**READ 2 Peter 3:1-18 (NKJV)**

(**Verses 1-2**) Reminder of the holy prophets and the commandments of the apostles (they are completely consistent with one another!)

(**Verses 3-7**) Scoffers (or mockers NASV) – today it seems we have more scoffers of God and of Christians than I can ever remember. Not a new thing. Paul encountered scoffers in **Acts chapter 17**. These scoffers still follow their own sinful desires. These willfully forget (deliberately overlook this fact: ESV)

The earth was formed out of water and through water by God’s Word (**Genesis 1:1-8, 7:21-23, Psalms 33:6-9**). The same earth was destroyed by that water; all that breathed air died (**Genesis 6:11-13, Psalm 104:1-9**). Floods are devastating and give us a glimpse of the power of God.

* 1931 China Floods: 69,000 acres flooded (equal to the states of NY, NJ, and Connecticut combined) – 25-50 million people impacted by the floods. 150,000 died from the floods and 2 million died from starvation and disease that followed. 32,000 folks died from cholera alone.

To be a scoffer of God, one must willfully forget or deliberately overlook God’s Creation and the Flood of Noah – God’s Word is in control! That same Word of God preserves our world until Judgment Day

(**Verses 8-9**) The scoffers also overlook that God wants all of His creation, no matter what background or what nationality, or what color of skin, to be saved. We should never, ever overlook this fact! But in context Peter is saying God is longsuffering, not with the lost, but with us/you.

(**Verses 10-13**) Judgment will come when we do not expect it. **What is our take home message here?** God’s Word Created, Flooded, and Preserves the world until Judgment Day, when all that we know (Sun, Moon, Stars, Earth, Planets, constellations) will be gone (**2 Thessalonians 1:3-10**).

* Fire is terrifying: 1933 Tillamook fire: My uncle had a place in Tillamook, OR that we visited in the late 1990s. In the area of the Tillamook fire; on August 24 – 20 hours – 240,000 acres (375 square miles) was burned. The fastest burn in recorded history! Debris reached ships 500 miles at sea. Gatlinburg, TN fire/ Burning of Paul’s fields

**Then where do you want to be for eternity?** Even in the midst (1) of the global virus; (2) of much civil unrest in our country; (3) of evil trying to take advantage of these situations; (4) God has high expectations for His children!

(**Verses 14-18**) What manner of persons ought we to be in holiness and godliness?

* Diligent – in peace, without spot, and blameless – (**1 Thessalonians 1:11-12**)! Are you diligent in your Bible studies, Are you diligent in your assembling, are you diligent in letting those around you know about the gospel of Jesus Christ?
* Looking forward to these things and appreciate God’s patience, as Paul also wrote (**Ro. 2:1-11**).
* Beware (on guard NASV) of being led away by the error of the wicked one (lawless people ESV)
* But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ!

No matter what the challenge – Jesus is the answer (**Philippians 2:14-16, Galatians 3:26-29**) – Racism, violence, anxiety, civil unrest, suicidal thoughts! We treat others like Jesus did. We do not respond in violence and we live in peace as best we can no matter what government is in charge. And we do not need to be anxious because we are members of His unshakable and everlasting kingdom. What can man do to us (**Romans 8:35-39**)?

**Are you in need of a place of peace from all the turmoil in the world?** The Lord’s Church is that place. We are trying to make the Oak Ridge church of Christ that and you need that goal for the Idlewild church of Christ! And He wants you to come in (**Revelations 22:17**)!