

2 Peter 2:10-22

“The truth about false teachers”

- I. **Intro**
- II. **Vs. 10-11 Description of false teachers**
- III. **Vs. 12-17 Depravity of false teachers**
- IV. **Vs. 18-22 Deception of false teachers**

I. **Intro**

Peter’s words in chapter 2 illustrate the truth of God’s judgment that he will bring upon false teachers. The remainder of the chapter is where Peter reaffirms that false teachers have not escaped God’s authority as he outlines three things that God knows about false teachers:

- A. Vs. 10-11 **Description of false teachers**
- B. Vs. 12-17 **Depravity of false teachers**
- C. Vs. 18-22 **Deception of false teachers**

Throughout this section it is apparent that God views apostasy as far worse than mere ignorance. For those who have tasted the goodness of God, caught a glimpse of God’s glory it would be better for them to have never had such a blessing than to have had one and then turned their backs on the gates of grace! Light that is ignored becomes lightning and the splendor of God’s glory rejected becomes a consuming fire!

II. **Vs. 10-11 Description of false teachers**

Vs.10-11 Peter gives a fourfold description of these false teachers that would help us identify false teachers based upon our observations of their character instead of waiting to identify them based upon false teaching.

1. Vs. 10a “*Walk according to the flesh*”: The Greek word for walk here describes

a journey and speaks of ordering one's life along this path. The path they are walking on is governed by the old sin nature that is dominated by passionate cravings of things that imprisoned us by their desire and will end our destruction if continued.

2. Vs. 10b "***Despise authority***": The Greek word for "despise" means to "look down upon" and the word "authority" is a word that is used for the Lordship of Jesus and is probably a reference to 2:1 where we were told that these false teachers "*even deny the Lord who bought them*".
3. Vs. 10c "***Presumptuous, self-willed***": Peter further describes them as lacking the normal fear of most people and instead being consumed with self-pleasing and arrogant narcissism.
4. Vs. 10d-11 "***Not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries***": Here Peter prefaces this with the comparison between angels who are naturally superior in knowledge and power than false teachers, yet they don't speak reproachfully against fallen angels, as Jude states in verse 9. The point is that these false teachers were often criticizing others who disagreed with them.

III. Vs. 12-17 Depravity of false teachers

Vs. 12-17 Peter now moves from the general description of false teachers to their fivefold depravity.

1. Vs.12 "***Brute beasts***": Their best feature is that they were "alive" but like animals they were enslaved to their fleshly instincts which governed their conduct. That is fine for the animal kingdom as they were created by God that way but for those created to be in His image to lack the gift of natural reasoning of thought and

judgment that ensured their own destruction. They demonstrate this Peter says by *“speaking evil of things they do not understand”* and it is such depravity that leads to their own destruction.

2. Vs. 13 *“Spots and blemishes”*: Peter starts this verse by stating that these false teachers are going to reap what they have sown. One area that they will reap is described for us in the words *“who count it a pleasure to carouse in the daytime”*. They counted it a best blessing to indulge in sin in the daytime and the word *“carouse”* is the Greek word for orgy which was not even considered by the Romans as appropriate. This perhaps is a reference to a type of false teaching that believed that the spirit of man was unaffected by the flesh of man, so it was encouraged to pursue pleasure of all types. The phrase *“spots and blemishes”* remind us of Paul’s words in Eph 5:27 where the Lord was going to present His church without any *“spots and blemishes”*. To make matters worse they were doing so when the church gathered turning such gathering of the saints causing them to engage in the same behavior as these false teachers.
3. Vs. 14 *“Eyes full of adultery”*: This phrase describes a specific area of depravity by which these false teachers viewed every woman they saw as an object weighing the possibility of her sexual performance. They were predators seducing *“unstable souls”*. But their covetous didn’t end there they were engaged in a conquest for whatever their flesh desired and should that they had abandoned their faith.
4. Vs. 15-16 *“Following the way of Balaam”*: Peter explains how these individuals came to be as they deliberately forsook the right way. They did so like Balaam in

Num 22-25 who loved the “wages loved the wages of righteousness” who commercialized his gift. These false teachers were in the “profession” for what they gained out of it! Peter contrasts the ignorance of a donkey with the madness of the prophet as the message of the donkey made more sense than the actions of Balaam!

5. Vs. 17 “*Wells without water*”: Peter finishes this section with metaphors that would mean far more to those who lived in an arid climate. He says they were “*wells without water*” where a well offers hope and joy to those who those on a journey but to find a well that had no water is the cruelest thing to a person in dire need for water of the word of God. Likewise, “*clouds carried by the tempest*” as rainfall was a matter of life and death who were dependent upon rain to water crops. But when the storm promised by the clouds was driven past the land in desperate need for it for it fails to deliver what it has promised!

IV. Vs. 18-22 Deception of false teachers

Vs. 18-22 Peter offers two more points about the deception of false teachers:

1. Vs. 18-19 *Great swelling words of emptiness*: The point Peter makes here is that they put more emphasis upon “HOW” they says things then the content of “WHAT” they say. Such a wrong emphasis cause the listener to be seduced into the lust of the flesh who are captive by the very things they saw will give them liberty. These false teachers were offering something that they did not possess’ “freedom”. These false teachers had been around the truth of God’s word yet had not been changed by it! There is no greater ignorance then to know God’s Word and depart from obedience to it! And to make matters worse these false teachers

didn't stop at their own depravity they taught the same depravity to others. They were drunk drivers causing others to be in the same car as them as they drove off a cliff!

2. Vs. 20-22 ***Professors of truth but not possessors of truth***: Peter concludes with two illustrations the first of which was out of Proverbs 26:11 and its behavior which is to reject that which turns its stomach only to return and devour it again. The other illustration is from that of a pig who is cleansed from the outside, but such a scrubbing did nothing to cleanse its habits as it returns to wash itself in its own filth.

Next week we start the final section of this little letter of Peter as we take on the 3rd chapter.