

East Cooper Baptist Church  
March 6, 2016

**Rescue or Punishment**  
**2 Peter 2:3-10**

*<sup>3</sup> And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.*

*<sup>4</sup> For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; <sup>5</sup> if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; <sup>6</sup> if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; <sup>7</sup> and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked <sup>8</sup> (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard); <sup>9</sup> then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, <sup>10</sup> and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones.*

**In 2:1-3, we were introduced to the false teachers who will:**

1. Come up from among the believers.
2. Secretly operate in destructive ways and travel along well-worn paths: sensuality and greed.
3. Many will follow their message of sensuality and blaspheme the Christian faith.

But Peter tells the young church in Asia Minor: “Their destruction is not asleep.” And then he gives them three historical examples: the fallen angels (Genesis 6), Noah and the flood, and Sodom and Gomorrah. These serve as examples of what is to happen.

**The church must guard against amnesia in regards to the eternal nature of life.**

“But watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a trap.”  
Luke 21:34

We can lose our wonder of the triune God and the glory of the cross and in so doing can shrink our souls and confine them to momentary, earthbound hopes and dreams. The cares of this world [when they overwhelm us] can lead to disappointment, anger, envious spirit, and disillusionment.

**The certain Day of Judgment.**

“Christ desires that we be firmly convinced that a day of judgment will come, both to deter everyone from sin and to comfort the godly more fully in their adversity. For this reason, he has determined to keep the day secret, to encourage people to shake off any fleshly security and always to be watchful, because they do not know the hour when the Lord will come.”  
The 1689 Confession of Faith, Chapter 32, Article 3

**There is a dual operation of rescuing or punishing. (vv. 9-10)**

**\*The rescue.**

“And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.”

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Thessalonians 1:10

“<sup>9</sup> And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup> so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. <sup>11</sup> May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, <sup>12</sup> giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. <sup>13</sup> He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

Colossians 1:9-14

**How are we to enjoy the reality of our rescue? (see Colossians 1:9-14)**

1. Foster the HOPE of heaven which leads to faith in love.
2. Be prayed for and pray for others.
3. Part of the prayer discipline is to pray specifically that people would be “filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.”
4. Make it your goal to be pleasing to God and to bear fruit to the glory of his name.
5. Be a person of thanksgiving.

**\*The punishment of the unrighteous.**

1. It is certain.
2. It is unending.
3. It should move us to deep compassion and acts of mercy and love.

“The only thing that has the power to defeat fear is fear. Only when the grander fear of God rules your heart will you be free of all the little fears in life that chip away at your heart. When you live in a reverential awe of the magnitude of God’s power and authority and are stunned by the fact that he exercises his power for his glory AND your good, then you can be free from all the anxieties that make you timid and rob you of joy.”

Paul Tripp, *Awe*, p. 72