

2 Peter 3:16

by John Gill

The sermon explores the complexities of interpreting Scripture, emphasizing the importance of spiritual maturity and diligent study.

Scripture: Romans 3:8, 1 Corinthians 15:44, 1 Thessalonians 4:15, 1 Timothy 4:1, Hebrews 9:28, 2 Peter 3:16

Topics: "The Second Coming of Christ", "Understanding Scripture"

Description

John Gill expounds on 2 Peter 3:16, emphasizing that the Apostle Paul wrote his epistles under divine wisdom, addressing themes such as the second coming of Christ and the challenges faced by believers in the last days. He warns against the unlearned and unstable individuals who distort Scripture, leading to their own destruction, while encouraging diligent study and prayerful meditation on the Word. Gill reassures that while some parts of Paul's writings may be difficult to understand, they are not beyond the reach of those who seek God's guidance. He highlights the importance of being rooted in Christ to avoid misinterpretation and to grasp the truth of the Scriptures.

Transcript

Ver. 16. As also in all [his] epistles,.... From whence it appears, that the Apostle Paul had, by this time, wrote several of his epistles, if not all of them; and they were all written according to the same wisdom, and under the influence of the same spirit, as his epistle to the Hebrews:

speaking in them of those things; of the same things, Peter had been speaking of, of the coming of Christ, as that he should appear a second time to them that look for him, and would come as a thief in the night, and that the fashion, scheme, and form of this world should pass away, and that saints should look and wait for his coming, and love it: something of this kind is said in all his epistles; see Heb 9:28; and also of mockers, scoffers, seducers, and wicked men that would arise in the last days; see 1Ti 4:1,

in which are some things hard to be understood. The phrase, "in which", refers either to the epistles, or the things spoken in them. The Alexandrian manuscript, and three of Robert Stephens's copies, read en oiv, "in which" epistles, but the generality of copies read

en oiv, "in", or "among which things", spoken of in them, concerning the subject here treated of, the coming of Christ; as the time of Christ's coming, which is sometimes represented by the apostle, as if it would be while he was living; and the manner of his coming in person with all his saints, and his mighty angels, with a shout, the voice of the archangel, and trump of God, things not easily understood; and the

destruction of antichrist at his coming, which will be with the breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming; as also the resurrection of the dead, of the saints that will rise first, and that with spiritual bodies; and likewise the change of the living saints, and the rapture both of living and raised saints together, in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and the standing of them before the judgment seat of Christ, and the account that everyone must give to him, 1Th 4:15

1Co 15:44;

which they that are unlearned; untaught of God, who have never learned of the Father, nor have learned Christ, nor have that anointing which teacheth all things; who, though they may have been in the schools of men, were never in the school of Christ; and though they have been ever learning, yet will never come to the knowledge of the truth; for men may have a large share of human literature, and yet be unlearned men in the sense of the apostle; and very often it is, that such wrest and pervert the Scriptures to the ruin of themselves, and others:

and unstable; unsettled in their principles, who are like children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine; the root of the matter is not in them; nor are they rooted and built up in Christ, and so are not established in the faith; they are not upon the foundation Christ, nor do they build upon, and abide by the sure word of God, or form their notions according to it, but according to their own carnal reasonings, and fleshly lusts; and so

wrest the word of God, distort it from its true sense and meaning, and make it speak that which it never designed; dealing with it as innocent persons are sometimes used, put upon a rack, and tortured, and so forced to speak what is contrary to their knowledge and consciences; and so were the words of the Apostle Paul wrested by ill designing men, as about the doctrines of grace and works, so concerning the coming of Christ; see Ro 3:8;

as [they do] also the other Scriptures; the writings of Moses, and the prophets of the Old Testament, the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the other epistles of the apostles of the New Testament: and which is eventually

unto their own destruction; for by so doing they either add unto, or detract from the Scriptures, and so bring the curse of God upon them; and they give into doctrines of devils, and into heresies, which are damnable, and bring upon themselves swift destruction, which lingers not, and slumbers not. Now from hence it does not follow, that the Scriptures are not to be read by the common people; for not all the parts of Scripture, and all things in it, are hard to be understood, there are many things very plain and easy, even everything respecting eternal salvation; there is milk for babes, as well as meat for strong men: besides, not the Scriptures in general, but Paul's epistles only, are here spoken of, and not all of them, or anyone whole epistle among them, only some things in them, and these not impossible, only difficult to be understood; and which is no reason why they should be laid aside, but rather why they should be read with greater application and diligence, and be followed with fervent prayer, and frequent meditation; and though unlearned and unstable men may wrest them to their perdition, those that are taught of God, though otherwise illiterate, may read them to great profit and advantage.

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