

## *2 Peter 2:10-22 False Teaching 7/23/17*

*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, <sup>11</sup> whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord. <sup>12</sup> But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction, <sup>13</sup> suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you. <sup>14</sup> They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children! <sup>15</sup> Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray. They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing, <sup>16</sup> but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with human voice and restrained the prophet's madness.*

*<sup>17</sup> These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm. For them the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved. <sup>18</sup> For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error. <sup>19</sup> They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved. <sup>20</sup> For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. <sup>21</sup> For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them. <sup>22</sup> What the true proverb says has happened to them: "The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire."*

*(Pastor prays)*

What we have just read is not a very enjoyable chapter to read and it's not the kind of chapter that's any fun to preach. But not all the medicine we take tastes good. God knows our need and if there ever were a time to point out and expose false teaching, the time is now. But you've got to ask the question when you read this chapter: Why? Why has Peter spent so much time on false teaching? Here is an entire chapter for us and we

will spend the next two Sundays talking about false teachers. I think Peter spends all this time on false teachers because he's a pastor and, as a pastor, he is held responsible for feeding the sheep, for making sure that his people get a steady diet of God's word. And as a pastor, it is infuriating to find out that your people are being poisoned by lust, materialism and the prosperity gospel masquerading as Christianity.

This chapter is a warning. In chapter 1 we are encouraged to confirm and be sure that we are in the faith so there is a real positive feel to Chapter 1. But in Chapter 2, Peter is giving the same message but with a dark and somber tone. It's a warning designed to make us serious about following Jesus Christ, and the main point of the chapter is to tell us that false teachers, and those who follow them, will end up condemned and destroyed.

I want to convince you today to know the Gospel and cling to the Gospel. Let's look and see the lessons and trust that this word in this chapter is here for our own building up and edification. So today we will look at some of the

## **Traits of a False Teacher**

### **A False Teacher is Reckless**

A false teacher is not careful and not humble but he is reckless. You see it in verses 10-11. *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, <sup>11</sup> whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord.* Bold and willful. They do not tremble when they blaspheme and say things that even the angels wouldn't say. (It's) A reckless daring that defies God and shows a determination to please himself at all costs. It's a manipulation of the truth. It's an "en-smallling" of God. A false teacher is never saying God is *bigger* than He actually is. A false teacher is saying God is *smaller* than He actually is. He will proudly say that God's primary concern is not His Glory but your comfort. It's diminishing the cross and elevating "coolness" so that reverence for God and love for His grace and hatred for sin are diminished all in the name of you having a better week this week at work. They never address the *real* issues that separate you as a sinner from a God who is Holy, and we must reject this heresy out of hand and cling to the cross of Christ. It's a recklessness.

## **A False Teacher is Carnal**

Carnal – I couldn't think of a better word as I read Peter's warning in verses 12-13. *But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction, <sup>13</sup> suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you.* What you have here is a description of crass materialism. In these verses, Peter launches an all-out attack on false teachers. Like animals and they will be hunted and destroyed like animals. And their mistake?

The false teacher's mistake is to confuse the thrill of animal instinct with the presence of the Holy Spirit. The presence of the Holy Spirit doesn't cause you to act like an animal, it causes you to worship King Jesus and to live for King Jesus. Christianity is inescapably ethical. You cannot have a relationship with a *t* God without becoming a *better* man. In verse 12, they are *Zoa Physica* – irrational animals. They operate on feelings and desire instead of scripture and reason; and Peter says they will get the fate of animals. They will reap what they sow. Verse 13 talks about false teachers as a part of the church. The blots and blemishes. Jude calls them a hidden reef at love feasts. They stain and defile the church and it only gets worse.

## **A False Teacher is Twisted (Sexually)**

Peter's description takes a sort of dark turn here in verses 14 down through 18. *<sup>14</sup> They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children!*

*<sup>18</sup> For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error.*

Their eyes are full of adultery. Peter's language here is vivid and arresting. Verse 14 looks at every woman as an object and a potential candidate for sexual sin...: This insatiability for things of the flesh. In verse 14 and also in verse 18, they seduce the unstable, the unsteady souls and those who are barely escaping. Those two descriptors speak to the same kind of person: one who is vulnerable. A false teacher preys on the vulnerable and those who have not been rightly disciplined, people who are unstable because they've not planted their feet firmly on Christ. It's why it is so important that our children and students learn solid Biblical truth from the beginning. It's why new Christians must be taught the solid basics so you can spot a slick false teacher and not be duped into their curse. That's the language used in verse 14. They are accursed

children. They rest under the curse of God as do all who fail to trust in Christ, who bore man's curse. And you won't hear a false teacher spend much time on sexual ethics, God's design for marriage or anything that points to a Biblical and orthodox position on gender because he twists the clear teaching of the Bible.

### **A False Teacher is Off-Center**

In verses 15-16, Peter goes back to the Old Testament. He's already used Noah and Lot and now he brings up Balaam, the false prophet in Numbers who prophesied for money and was so spiritually obtuse that the donkey he was riding on had more sense and spoke to him. Look how Peter uses that story in Numbers 22:

*But God's anger was kindled because he went, and the angel of the LORD took his stand in the way as his adversary. Now he was riding on the donkey, and his two servants were with him. <sup>23</sup> And the donkey saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road, with a drawn sword in his hand. And the donkey turned aside out of the road and went into the field. And Balaam struck the donkey, to turn her into the road. <sup>24</sup> Then the angel of the LORD stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, with a wall on either side. <sup>25</sup> And when the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, she pushed against the wall and pressed Balaam's foot against the wall. So he struck her again. <sup>26</sup> Then the angel of the LORD went ahead and stood in a narrow place, where there was no way to turn either to the right or to the left. <sup>27</sup> When the donkey saw the angel of the LORD, she lay down under Balaam. And Balaam's anger was kindled, and he struck the donkey with his staff. <sup>28</sup> Then the LORD opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?" <sup>29</sup> And Balaam said to the donkey, "Because you have made a fool of me. I wish I had a sword in my hand, for then I would kill you." <sup>30</sup> And the donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey, on which you have ridden all your life long to this day? Is it my habit to treat you this way?" And he said, "No."*

*<sup>31</sup> Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand. And he bowed down and fell on his face. <sup>32</sup> And the angel of the LORD said to him, "Why have you struck your donkey these three times? Behold, I have come out to oppose you because your way is perverse before me. <sup>33</sup> The donkey saw me and turned aside before me these three times. If she had not turned aside from me, surely just now I would have killed you and let her live." <sup>34</sup> Then Balaam said to the angel of the LORD, "I have sinned, for I did not know that you stood in the road against me. Now therefore, if it is evil in your sight, I will*

turn back.” <sup>35</sup> And the angel of the LORD said to Balaam, “Go with the men, but speak only the word that I tell you.” So Balaam went on with the princes of Balak.

So, here’s the comparison: False teachers are like Balaam. They’ve abandoned *THE WAY*. *THE WAY* is how Christianity was described in the New Testament. It’s called the *right way* here in verse 15. That implies that often a false teacher doesn’t start out *sounding* false but begins slowly and imperceptibly to drift from *THE WAY* and be overtaken by a desire for gain. And it’s tough to be popular preaching an unpopular Gospel. It’s off-putting to call people sinners who need a savior.

The cross is a stumbling block and foolishness to those who are perishing. But to those whom God has called, Christ is the power of God for salvation and it is so very easy to move off-center like Balaam who was a preacher and used a preacher’s language but had a devil’s heart. I actually have three more of these points and I’ll have to decide whether or not to finish it out for next week, because verses 19-22 is a pretty heavy passage and deserves to be looked at. But for today I will have this last point.

### **A False Teacher is Empty**

Empty. You can read verse 17 and see what I mean. There are two brilliant metaphors in verse 17. *These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm. For them the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved.* In the intense heat of the Middle East, you come to a location where there is supposed to be a spring of fresh water. It’s set up like a well but when you drop the bucket down into the well, all that comes up is sand.

A false teacher promises satisfaction for weary, thirsty souls but only leaves them more parched. They don’t deliver the promises. Remember what Jesus said to the woman at the well whose soul was thirsty. In John 4:13-14, *Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”*

Come to Jesus and drink: (Jesus said) If any man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, from his inmost being will flow rivers of living water.

*(Pastor shares the Gospel and prays)*