said Jesus is in every verse of scripture sometimes he's out front it's obvious sometimes he's in the shadows but until you find him you had understood that verse of scripture this is how Dr. Luke put it in his gospel he was a physician Luke 24 27 then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets he interpreted to them the things concerning himself in all the scriptures that's amazing he just opened up the scriptures that's on the road to Emmaus by the way and then Luke 24 verses 44

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to 45 now he said to them these are my words which I spoke to you while I was still with you that all things which are written about me and the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled!
And then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures can you imagine walking along with this guy and you figure out this is Jesus and he opened our minds wow these passages embody the prophetic word we've been speaking about Peter asserts in 2nd Peter chapter 1 that we would do well to pay attention to the prophetic word written in both the Old and New Testaments I had to consider the possibility that some of what I'm talking about doesn't make a lot of sense that's pretty common when I'm teaching but all of this is a precursor to more detailed lessons in the future on false teachers and apostates that are all contained in this epistle and we're going to get to those pretty fast we're still going to go through chapter 2 and chapter 3 and it's going to be about false teachers and apostates and
Peter also reveals to us that his word is to serve as a lamp shining in a dark place and by the way that concept comes from the inspired words of the longest chapter in the Bible Psalm 119 verse 105 your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path and consider also verse 130 in chapter 119 the unfolding of your words gives light it gives understanding to the simple there is a phrase that Peter uses in our passage tonight I've made reference to it a couple times he talks about the lamp shining in the dark place the original meaning of the word dark in the Greek language was a place that was dry and parched later it became known as some place that was dirty and murky pretty interesting
[39:38] Dr. MacArthur now with the Lord says about this dark place the phrase dark place encompasses the murky blackness of the fallen world that prevents people from seeing the truth until the lamp of divine revelation shines forth now we don't desire to dwell in dark places Jesus brought light to the world that's what we're seeking we're looking for this 2nd Peter chapter 1 second part of verse 19 the day dawn and the morning star to arise in our hearts now I've been getting up early not on purpose but I've been doing it one of the first thing that catches my eye is a huge planet outside my window and that's Venus and just before the sun comes up it's called the morning star and it arises it brings light just before the sun and I can see the eastern sky lightening up and I know the sun's coming but we're going to close our lesson tonight with two great passages of scripture this is 2nd

Peter chapter 1 verse 20 and 21 which closes out the first chapter no prophecy of scripture comes by one's own interpretation and verse 21 for no prophecy was ever made by the will of man but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God and you know I kept looking at that and thinking and finally I decided those words speak for themselves you don't need me or any other teacher to interpret those

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