

## Jesus Transfigured & Other Jesuses

2 Peter 2:1-3

November 3rd, 2024

### I. Introduction - “Is Theology Poetry”

C.S. Lewis wrote an essay called, “Is Theology Poetry?” In the course of his essay, he goes on to specify the question; he asks, “Is theology *merely* poetry?” Theology *is* poetic. The Christian story *is* beautiful and moving; it strikes at the very core of our being. In Lewis’ words, “[it] arouses and in part satisfies the imagination.” But, is it *merely* poetic? Is that all it has going for it? Is that the only reason we believe it? Lewis goes on to argue an emphatic *No*. The Christian story *is* poetic, but more importantly it is \_\_\_\_\_.

### II. The Text — 2 Peter 2:1-3

*1 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. 2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. 3 By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.*

### III. Summary of the Text

As Peter approaches his main subject, he launches into it by grounding his polemic against his opponents by saying, “This is nothing new.” There were false prophets among the people, and there will be and have been false teachers among us, the Church of the twentieth century. These false men are ‘among the people’. In other words, this danger is an \_\_\_\_\_ issue. As one commentator put it: “The undoing of the faith is usually an inside job.” What these false men bring in is a \_\_\_\_\_ teaching—something other than the true Word of God (Jer. 14:14). They bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them. Like the serpent in the Garden, they not only lie and twist the Word of God, but they also deny the Word of God, saying, “Surely, you won’t die . . .” Surely what God has said won’t come to pass.

The results of their activity is \_\_\_\_\_. They will bring swift destruction upon their heads, and they will also bring destruction upon others by their corrupting teaching—both those inside the church and those outside the church. But, *why* do they do this? Look at v. 3, it’s all because of *greed*: “By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words.” There is a lot of money to be made in telling people what they want to hear. Will these false teachers get away with it? Not at all. Their behavior is nothing new, and the judgment they will face is *likewise* nothing new. It has not been idle. It has overtaken all who have walked in this way and it will overtake them.

### IV. A Different \_\_\_\_\_

False teachers preach another *Jesús*. Everybody loves ‘Jesus’—but the real question is *which* Jesus? The threefold witness—the Father, the Apostles, and the Holy Spirit by the prophets—centered on the \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus: the Jesus who is the Son of God; the Jesus whom God the Father has set upon His holy hill; the Jesus who shall come again in glory to judge both the living and the dead; the Jesus to whom every knee shall bow; the Jesus who shall subdue every nation, every enemy beneath His feet, the last enemy being death. That is the decisive Jesus of the Gospel

we preach and the Church confesses. But this Jesus is often found too strong, too holy, too offensive, too demanding, too glorious.

Those who live in darkness cannot bear the true Jesus (Jn. 3:20). So what do those do who cannot give up their love of sin? They can only with much difficulty dispose of Jesus, and so they instead come up with a different jesus. They soften Jesus. They make Him more palatable. They blur the picture, and ease their conscience taking solace in a jesus who was not transfigured before the eyes of the apostles, who was not spoken of by holy men led along by the Holy Spirit, who was not declared to be the Son of God by the thundering voice of God the Father.

#### **V. A Different \_\_\_\_\_**

More often than not, false men are first heretics in \_\_\_\_\_ before they are heretics in doctrine. Their lusts are never extinguished, and so with itching ears, wanting to clean their guilty conscience, when once they hear about a jesus who doesn't really care about how they live, or who even approves of it, they bite and they're hooked. Their different jesus goes hand-in-hand with a much different ethic—a much, much different morality.

#### **V. A Different \_\_\_\_\_**

False men preach a different future. This future is not the hope of the Gospel—of a new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness is at home. It is not the future promised by God. It is always something less, something more carnal than this future. They instead tell of a different end to the story that God is telling. And they do so without His permission. But Peter bore witness to Jesus as the future judge of the living and the dead. The Scriptures inspired by the Holy Spirit foretold this. Peter and his fellow apostles beheld it. And so whatever one might think or want it is impossible to escape the historical fact that those stories are *only* stories. They are not the true, historical story God is in the process of telling—with the true future foretold on the mountain whereupon Jesus was unveiled as the King and Judge of all.

#### **VI. The True Story**

Our Triune God is telling the story wherein Jesus, the incarnate God-Man, ransomed His bride from the clutches of Hell, from the fangs of her sin, from the condemnation of the law—He bought her. He cleaned her. He made of her a disciple. *And* He has promised to come back for her. He is coming back, clothed in the glory of His Father, flanked by His holy angels. He will repay with tribulation all those who have troubled His people. And He will usher in an eternal rest for all who have loved His appearing (2 Tim. 4:7).

Whatever the merits might be of any other stories, the question yet remains: Are they \_\_\_\_\_? And the test is—can they stand before the \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus? If they can't stand here, then they are worth less than a Greek myth. They are mere stories. The apostles did not follow cunningly devised fables when they made known to us the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. They were eyewitnesses of His majesty. But men and women who fabricate other stories that contradict *this* one, they are the storytellers and the myth-makers. They cunningly devise fables of a different jesus and a different gospel, supporting a different lifestyle and hoping for a different future. And, as Peter has made clear, they shall not get away with it. Their word will not be the last word.

#### **VII. And as we come to the Table . . .**