

Title: **Dead Men Hanging (Part 3)**

Passage: **Jude 8a**

Theme: **The Dreadful Estate of False Teachers as a Warning to the Church**

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{Read Passage}

August 14, 2011 (just a little over 2 yrs ago) marked t/75th anniv. of t/last public execution in t/US.

T/year = 1936. Place = OWENSBORO, KY.

About 20k ppl. (men/w./child.) gathered along t/banks of t/OH rivr to watch Rainey Bethea, a black man in his 20s, die. Jury delib. less than 5 min. B4 convic. Bethea of raping a wealthy 70 yr. old widow, Elza Edwards, who was found strangled in her bed.

Under t/law at t/time, t/max. penalty for rape was hanging. Had Bethea been convicted of t/woman's murder (a charge t/prosecutors never pursued) t/sentence would have been a private exec. in t/state penitentiary's electric chair.

As it was, t/hanging drew national media coverage fueled by t/twist of a black man being executed under t/authority of a sheriff who happened to be a white woman.

Headlines from around the country screamed news. From Chicago — "Death Makes a Holiday: 20,000 Revel Over Hanging." From Evansville, Ind. — "Ghostly Carnival Precedes Hanging." From Louisville — "'Did You Ever See a Hanging?' 'I Did,' Everyone in this Kentucky Throng can now Boast."

Newspapers described vendors selling hot dogs, popcorn and drinks.

10 days after t/hanging, Time Mag. wrote of t/event ==>

"Every bar was packed to the doors. Down the main street tipsy merrymakers rollicked all night. 'Hanging parties' were held in many a home,"

Pictures taken the morning of the hanging show a large crowd — men and women, some holding children — standing in downtown Owensboro, some on the rooftops of brick buildings. They watched as the execution team put a black hood over Bethea's head. Then they saw Bethea fall through the trap door. Doctors pronounced him dead about 10 minutes later.

Remember t/woman sheriff? Florence Thompson, who had succeeded her husband Everett as sheriff upon his death in 1935, s received death threats & marriage proposals afterward. She died in 1961.

Now, 75 yrs. later, Bethea's hanging is just a footnote in US penal history. He was buried in a pauper's grave--no one today knows where. The gallows used are long gone. T/site of t/execution is under redevelopment.

[i] Dead men hanging

In some cases a fn. of history long forgotten by most.

As we've used t/picture – metaphorically – in t/BOJ, DMH isn't something to be forgotten. It's not a fn. of history, it's a reminder for eternity.

[ii] Bible is filled with such reminders

Now I desire to remind you . . .

Reminder them of what?

That God is a fearsomely holy judge who will not be mocked.

Even though sinful men who pervert His Word & misrepresent His nature appear to have escaped His notice, they haven't.

God is long-suffering and patient. He works on His timetable, not man's. At times it may appear w/i t/tiny space of time we call history that t/wicked & godless have escaped judgment but in reality they are in t/midst of it.

[iii] It's another one of those time-related tensions in theology

I've called it "the already and the not yet"

It's like t/Kingdom of God as it's described in t/NT. It's here in preview form, but it's not yet in fulness.

What about t/biblical phrase "the last days?" TLDs began at t/cross. They were already. But here we are 2k years later. So t/last days are "not yet."

This is an issue because we're dealing with 2 radically different dimensions: 1) Time; 2) Eternity.

God sees everything in an eternal "now" yet he works in terms of time: past, present, future. That's t/already (eternal) as it relates to t/not yet (time).

It's like our salvation. We who are t/elect of God in X are saved. But, as Peter reminds us, we are kept by God for a salv. ready to be revealed at t/last time.

In that sense, we are saved (past position), we are being saved (our present practice), we will be saved (future glorification).

Already, and not yet.

Relevant as it relates to our perseverance. We must persevere in order to be saved. If we're saved we will persevere.

Romans 8:29–30 **29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; 30 and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.**

Did you realize that in those 2 vv. you got a glimpse of eternity?

Verse 29 ==>

Foreknew (preordained by reason of intimate knowledge)

Predestined (determined in advance)

to be conformed to t/image of JC.

That's all in eternity past.

Present reality . . .

Verse 30 ==>

Called (conviction of t/Holy Spirit / drawing)

Justified (comes immed. upon faith)

Glorified (future!) - yet here descr. in t/past tense.

False teachers who are alive and (seemingly) well in "not yet" are dead men hanging in "the already"

Now I desire to remind you . . .

Reminder them of what? That God is a fearsomely holy judge who will not be mocked.

Goes back to t/persons of v. 4. (those whom J. writes about) ==>

For certain men have slipped in, those whose judgment was written about long ago, ungodly [men] who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

[v] Verse 4 is a preview of what follows in verses 5-16

These certain men / heretical teachers of a false religion ==>

1. Have infiltrated the church (w/i you)
2. Cannot escape judgment (j. was written about long ago)
3. Are rebels against grace (cheapen grace)
4. Deny the Lord with their lives (end of t/v.)

Verses 5-16 expand upon those 4 ideas ==>

I. Certain Men who Face a Certain Judgment (vv. 5-10)

II. Certain Men who are Rebels Against Grace (v. 11)

III. Certain Men who Have Infiltrated the Church (vv. 12-13)

IV. Certain Men who Deny the Lord with their Lives (vv. 14-16)

Don't think that this is only an historical exercise. Temp. to think, "This is something that happened 2k yrs. ago. These "certain men" are all long gone, dead & buried" – keep in mind that history repeats itself. Reason why – human nature doesn't change.

I'm a bit of a Trekie – I enjoy Star Trek (1st 2 incarnations). 1 thing I find amusing is t/ever-apparent doctrine of “evolutionary sanctification” - idea that time & evolution cure all t/evils of mankind. It's fanciful to think that given enough time & education mankind is going to evolve into ever-philanthropic beings who have learned to live peacefully w/one another. Scientific “kumbaya”.

Jer. 17:9 will be true until t/end of t/age. (hum. hrt. is dec. & wick.)

2 Timothy 3 is as relevant for 4 us as it was in t/1st c. ==>

[men are still] lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God;

As it relates to t/the CH – even our CH here on this little postage stamp of dirt in a foreign land known as NYS, Paul's words in 2 Timothy 4 written so long ago then, are our charge today ==>

2 preach the word . . .reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; 4 and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.

In his book, The Truth War, John MacArthur talks about how t/truth of t/Gospel has been under attack for as long as t/CH has existed on earth.

It goes back to t/fall of Satan and t/subseq. fall of man into sin.

T/O history t/enemy has worked much t/same way.

Quoting ==>

Ever since that day in the garden when the serpent tempted Eve, he has relentlessly attacked the truth with lies, using the same strategies over and over to sow doubt and disbelief in the human mind. . . .

The form of his evil dialectic rarely changes. He questions the truth God has revealed ("Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'" [Genesis 3:1]). Then he contradicts what God has said ("You will not surely die" [v. 4]). Finally, he concocts an alternative version of "truth" ("God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" [v. 5]). The devil's alternative credo often has a few carefully chosen elements of truth in the mix—but always diluted and thoroughly blended with falsehoods, contradictions, misrepresentations, distortions, and every other imaginable perversion of reality. Add it all up and the bottom line is a big lie.

Furthermore, in the promotion of his dishonesty, Satan employs every agent he can dupe into being a shill for him—demons, unbelievers, and (most effectively) people who are in some way actually associated with the truth, or (even worse) who merely pretend to be agents of the truth and angels of light. [*The Truth War*, 20]

MacArthur goes on to talk about t/ministry of Paul in Ephesus, how he gathered t/elders of that church together, men not unlike Kevin, Chip & myself, to warn them of the “savage wolves who will come in among you, not sparing t/flock.” – then how that was fulf. in 1st c. hist.

Then under t/heading ==>

WHY THE EVANGELICAL MOVEMENT IS IN TROUBLE TODAY

Apostasy poses real and present dangers today as always. Actually, the threat may be more imminent and more dangerous than ever, because most Christians nowadays simply don't care about the prevalence of false doctrine, nor do they take seriously their duty to fight against apostasy. Instead, they want a friendly atmosphere of open acceptance

for everyone, tolerance of opposing ideas, and charitable dialogue with the apostates.

Evangelicalism as a movement has historically stood against handling important Bible doctrine in such an indifferent way—as if truth itself were pliable. Evangelicals' primary distinctive used to be their commitment to the purity of the gospel. That commitment is reflected in the word evangelical itself (which is derived from the Greek word for "gospel"). William Tyndale was one of the first to use the expression, speaking of "evangelical truth" as a synonym for the gospel. And the evangelical movement has always treated the gospel as the core and foundation of all truth.

Since the Protestant Reformation, the term has historically been used to signify a particular strain of conservative Protestantism in which a handful of key gospel doctrines are regarded as absolutely essential to authentic Christianity. These nonnegotiable evangelical distinctives include the doctrine of justification by faith, the principle of substitutionary atonement, and the absolute authority and perfect sufficiency of Scripture. (Of course, necessarily implied and included in that short list are a number of other vital doctrines, including Christ's deity, His virgin birth, and His bodily resurrection.)

Evangelicalism has furthermore always expressly denied that any good works or sacraments have any merit before God or any instrumental efficacy for justification. So the stress in historic evangelicalism is properly placed on the primacy of faith over works. Evangelicals have always resisted the pressure to elevate good works over sound doctrine, insisting that truly good works are the fruit of faith, never a valid substitute for it.

But the evangelical movement isn't really very evangelical anymore. The typical evangelical leader today is far more likely to express indignation at someone who calls for doctrinal clarity and accuracy than to firmly oppose another self-styled evangelical who is actively attacking some vital biblical truth.

Meanwhile, much of the evangelical movement has been acting for a long time as if our main duty is just to keep in step with the fads of worldly culture in order to gain the approval of each succeeding generation. That strategy will never fail to find enthusiastic support among those who are immature, weak, ignorant, or cowardly, but it can never be truly effective. Without the truth, no spiritual transformation is possible (1 Peter 1:22-25; John 17:17). [*The Truth War*, 46-48]

We, t/elect bride of X, have a promise. JC, t/Living Head of t/CH said, "I will build my church & t/gates of hell will not prevail upon it." That's t/already.

But t/not yet is in Jude v. 3 ==>
contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

In fact, if you go to t/end of t/book, we have another promise as it relates to we who believe ==>
[He] is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy.

That's t/hope of eternity. Sure hope! But we who live on this side of eternity have a job to do. It's a joyful duty that every true Xn & evry tru CH has had. We stand on t/shoulders of great men & women, some

well known but most who have ministered in obscurity. Men & women who were great only because their lives were hidden w/i a great God and Savior, JC.

We must not lose heart in t/fight. In America it's raging as hard as it's ever had. Firestorm out there against t/truth. Sad thing is, that firestorm not only rages out there, in t/world, it also rages w/i many elements of t/CH itself.

Dead Men Hanging isn't a pretty site. But it is a reminder. Specif. as it relates to Jude, a rem. of (1st point thru v. 10) ==>

I. Certain Men who Face a Certain Judgment (vv. 5-10)

1. Reminder #1: Israel After Exodus (v. 5)

Now I wish to remind you, although you know all things, that the Lord having once saved a people out of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.

2. Reminder #2: Immoral Angels (v. 6)

And the angels who did not keep their own domain, but deserted their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day.

3. Reminder #3: Immolated Cities (7)

Just as Sodom and Gomorrah, and those cities around them, in like manner as these, indulged in sexual immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

I. Certain Men who Face a Certain Judgment (vv. 5-10)

A. Three Reminders from History (vv. 5-7)

1. *Reminder #1: Israel After Exodus (v. 5)*

2. *Reminder #2: Immoral Angels (v. 6)*

3. *Reminder #3: Immolated Cities (7)*

B. Application: History Repeats Itself (vv. 8-10)

1. *Like Immolated Cities (v. 7): The False Teachers are Sensually Depraved (v. 8a)*

2. *Like Israel (v. 5) – The False Teachers Reject Authority (v. 8b)*

3. *Like Immoral Angels (v. 6) – The False Teachers are Mockers (v. 8c-10)*

Ea. 1 of the point in vv. 8-10 relate back to t/3 examples of vv. 5-7.

B. Application: History Repeats Itself (vv. 8-10)

1. *Like Immolated Cities (v. 7): The False Teachers are Sensually Depraved (v. 8a)*

Yet in the same way, these men, also by dreaming, defile the flesh, and reject authority, and blaspheme majestic beings.

a. Evident Jude likes “threes” [^]

b. Note the phrase “**Yet in the same way**”

Adverb ὁμοίως which has at it's core t/word “homos” which means “same or similar”. “homogeneous group” draw a pun to t/context of S&G (v. 7) “homo-sexuality” - 2B intimate w/a member of t/same sex. Stand in opposition to another Gk. word, “heteros” (hetero-sexual).

Yet, in the same way

Same way as what? Adverb ὁμοίως governs not just v. 7 (S&G) but also v. 6 (Angels who sinned) and v. 5 (I. out of E.).

Jude is saying, “in the same way as these ==>

A. Three Reminders from History (vv. 5-7)

1. *Reminder #1: Israel After Exodus (v. 5)*

2. *Reminder #2: Immoral Angels (v. 6)*

3. *Reminder #3: Immolated Cities (7)*

. . . these men, also by dreaming, defile the flesh, and reject authority, and blaspheme majestic beings.

B. Application . . . (vv. 8-10)

1. Like Immolated Cities: The False Teachers are Sensually Depraved (v. 8a)

To be “SD” is to be governed by your passions, part. sexual lust.

Here ==>

...defile the flesh...

c. Verb $\mu\alpha\iota\nu\omega$ = to defile, stain with sin

Used 2x Titus 1:15 To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled ($\mu\alpha\iota\nu\omega$) and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled ($\mu\alpha\iota\nu\omega$).

In t/LXX (Gk. OT) this word was commonly used to denote sexual sin.

Used of t/rape of Dinah by Shechem in Genesis 34

27 Jacob's sons came upon the slain and looted the city, because they had defiled their sister.

Job equates it w/adultery in Job 31:9–12

Some comm. believe that Jude's use here ind. that these “certain men” about whom he writes practiced homosexuality. I don't think we need to be that specific. They were sensual – opens t/door to all kinds of sexual deviancy (hetero and otherwise).

NIV: pollute their own bodies | Peter (2 Peter 2:10) indulge the flesh 2:14 having eyes full of adultery and that never cease from sin,

2. Like Israel (v. 5) – The False Teachers Reject Authority (v. 8b)
they defile the flesh, and they reject authority,

What authority do they despise?

a. Could mean that in general they reject authority (all kinds of authority)

Anything from political to ecclesiastical authority. Cert. to be antinomian or lawless is to reject any and all constraint.

b. Problem is that the word (κυριότης) is never used that way in NT
Word is singular which leads me to believe that Jude has God in mind.

Question: Would anyone who claims to be a Xn – even if they are not – even if they are heretical & unconverted – admit to this? *“Oh yes, I believe in JC & I reject His authority.”* Of course not!

Lesson here is that actions speak louder than words.

"They may be energetic worshipers, but their actions betray them in that they have thrown off all authority from their lives." [Davids, 233-34]

Just because someone professes to "love Jesus" doesn't mean that they belong to Him. They may be sincere // put forth great effort in their cause. But if they pervert t/Gospel by what they believe & how they act, they fall into t/terrible category of Matthew 7:21-23 ==>

21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. 22 “Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ 23 “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’

Lord, weren't we sincere? Didn't we love you? Didn't we have some awesome worship? Can be sincerely wrong. Love is subjective. Worship, no matter how "vibrant" isn't true unless it's based on truth (John 4:24).

A friend of mine who serves a CH not far away told me about a group that a relative of his is involv. in. Not a CH but an organization / fellowship. Here's an abstract of their doctrinal statement ==>

-The Bible is utterly trustworthy and reliable as the final authority for faith and practice. It is the divinely inspired, inerrant and infallible Word of God . . . care must be given to interpreting God's Word as it was intended to be understood by the original recipients, maintaining historical and cultural context.

-God is the great Creator of all things and is Himself omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent. Eternally self-existent, He rules as Sovereign over all that was, is and ever shall be.

-That the human race is spiritually fallen and totally depraved by nature because of Adam and Eve's sin in the Garden of Eden.

We affirm the primitive Christian view that Jesus Christ was both fully human and fully divine making him the fullness of the Godhead manifest in the flesh. We believe Jesus Christ to be the great I AM, the Jehovah of the Old Testament, the Mighty God and the Everlasting Father.

-...[S]alvation being appropriated by faith, experienced through obedience and exemplified by good works. God sovereignly initiated salvation which we receive by putting faith in Christ . . .

-That every child of God should walk in holiness and righteousness, not through legalism but by the power of the Spirit within, living out the life of Christ in each believer. Excellence should be the hallmark of the saved.

CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

-Grace affords liberty in Christ while not becoming a license to sin...

There are some other things in the statement that are problematic.

. . . the Gift of the Holy Ghost, signified by speaking with other tongues as the initial, physical evidence of His indwelling. This was the normative, expected experience of all Apostolic believers.

-There is healing power in the atonement which God can and does sovereignly minister to those who pray in faith.

They refer to themselves as Apostolic Pentecostals.

Nothing that I've read at this point that would necessarily indicate that we are dealing with a heretical group of apostates.

May have issues related to character, such as t/character of 1 of their leaders who left his wife for another. Biggest problem was that he left his wife for another . . . man.

So we'd also read this on their doctrinal statement ==>

- . . . We do affirm all people as God created them and embrace them as the open arms of Christ, without distinction. It is our belief and practice that all saved persons, including those called to ministry, should not be excluded from life in, or service to the church, based on anything other than the condition of their spiritual life as exemplified by their attitude and conduct. Neither race, gender identity nor sexual orientation are reasons to disfellowship or limit involvement in ministry. Scripture shall not be misapplied for purposes of discrimination based on those issues.

I would agree that one can be a true Xn and fight against t/temptation of SSA. Tempt. is a result of t/fall, but it may not itself be sinful. It's what you do w/the tempt.

Fornication is a result of t/fall. Tempt. to fornicate may be there, but if I recognize it and resist it, I've not sinned. Greed is a result of the fall. But that's different than saying, "Fornication is okay to practice as a Xn." Or "it's okay and acceptable before God to be greedy // drunk."

All of us have desires that are warped as a result of our fallen nature. Desires for things God has forbidden are a reflection of how sin has distorted me, not how God has made me. [Sam Allberry, Is God anti-gay?, 30]

That's not t/perspective of this group which teaches that sexual desires define the person. If they define the person then it's acceptable.

Can apply for memb. in this group. ?s on t/application include:
Have you received the Holy Ghost with the initial physical evidence of speaking with other tongues? If so, when? And ==>
Do you self identify yourself as straight, gay, transgendered or other?

Not to pick out a particular sin, even tho it is t/issue of our culture. We would rightly reject all sinful practices and attitudes.

We ought to demonstrate X's love & share t/Gospel of grace to everyone. God saves sinners of all kinds. The religious and seeming Xn to atheists/agnostics to drug abusers to materialists to perverts of all shapes, sizes and colors. Isn't that 1 Corinthians 6?

6:9–11 **9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God.11 And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.**

The issue is, can a true believer continue in a sinful lifestyle. Note t/words **And such were some of you;**

I would also point out that upon a closer look there are more problems w/this min. than just their affirmation that w/God it's ok to be gay.

Theol., they fall into t/heresy one Oneness Pentecostalism (baptism as salvific; in t/Name of Jesus only; heretical view of t/Trinity) – which proves my point that false teaching isn't an isolated event.

Bad theology in practice has a root in plain ol' bad theology.

All around us we have those who would say they believe in Jesus and the Bible and salvation by grace & even those who may be sincere and have what looks to be a vibrant worship experience – who are unregenerate and lost!

Matthew 7:21-23 ==>

21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. 22 “Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ 23 “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you;

1 Cor. 6:9 **Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived;**

c. Peter's admonition about “twisting the Scriptures” (2 Peter 3:16)

Turn over to 2 Peter . . .

As also in all his letters, speaking in them concerning these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the unlearned and unstable twist, as also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.

First thing to note is that Peter affirms that some things that Paul wrote were difficult to comprehend

It's one thing to affirm that there are things in the Bible that are difficult to understand. If it was all easy we wouldn't have to worry about handling it accurately & having CH leaders who are diligent in their scholarship. Not everything in t/Bible is easy. But it's another thing when you have men and women who are intent on twisting those things into unrecognizable doctrinal rubble.

... the unlearned and unstable twist ...

Those are the persons. The unlearned & unstable.

(1) May be that these two words describe two classes of men:

- 1) Unlearned (false teachers);
- 2) Unstable (their disciples)

Same word used in 2:14 where Peter states that the false teachers have **... eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, [that they] entice unstable souls ...**

(2) Theological Phrase of the Day: Perspicuity of Scripture

When we affirm t/POS we're affirming that it is understandable. It's not written in some secret code // at a level where you have to possess a Ph.D. to understand it.

If you look at each of the books of the Bible you will recognize that they were written for t/average person to understand.

That doesn't mean we don't need t/Spirit to guide us.

Doesn't mean that all parts of Scripture are = clear.

It does mean that when we read, for example, 1 Sam. 17:40, that David chose "5 smooth stones" for his sling that he was in fact picking up just that: 5 smooth stones.

That's something anyone can understand.

- * We also have to understand that there are 1200 chapters in t/Bible.
- * That we are dealing w/different authors over a span of 1500 yrs. who wrote in 2 different languages.
- * There are diff. genres of lit., from didactic; to prophetic; to historic.
- * There are many different figures of speech.
- * We have parables and narratives and types.

(3) The perspicuity of Scripture doesn't mean we don't need scholars

The perspicuity of Scripture doesn't mean we don't need to be scholarly. The perspicuity of Scripture doesn't mean we don't give due consideration to what t/CH has taught t/o it's history

Sola Scriptura does not mean, as Romanists would have you believe, that it's every man with a Bible to believe whatever he wants.

I don't care what we're talking about be it science, politics, literature, religion – there will always be diffs in interpret. on some issues. That's not all bad. We're not cookie-cutter robots who are all programed to act and think alike. Not reality.

In this CH we have some different views on what I like to call 2ndary or tertiary issues.

But God has programed t/elect to believe in certain core truths.

As I've said before, it's remarkable that out of t/many different Protestant denominations, those who truly affirm Sola Scriptura are very much like-minded.

We agree on God's Triunity / X's death, burial and resurrection / Human depravity // Future Judgment // Only hope of eternal life being JC - Salv. by grace thru faith alone. Those are some remarkable things to agree on. Doesn't happen by accident.

Always been true t/o history that fallen men will twist God's Word.
Dead Men Hanging.

(4) A balance must be maintained between 1) the perspicuity of Scripture; 2) the exegetical demands of Scripture

(a) Peter uses a graphic word (only found here in the entire NT)

When he says that the ==>

. . . unlearned and unstable twist . . . the Scriptures, to their own destruction.

He uses the verb στρεβλω.

i. From στρεβλος (twisted) and στεφοω (to turn)

Ancient Greek historian Herodotus used στρεβλω of twisting or wrenching a dislocated limb, with a view to setting it.

Noun was used of torture devices [BAGD]

A stréble was a winch, an instrument that produced torture by twisting or pulling one's limbs out of joint. Thus one meaning of the verb was to put to the rack.

We could say, to put eyes to the picture ==>

. . unlearned and unstable torture . . . the Scriptures, to their own destruction.

We see more and more of this as t/CH has moved away from scholarship to subjectivism, pragmatism, and cultural compromise.

(5) Paul's letters aren't the only target

No part of Scripture is immune from their attack. They also
... **twist ... the rest of the Scriptures ...**

There are those who would place t/WOG on t/rack, stretching and twisting it in a vain attempt to make it say something it doesn't.

What's the difference between Rob Bell; T.D. Jakes; Joyce Meyer; Joel Osteen; and the Pope? (not a joke).

The problem is that there are thousands who claim to be born again that don't see any difference. That's t/problem.

T/CH has lost its ability to discern. Because we have lost t/desire to think. Thinking takes effort.

Peter says (v. 17) ... **be on your guard ...**

John Wesley wrote in the preface of his Standard Sermons: "I am a spirit come from God and returning to God; just hovering over a great gulf; 'til a few moments hence I am no more seen; I drop into an unchangeable eternity! I want to know one thing -- the way to heaven ... He hath written it down in a book. O give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God! I have it: here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be *homo unius libri* (a man of one book)."

O that we might be a people of the book!

Satan, t/enemy of our souls / JC / CH – would have it otherwise.

No surprise that in t/classic work “Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices” written by t/Puritan Thomas Brooks, he puts great emphasis on truth. Truth of God's Word. That is the precious remedy . . .

Truth is thy crown, hold fast your crown, and let no man take your crown from you. . . . Ah, souls, have you not found truth sweetening your spirits, and cheering your spirits, and warming your spirits, and raising your spirits, and corroborating your spirits? Have not you found truth a guide to lead you, a staff to uphold you, a cordial to strengthen you, and a plaster to heal you? And will not you hold fast the truth? Has not truth been your best friend in your worst days? Has not truth stood by you when friends have forsaken you? Has not truth done more for you than all the world could do against you, and will you not hold fast the truth? Is not truth your right eye, without which you cannot see for Christ? And your right hand, without which you cannot do for Christ? And your right foot, without which you cannot walk with Christ? And will you not hold truth fast? Oh! hold fast the truth in your judgments and understandings, in your wills and affections, in your profession and conversation. Truth is more precious than gold or rubies, 'and all the things you can desire are not to be compared to her' (Prov. 3. 15). Truth is that heavenly glass wherein we may see the luster and glory of divine wisdom, power, greatness, love and mercifulness. In this glass you may see the face of Christ, the favor of Christ, the riches of Christ, and the heart of Christ, beating and working sweetly towards your souls. Oh! let your souls cleave to truth, as Ruth did to Naomi . . . and say. ' I will not leave truth, nor return f

rom following after truth; but where truth goes I will go, and where truth lodges I will lodge; and nothing but death shall part truth and my soul.' . . . Oh, keep the truth, and truth will make you safe and happy forever. Blessed are those souls that are kept by truth. [Thomas Brooks in Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices, 96-97]