**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. In a recent lesson we talked about the scoffers Paul encountered 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 (**Gen. 1:1-8, 7:21-23, Ps. 33:6-9**)

The same earth was destroyed by that water; all that breathed air died (**Genesis 6:11-13, Psalm 104:1-9**)

* At ORNL – a friend who was an atheist became a believer when he hiked in the Grand Canyon and saw a boulder, larger than a house at the bottom of the canyon. He surmised that gradual erosion of the river could not have put the boulder there but a catastrophic worldwide flood could. Another geologist friend once told me that he estimated 75% of all geologists, including atheists, believed there was a worldwide flood a few thousand years ago.
* In 1889 – The Johnstown Flood – Small town in Pennsylvania. It rained 6-10 inches in 24 hours and the South Fork Dam, 14 miles upstream from Johnstown, failed. In 65 minutes, 2,208 people died. The rescue services included the first event where Clara Barton and the Red Cross responded. Another reminder of the power of God!

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!

(**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**). **Then where do you want to be for eternity?** Some folks claim, and I am not one of them, after judgment there will be a cleansed earth. Even if this earth was still present, with no Sun and no moon, it would no longer be inhabitable. **Again, where would you like to go on Judgment Day?**

* 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 – How? Jesus is the only way (**John 14:6**)! 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 who you are – Jesus is the answer (**Philippians 2:14-16, Galatians 3:26-29**) – He is even the answer to our civil unrest – treat all humans like Jesus did!

**Are you in need of an oasis; a refuge (National Wildlife Refuges were originally set up by Teddy Roosevelt to provide a place where animals could be protected from hunting); a place of peace from all the turmoil in the world?** The Lord’s Church is that oasis and refuge. We are trying to make the Oak Ridge church of Christ an oasis and a refuge. And He wants you to come in (**Revelations 22:17**)!