

Deceivers Part 2 • 2 Peter 2:12-22

INTRODUCTION • Read Jude 8-13 > Keep in mind as we take a look at 2 Pet 2

1. In May of 2000, a German tourist was visiting Nîmes, France & thought it would be a great idea to get a picture of the running of the bulls that afternoon.
 - a. So she grabbed her camera, stepped around the barricade the City set up & stood in the middle of the road.
 - b. The horseman leading the bulls never suspected someone would standing where she was and ran right into her.
 - c. She was knocked to the ground, then trampled by a half dozen bulls.
 - d. She was then taken to the local hospital for treatment but her injuries were too severe & she died.
2. And so it is w/false teachers. They think they can do whatever they want & get away with it; that there are no consequences.
 - a. Because God doesn't punish them when they **first** spin their web of lies, they assume He never will.
 - b. But as Peter warns here in ch. 2 > Their judgment is **certain**.
 - c. Just because they **haven't been** punished doesn't mean they won't.
3. As we saw in part 1 last week, Peter says there have always been & will always be false prophets & teachers who seek to prey off God's people.
 - a. Through deceit hidden behind appealing words, they try to carve out supporters,
 - b. Forming their own group they can then live off.
4. Peter describes their motive: They're greedy & filled with lust.
5. He describes their character: They're rebels who despise authority.
 - a. They want to be IN authority but never UNDER it.
 - b. So they **reject & mock** the God-ordained authority of genuine spiritual leaders.
6. As a faithful shepherd, Peter warns his readers of these wolves in sheep's clothing.
 - a. They mustn't be seduced by their slick appeals.
7. It's bad enough that false teachers are heeded to destruction.
8. What makes it worse is that they take so many with them.
9. Peter goes on now to **describe** these false teachers in greater detail. It's not a pretty picture.

Vs. 12-14

¹² But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption,

1. In the vs just before this, Peter mentioned how **even angels** are ultra-careful in how they speak **to & about** those in authority.
2. But false teachers are such **rebels** they tread where angels fear to.
3. They do because, living for their flesh, they're little different than mere animals.
 - a. As Paul says in Phil 3:19 Their god is their belly.
 - b. Though they present themselves as **heavyweights** in spiritual matters – they don't have a clue!
 - c. A doberman / dachshund makes a better theologian.
4. And though they think they're immune to judgment, like a rabid dog, they WILL BE put down.
5. Whenever an animal turns on humans, attacking & killing them, it's hunted & destroyed.
6. So it will be with these religious predators. >> Look . . .

¹³ and will receive the wages of unrighteousness,

7. They're working in sin & deceit. Pay day's coming.
8. But then Peter says something shocking . . .
as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime.
9. These guys are **wholly given over** to their rebellion & schemes.
10. You see, most unbelievers work during the day, then let their hair down in the evening & on the weekend. It's Work during the day; Party at night.
11. Not these false teachers. They're **professional partiers**. That IS their work!
12. See how peter says it: They COUNT IT PLEASURE to **carouse** in the daytime.
 - a. This is what they live for: A Good Time!
 - b. Life's a Party. & everything they do & say is aimed at 1 thing **Keeping the Party going**.

13. Carouse means to move around from 1 hot spot to the next, 1 thrill after another.
 - a. There's a **restlessness** here because there's no such thing for the carouser as "Enough."
 - 1) Enough fun, food, drink, sex, money, power.
 - 2) For these guys it's the one who dies with the most toys or fame who wins.
 - 3) And winning is everything to them!
 - b. So these guys are all about wearing the right clothes with the hip labels.
 - 1) Driving the right vehicle, eating at the right restaurants, hob-nobbing with the cool set.
14. They're **able** to do all this during the day because they have a whole crop of the gullible who fund their wicked lifestyle.
15. They think they're celebrities, but in reality, Peter says . . .
They are spots and blemishes,
 - a. I want to say "Thanks" to Peter for these descriptions because they're **just plain fun**.
 - b. Spots has 2 meanings & Peter likely means **both** of them.
 - 1) 1 meaning is that of a **stain** caused by something spilled.
 - a) The false teachers were concerned to be seen in the hippest places wearing the coolest threads.
 - b) But in their carousing they'd spilled all over themselves & had become a shameful joke.
 - c) This looks back to what Peter said in v2; that these false teachers are a cause of blasphemy by unbelievers.
 - i) False teachers might fool gullible believers –
 - ii) But the world knows they're just hiding their greed behind a lot of clever god-talk.
 - iii) It turns them off to the Real Gospel because they assume it's all the same.
 - d) These guys are **stains** on the Body of Christ.
 - 2) The 2nd meaning of the word refers to a **hidden reef**.
 - a) It lies below the surface, a danger to any ship passing by.
 - b) That's what these false teachers are to the church.
 - c) 1 of the very first idioms was used for the Church was a ship.
 - d) It's found over & over in the catacombs. >> It's a fitting metaphor too.
 - 1) The Church is a community of people IN Christ,
 - 2) On a journey thru the troubled seas of a fallen world.
 - 3) Like a ship, The Church is IN the world, but it's not good when it's the other way around—
The world is **in** the Church.
 - e) Both Peter & Jude use that image as they speak of false teachers.
 - 1) They're hidden reefs who imperil the progress of both individuals & the Church.
 - 2) If they aren't avoided, they can shipwreck the faith of some & set the mission of the church back a long way – as the history of heresy proves.
 - c. "Blemish" referred to some **more** than a minor imperfection.
 - 1) Some stores at the outlet mall sell brand name items at way below regular price because they're what are called "seconds."
 - 2) They have a 'blemish' that most people would never notice.
 - 3) That's not what this word means. This blemish is so big, so OUT THERE for everyone to see that it's **embarrassing**.
16. By using these words for false teachers, Peter hopes to urge his readers to distance themselves from these guys because not only are they dangerous, they're **embarrassing!**
17. But sadly, too many gullible Christians are more than happy to embrace them
 carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you, ¹⁴ having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. *They have* a heart trained in covetous practices, *and are* accursed children.
18. The feast Peter refers to was the Agape, the Love Feast the early shared when they gathered.
 - a. Once a week, usually Sunday, Christians gathered to share a meal.
 - b. Each brought what they could in a kind of pot-luck; then they all ate.
 - c. Dessert was Communion, when they'd pass round a loaf of bread & a cup.
19. The false teachers used these communal meals to gorge themselves and get plastered.
 - a. Then they'd look round the room; lining up which women to go after; who looked vulnerable.

¹⁵ They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the *son* of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; ¹⁶ but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet.

1. This is a great story from the book of Numbers I'd love to go into if we had time.
2. Peter's point is that the false teachers he's referring to aren't guys who've just made an innocent *mistake* in their theology.
 - a. They don't think they're right – ***they know they AREN'T.***
 - b. But they press on with their lies because of what they hope they'll get in money & power.
 - c. Some people ***work*** for a living; these guys ***con*** for a living.

3. Like Balaam of old, they may ***seem*** to be mighty men of God, when in fact, they're just ***greedy***.

¹⁷ These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

4. Have you ever been driving along the HWY thru some desolate place, & you see a billboard saying, "Great Food Ahead"

- a. 50 Miles every 5miles, till down to 20 miles, then every mile.
 - b. Pictures of food. Descriptions Gourmet burgers, 10 miles >> Hand mixed floats & shakes.
 - c. Then every half mile; quarter mile. 100 yards
 - d. By now you're hungry & thirsty. Your mouth's watering.
 - e. You arrive at the place & it's ***abandoned!*** Just a derelict shell, w/caved in roof.
5. That's false teachers. They promise much but deliver nothing but hurt.
6. Before the great Church Father & theologian ***Augustine*** came to Faith in Christ, he was a member of a cult known as the ***Manichaeans***.
 - a. The Manichaeans presented themselves as a philosophy for the intelligent.
 - b. Being the brilliant thinker he was, Augustine began to question the core beliefs of Manichaeism.
 - c. None of his fellow cult members could answer his penetrating challenges.
 - d. But they all said the famous Faustus could, and soon would because he was coming to town.
 - e. Faustus arrived, & Augustine listened as the famous teacher waxed eloquent.
 - f. But his words were ***empty***.
 - g. Augustine said Faustus' speech was a jeweled cup that bore no drink to quench a thirsty soul.

¹⁸ For when they speak great swelling *words* of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error.

7. The word "actually" is an unfortunate translation; better is the word "just"—
8. Those being led astray by false teachers are new converts; they've just exited the world of fallen humanity to become part of the Body of Christ.
9. But these false teachers swoop in & try to grab them by cloaking their lies in religious jargon.
10. I've watched this happen time & again over the years; that people are new to the faith become enamored by false teachers.
 - a. Because they don't have a good grounding in God's Word yet, they get sucked into goofiness.
 - b. Christian: When you meet a new believer, urge them to get plugged in to a good, Bible teaching church.

Vs. 19-22

¹⁹ While they [the false teachers] promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.

1. One of the most enticing promises of false teachers is "***Freedom.***"
2. But their teaching ***doesn't*** liberate; it ensnares & enslaves because it's sin.
3. ***Only Jesus*** sets us free. In John 8:31–32, He said, If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'
4. Peter ends w/a dire warning. He speaks about ***those who follow*** false teachers.

²⁰ For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. ²¹ For

it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.²² But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: [Pro 26:11] “*A dog returns to his own vomit,*” and, [Jewish folk proverb] “a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.”

5. The subject here is people who profess faith in Christ, but are led away into error by false teachers.
6. Peter says it would be better if they'd never come to faith in the first place, than to turn away.
7. Since the condition of **both** is to be lost & destined for hell, we wonder how it could be better.
8. It's better because when at FIRST you're lost, you have only 1 direction to go – Toward Christ.
9. But, if someone comes to Faith, **then** is pulled away into a cult, they're lost but assume everything's fine.
 - a. All the words that won them to Jesus get gutted & stripped of their Bible meaning
 - b. And stuffed w/lies that keep them in bondage.
10. Peter uses 2 well known proverbs for these people; 1 of a dog and 1 of a hog.
11. The question these last 3 vs put to us are – were these people genuinely saved or did they just appear to be?
 - a. v20 seems to describe them as **real believers**.
 - b. But the proverbs of v22 suggest they weren't.
 - 1) This is what dogs do.
 - a) My dogs do this. It's disgusting!
 - b) When they do it, I can do nothing but stand back & say, “That's dog-nature right there.”
 - 2) You can give a pig a bath, perfume it, do its nails & dress it in a new Easter dress.
 - a) First chance it gets, it's going back to the mud-hole.
 - b) Pigs love mud because they're pigs!
12. So, which is it? Are the people Peter describes in vs. 20-22 saved or not. Yes!

CONCLUSION

1. What difference does it make to the point he's making? >> It makes **no** difference.
2. Either way, Peter's big idea is that we have to be **vigilant**; on the lookout for false teachers & aberrant doctrine that would take us away from Jesus.
3. Don't assume just because someone has a religious t-shirt or carries a bible, everything they say is muy bueno. >> It may be mega-muy mal.
4. As I shared last week; what Peter wrote 2000 yrs ago needs to be repeated loudly today because Jesus warned the last days would see widespread spiritual deception.
5. In Matt. 24 He said,
 - ¹¹ Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.
 - ¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.
 - ¹³ But he who endures to the end shall be saved
 - a. That word “lawlessness” is the most common description for the **effect** false teachers have.
 - b. Jesus warned the end times would see an epidemic of spiritual deception that would quench many people's faith and love.
6. Christian: Don't let your love grow cold.
7. Be discerning in what you watch, listen to & read.