

Introduction

A. From big to little: how does our passage today fit into the whole of II Peter

1. The Big Picture: Premise of II Peter
 - a. Dangers will not only come from outside the church but also inside the church. Therefore we should guard against these by knowing the true gospel. The true gospel is marked by godliness and is found in Scripture. A gospel that denies godliness or disregards the promises of God or twists Scripture must be rejected. God will judge such things and will protect His church. Since the judgment of God is imminent, we must be diligent now to make our calling and election sure by pursuing righteousness and godliness.
2. II Peter 1: The gospel is always marked by godliness
3. II Peter 2: False teachers will deny godliness by perverting the concept of freedom and promoting licentiousness
4. II Peter 3:1-13 - Scoffers will deny godliness by disbelieving God's words and following their own passions instead
 - a. II Peter 3:1-7 - Peter defines what scoffers are and why they are wrong
 - b. II Peter 3:8-13 - Peter encourages the believer in the promises of God and commands them to continue in the faith

B. Read II Peter 3:1-7

This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation." For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly

C. Read Jude 17-19

But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions." It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit.

D. Proposition and outline

1. Proposition: Scoffers are another danger that will come against the church and we must be aware of them, understand how wrong they are, and be ready to rebut them in order to guard our faith.
2. Outline:
 - a. We have been told what scoffers are
 - b. We have been warned that scoffers will come
 - c. We can see modern day examples of scoffers
 - d. We have been told how to rebut scoffers
 - e. God's purposes stand despite scoffers

I. We have been told what scoffers are

II Peter 1:3-6 - *knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation." For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished.*

A. Definition: one who mocks or scorns, that is one who mocks (makes fun of and disregards) God and scorns (mockingly disbelieves) His word

1. They mockingly disbelieve God's promises
 - a. II Peter 3:4 - *They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation."*
2. They mockingly disbelieve God's creation
 - a. II Peter 3:5-6 - *For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God,*
3. They mockingly disbelieve God's judgment
 - a. II Peter 3:5-6 - *For they deliberately overlook this fact...that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished.*
 - b. Isaiah 28:14-15 - *Therefore hear the word of the LORD, you scoffers, who rule this people in Jerusalem! Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death, and with Sheol we have an agreement, when the overwhelming whip passes through it will not come to us, for we have made lies our refuge, and in falsehood we have taken shelter"*
4. They love mocking and hate knowledge, understanding and correction - there is no arguing with a scoffer
 - a. II Peter 3:5 - *For they deliberately overlook this fact...*
 - b. Proverbs 1:22 - *"How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple? How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing and fools hate knowledge?"*
 - c. Proverbs 9:7-8 - *Whoever corrects a scoffer gets himself abuse, and he who reproves a wicked man incurs injury. Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you; reprove a wise man, and he will love you.*
 - d. Proverbs 13:1 - *A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.*
 - e. Proverbs 14:6 - *A scoffer seeks wisdom in vain, but knowledge is easy for a man of understanding.*
 - f. Proverbs 15:12 - *A scoffer does not like to be reproved; he will not go to the wise.*
 - g. Proverbs 21:24 - *"Scoffer" is the name of the arrogant, haughty man who acts with arrogant pride.*
5. In summary, they mockingly disbelieve God
 - a. Psalm 10:4, 11, 13 - *In the pride of his face the wicked does not seek him; all his thoughts are, "There is no God."... He says in his heart, "God has forgotten, he has hidden his face, he will never see it."... Why does the wicked renounce God and say in his heart, "You will not call to account"?*
 - b. Psalm 14:1 - *The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds, there is none who does good.*
 - c. Romans 1:18-20 - *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.*

B. Result: they corrupt the way of salvation

1. They are given to sin
 - a. II Peter 3:3 - *knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires.*
 - b. Jude 18 - *They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions."*
2. They lack the Spirit of God and thus are none of His
 - a. Jude 19 - *It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit.*
3. They cause strife and divisions
 - a. Proverbs 22:10 - *Drive out a scoffer, and strife will go out, and quarreling and abuse will cease.*
 - b. Jude 19 - *It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit.*
4. Therefore, they are hateful to God and righteous men
 - a. Proverbs 24:9 - *The devising of folly is sin, and the scoffer is an abomination to mankind.*

C. Comparison to the false prophets of chapter 2

1. They are different in their means and message
 - a. The means and message of a false prophet is to misrepresent the grace of God
 - b. The means and message of a scoffer is to disbelieve the word of God
2. They are similar in their results
 - a. They both lead to a sinful lifestyle that destroys the witness of the church and leads people away from the faith
3. They are not necessarily exclusive categories
 - a. False prophets are often scoffers and scoffers are often false prophets
 - b. But there are two distinct thoughts here and we must guard against both

II. We have been warned that scoffers will come

II Peter 3:1-3 - *This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing,*

A. The last days will be full of scoffers

II Peter 3:3 - *knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing,*

1. Peter tells us that during the last days there will arise many scoffers, which is a common theme of Scripture
 - a. I Timothy 4:1 - *Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons,*
 - b. II Timothy 3:1 - *But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty.*
 - c. Acts 20:28-31 - *Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish everyone with tears.*
2. To understand what Peter is saying, we need to define two words - scoffer and last times
 - a. We just defined scoffer above - someone who mocks God and disbelieves His Word
 - b. In the New Testament, the last days start with the first coming of Christ and extend until His second coming
 - i. I Peter 1:20 - *He [Christ] was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.*
 - ii. I Peter 4:7 - *The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.*
 - iii. Acts 2:14-17 - *But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them: "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: "And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;*
 - iv. Hebrews 1:2 - *but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.*
 - v. I John 2:18 - *Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour.*
 - c. So, Peter is telling us that throughout the time of the church there will be many scoffers
 - i. In other words, we today ought to expect scoffers to be surrounding the church
 - ii. We ought to see people disregard parts of Scripture that they don't like because they think it must be another way

B. So we must remember the prophetic and apostolic word

II Peter 3:1-2 - *This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles,*

1. Peter has been continually reminding them of the things they already know
 - a. The point of Peter's letters is to call them to remember things they already know
 - i. II Peter 1:12-14 - *Therefore I intend always to remind you of these qualities, though you know them and are established in the truth that you have. I think it right, as long as I am in this body, to stir you up by way of reminder, since I know that the putting off of my body will be soon, as our Lord Jesus Christ made clear to me.*
 - b. Particularly, Peter wants them to remember the warnings that the Apostles made about scoffers
 - c. Peter's reminder here serves a threefold purpose
 - i. First, it warns us to guard ourselves against scoffers - they are sure to come
 - ii. Second, it guards us against scoffers because we aren't surprised and disheartened when they come - we know they are going to come
 - iii. Third, it points us back to what will build our guard against scoffers - if we immerse ourselves well in the Word of God we will not be drawn away by scoffers
2. Where do we see these warnings against scoffers in the prophetic and apostolic writings?
 - a. In the prophetic writings (28 references)
 - i. Deuteronomy 32:15 - *"But Jeshurun grew fat, and kicked; you grew fat, stout, and sleek; then he forsook God who made him and scoffed at the Rock of his salvation.*
 - ii. II Chronicles 36:16 - *The LORD, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling place. But they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words and scoffing at his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD rose against his people, until there was no remedy.*
 - iii. All the references to scoffers in the Psalms and Proverbs
 - b. In the apostolic writings (17 references)
 - i. Scoffing and mocking was predicted by Christ about His death
 - i) Luke 18:31-34 - *And taking the twelve, he said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. And after flogging him, they will kill him, and on the third day he will rise." But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.*
 - ii) Luke 23:35-39 - *And the people stood by, watching, but the rulers scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!" The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews." One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!"*
 - ii. Paul warned his hearers not to scoff at his message
 - i) Acts 13:38-43 (quoting Habakkuk 1:5) - *Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses. Beware, therefore, lest what is said in the Prophets should come about: "'Look, you scoffers, be astounded and perish; for I am doing a work in your days, a work that you will not believe, even if one tells it to you.'" As they went out, the people begged that these things might be told them the next Sabbath. And after the meeting of the synagogue broke up, many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who, as they spoke with them, urged them to continue in the grace of God.*
 - iii. Jude, like Peter, warned that scoffers would continue
 - i) Jude 1:17-18 - *But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions."*

III. We can see modern day examples of scoffers

A. Theistic evolutionists

1. What do they scoff at?
 - a. For our discussion this morning I'm defining a theistic evolutionist as someone who claims to be a Christian and believe the Bible but does not believe the creation account in Genesis and instead believes something like evolution over millions of years brought us to where we are now. They may believe in different amounts of interaction during this time period by God to start or direct evolution, but they believe evolution was the means by which God created the world.
 - b. So, the theistic evolutionist scoffs at several things in Scripture
 - i. They scoff at the creation account of Genesis 1-2 and every other place that references God creating the heavens and earth by His Word
 - ii. They usually scoff at the flood account of Genesis 6-9 and instead attribute the geological remnants we see as happening over extremely long time periods
 - iii. They scoff at the relationship between creation and salvation in places like Romans 5 where Christ is a new Adam - they have to explain these passages away in order to fit their world view
2. Why are they wrong?
 - a. First, the Scriptures clearly describe something other than theistic evolution
 - i. All you have to do is read Genesis 1-2 to see something clearly against theistic evolution described
 - a- Even if you think there is some complication to the Genesis account there are several clear principles that are laid out that are directly against theistic evolution
 - b- Genesis clearly tells us that there was no death before sin and this is extremely important to the rest of the Bible
 - c- Genesis clearly tells us that God directly and specially created Adam
 - d- Genesis clearly tells us that God created *ex nihilo* by the power of His word
 - ii. There are many other places in Scripture we can see this doctrine confirmed
 - a- Exodus 20:11, Exodus 31:17, Mark 10:6 - all demonstrate belief in creation
 - b- Matthew 24:38-39, II Peter 2:5 - demonstrate belief in the flood
 - b. Second, scientifically they are on shaky ground
 - i. I'm not going to delve into science this morning since that isn't really the point
 - ii. But, for all of their boasting, their science lacks the ability to substantiate their claims
 - iii. There are good scientific reasons not to reject Genesis, the creation and the flood
3. Why are they dangerous?
 - a. As I hinted at above, once you jettison Genesis you start to unravel all of the Bible
 - i. The creation account and the rest of the Bible stand or fall as a whole
 - b. If the Genesis account is myth, by what authority do you decide if other portions of the Bible are true or myth
 - i. Especially the resurrection - it is no less 'impossible' than creation and yet we would all agree that it is absolutely necessary to our faith
 - c. If the Genesis account is myth, how does Christ save us through federal headship
 - i. Romans 5:18-19 - *Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.*
 - d. If the Genesis account is myth, what does it mean for God to be recreating a people?
 - e. If the Genesis account is myth, why should we keep believing any of the Bible?
 - f. Evolutionism is extremely dangerous
 - i. I know that most if not all of you here this morning are not especially tempted to follow the evolutionists right now and I'd like to believe that no one in this congregation would ever pursue that.
 - ii. But, I've seen too many young Christians who delve into worldly study of evolution and slowly start to erode their faith - even young Christians who come from very conservative families, even homeschoolers
 - iii. So, be on guard against such scoffers. We may not now see God creating or the flood but this doesn't make them not true. Following after the evolutionists will lead to disaster.

B. Unitarian universalists

1. What do they scoff at?
 - a. For those of you not as familiar with Unitarian Universalists, they are a 'denomination' that broke off near the beginning of the United States of America that has slowly developed the doctrine that God is not going to judge anyone. Thus their name - the Unitarian Universalists.
 - b. So, the Unitarian Universalists scoff at God's judgment. They don't believe that God will demonstrate His holiness and justice by executing His wrath on all who are sinful and not covered by the sacrifice of Christ.
2. Why are they wrong?
 - a. This is the excessively clear teaching of Scripture - God will judge the world.
 - b. Ephesians 5:5-7 - *For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be partners with them.*
 - c. Romans 1:18 - *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.*
 - d. Colossians 3:5-6 - *Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming.*
 - e. I Peter 4:3-5 - *For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you; but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.*
3. Why are they dangerous?
 - a. As can clearly be seen in the Unitarian Universalists church, those who lose the concept of the wrath of God quickly lose any real need for salvation.
 - b. Those who forget God's judgment disregard God's requirement of holiness in His people.
 - c. Those who disbelieve God's judgment will quickly lead you away from all of Scripture. Just like creation and the flood, perhaps even more so, the whole of Scripture stands and falls based on God's wrath being executed against sinners.
 - d. I've singled out the Unitarian Universalists because they are a clear example of this, but there are many others who scoff in the same way to various degrees. We must always be on guard against those who would call us to disregard God's judgment as proclaimed in Scripture.

C. Rob Bell, Paul Young and some forms of emergent Christianity

1. What do they scoff at?
 - a. Rob Bell and Paul Young are some of the forefront names in the emergent church movement. The movement is not extremely unified so defining their beliefs is often hard, but it often involves a large-scale reevaluation of what Scripture teaches.
 - b. Although Rob Bell's theology has always been well outside orthodox Christianity, he has been extremely well received in many evangelic circles. Recently, though, he has come out with a book called 'Love Wins' in which he denies that God could send anyone to hell.
 - c. Paul Young is the writer of the recently popular book, 'The Shack' which is another wild reinterpretation of the message of the Bible that focuses on God not being a God of judgment.
 - d. So, as representatives of the emergent church movement, I fear that a large part of that movement scoffs again at God's judgment, similar to the Unitarian Universalists.

D. These are some clear cut cases and we can clearly see them around us, but sometimes scoffing around us can be a little more cloudy

1. There is a temptation in all of us to disregard and disbelieve things in Scripture that we don't like - to scoff at those specific things
2. So, often one who is sitting in the seat of a scoffer will disregard little things about Scripture that he or she doesn't like
3. So, we need to be on guard. We need to guard ourselves against those who are full blown scoffers like I described above. We need to guard ourselves against others who are a little more grey but would still have us disregard portions of Scripture. We need to be on guard against our own temptations to disregard Scripture.

IV. We have been told how to rebut scoffers

II Peter 3:5-6 - *For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished.*

A. Scoffers disbelieve God's word because they don't currently see God working, so rebutting the scoffer is as easy as pointing to clear things that God has done

1. So, to rebut the scoffer that believes that God did not create the world, we simply point to the clear truths of Scripture that show He did
2. To rebut the scoffer that believes that God will not judge, we again simply point to the clear truths of Scripture that show He has and will
3. In other words, when the scoffer scoffs at us, we don't need to be ashamed of our beliefs, instead we ought to simply remind ourselves why we believe - we simply go back to Scripture
4. The scoffers of Peter's day may or may not have been directly attacking the account of the flood or creation - it appears that they were attacking the promise of Christ to return - but Peter rebuts them by pointing back to things that God had done. God had acted powerfully in the past, there is every reason to think He will continue to act powerfully in the future.

B. God created the world by His word

II Peter 3:5 - *or they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God,*

1. The first thing Peter points to is the creation of the world by God's power
 - a. This is a very powerful refutation of the scoffer because it undermines all of their arguments
 - b. Their arguments rest on the fact that God is not powerful to fulfill His promise, to keep His word
 - c. Their arguments rest on the fact that they do not see God acting now and do not see how He could act in the future
 - d. But creation destroys these suppositions - if God created the world then He is obviously powerful enough to keep His promises and if God created the world He obviously can act in the future
 - e. Even more, if God created the world then all men see the evidence of His power - although the scoffer claims not to see God working he is lying to himself and everyone else, the evidence is clear
 - i. Romans 1:19-20 - *For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.*
 - ii. Psalm 19:1-6 - *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tent for the sun, which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy. Its rising is from the end of the heavens, and its circuit to the end of them, and there is nothing hidden from its heat.*
2. So, holding up the creation of the world powerfully refutes the scoffers on every point they scoff at
 - 1) In the same way that the whole Bible falls with the creation account when we say we can't allow the evolutionists to disregard the story of creation, the whole Bible stands with the account of creation - if it is true then the rest of the Bible is true as well
 - 2) We should not be ashamed of the creation account, we should uphold it as our guard and our argument against the scoffer - our God created the world, He will bring about everything He has promised to do

C. God judged the world in the flood

II Peter 3:6 - *and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished.*

1. The flood is an excellent rebuttal of the scoffers for several reasons
 - a. There is a parallel in the attitude of the people
 - a) Even though, through the preaching of Noah, the people clearly knew what God promised, they disbelieved Noah and continued in their wickedness - the people of Noah's day scoffed at Noah just as they scoff today
 - b) II Peter 2:5 - *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* (Noah preached to the people of his day)
 - c) I Peter 3:18-20 - *but made alive in the spirit, in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, because they formerly did not obey, when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared,* (Noah preached but the people did not obey)
 - d) Matthew 24:38-39 - *For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away,* (the people continued in their wickedness and disbelief until the flood swept over them)
 - b. There is a parallel in the delay of action
 - a) The people were confident in their assertion that God would not flood the world because they had never seen it and it didn't happen right after Noah proclaimed it
 - b) I Peter 3:18-20 - *when God's patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared,*
 - c) Genesis 6:3 - *Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years."*
 - c. There is a parallel in the response of God
 - a) Matthew 24:39 - *and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away,*
 - b) II Peter 2:5 - *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*
2. So, when people scoff we can remind ourselves of two things
 - a. First, when people scoff at the flood we can simply remind ourselves that these things actually happened, we can read the account in the Bible and we can see the aftermath all around us
 - a) I've always been fond of Ken Ham's little saying: "Billions of dead things buried in rock layers laid down by water all over the earth."
 - b. Second, whenever people scoff at God's word, even if it is not about the flood, we can remind ourselves that people have scoffed at God before and God's plan still happened

V. God's purposes stand despite scoffers

II Peter 3:7 - *But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.*

A. Even if they don't believe God's promises, God will still judge the world

1. Like I mentioned a minute ago, the main thing the scoffers were scoffing at in Peter's day seems to be the return of Christ
 - a. So Peter proclaims that Christ is going to return, but not in the way the scoffers were expecting
 - b. The world that now exists is being stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment
 - c. Christ will return and when He does He will judge the scoffer
2. Proverbs 9:12 - *If you are wise, you are wise for yourself; if you scoff, you alone will bear it.*
3. Proverbs 19:29 - *Condemnation is ready for scoffers, and beating for the backs of fools.*
4. Isaiah 28:22 - *Now therefore do not scoff, lest your bonds be made strong; for I have heard a decree of destruction from the Lord GOD of hosts against the whole land.*
5. Isaiah 29:10 - *For the ruthless shall come to nothing and the scoffer cease, and all who watch to do evil shall be cut off,*

B. The scoffer may wholeheartedly believe that he is right, but he can't change the truth

1. God's promises will still all come to pass regardless of what the scoffer says
2. The only thing the scoffer will earn for himself is a place in the judgment of God
3. Isaiah 28:14-22 -

14 *Therefore hear the word of the LORD, you scoffers,
who rule this people in Jerusalem!*

15 *Because you have said, "We have made a covenant with death,
and with Sheol we have an agreement,
when the overwhelming whip passes through
it will not come to us,
for we have made lies our refuge,
and in falsehood we have taken shelter";*

16 *therefore thus says the Lord GOD,
"Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion,
a stone, a tested stone,
a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation:
'Whoever believes will not be in haste.'*

17 *And I will make justice the line,
and righteousness the plumb line;
and hail will sweep away the refuge of lies,
and waters will overwhelm the shelter."*

18 *Then your covenant with death will be annulled,
and your agreement with Sheol will not stand;
when the overwhelming scourge passes through,
you will be beaten down by it.*

19 *As often as it passes through it will take you;
for morning by morning it will pass through,
by day and by night;
and it will be sheer terror to understand the message.*

20 *For the bed is too short to stretch oneself on,
and the covering too narrow to wrap oneself in.*

21 *For the LORD will rise up as on Mount Perazim;
as in the Valley of Gibeon he will be roused;
to do his deed---strange is his deed!
and to work his work---alien is his work!*

22 *Now therefore do not scoff,
lest your bonds be made strong;
for I have heard a decree of destruction
from the Lord GOD of hosts against the whole land.*

Conclusions

A. We have been told what scoffers are

1. Scoffers are those who mock (make fun of) God and disbelieve His word
2. They reject parts of God's message because their human sensibilities and sense tell them something else must be true
3. They laugh, visibly or invisibly, at those who would dare to believe God's words are true
4. And they invariably lead to sensuality and licentiousness and rejection of God's message as they continue in unbelief

B. We have been warned that scoffers will come

1. We should expect to see scoffers around us - it has been promised to us throughout the Old and New Testaments
2. We should therefore be on guard so that we are not carried away with the error of the scoffers

C. We can see modern day examples of scoffers

1. We considered three examples of modern day scoffers - the evolutionists, the universalists, and the emergents
2. But these three examples are only examples and clear ones at that. We ought to be on guard against everyone who would call us to disbelieve God's words.

D. We have been told how to rebut scoffers

1. In response to the scoffers we can hold up the clear facts from Scripture that demonstrate they are wrong
2. We don't need to be ashamed of our belief in God's words - they are faithful and true and they guard us against the scoffer and proclaim their condemnation

E. God's purposes stand despite scoffers

1. When we see the scoffer we can take hope that the scoffer can never approach God
2. The scoffer may laugh but God will win
3. Psalm 2:4-6 -
 - 4 *He who sits in the heavens laughs;
the Lord holds them in derision.*
 - 5 *Then he will speak to them in his wrath,
and terrify them in his fury, saying,*
 - 6 *"As for me, I have set my King
on Zion, my holy hill."*

F. So, our application this morning is simple: Don't be a scoffer!

1. We need to guard ourselves against scoffers
2. Their message often sounds plausible because they rely on human senses and sensibilities
3. But we must remember that the world is not subject to our senses and sensibilities - it is subject to God Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth.
4. So, learn why the scoffer is wrong and guard yourselves against them so that you can say with the psalmist in Psalm 1 -

*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers;
but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.
He is like a tree planted by streams of water
that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither.
In all that he does, he prospers.*

*The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;
for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.*