

**THE EPISTLE OF
2 PETER**

***ADDRESSING
FALSE TEACHERS***

**PRESENTED TO THE
NORTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST**

2010

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2 Peter

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2Peter Introduction

I. From the beginning of time there have been those who have twisted the word of God to their own destruction. For example we have the serpent in the Garden. (**Gen 3:1-6**)

II. These false teachers also existed in the 1st century at the time of the NT writings,
Gal. 1:6,7
2Pet. 3:14-16

III. Sadly, these same kind of false teachers exist today – Article on the Evangelical Luther church suggesting the Bible not the final authority on Homosexuality.

IV. It is now even commonplace to hear of those who are leading congregations of the Lord's body into apostasy. These false teachers have become known as change agents.

V. With all that is taking place within the brotherhood, I believe it is a good idea to study an epistle that addresses a similar situation, **2Peter**.

1. Peter is writing to Christians who are dealing with false teachers, **2Pet. 2:1**
2. These false teachers were baptized believers, **2:1,15,20**
3. These false teachers advocate living a worldly lifestyle, **2Pet. 2:12-15**
4. In the process they will lead many away from the truth, **2Peter 2:2**

VI. *This study is intended to give us some insights into how false teachers work and how we might be better prepared to handle them.*

Trans: In our lesson today we will consider an overview of 2 Peter looking into how Peter describes these false teachers and their work.

1. The doctrine of the false teachers

- A. They deny that there is to be a judgment day at the coming of Christ.
 1. Their denial is implied in, **2Peter 2:1-10a**
 2. They scoff at the apostolic teaching of the second coming, **3:3,4**

- B. They advocate a worldly lifestyle, (since there is no judgment)
 1. **2:2,7,18** Peter accuses them of sensuality
 2. **2:10**, they indulge in the flesh
 3. **2:13**, they revel in the daytime and entice other Christians
 4. **2:14**, they have eyes full of adultery and they never cease from sin
 5. **2:18**, they entice by fleshly desire.
 6. **2:19**, they have become slaves of corruption
 7. **2:20**, they are entangled in the defilement's of the world.

Appl: As we study through second Peter, we find that some Christians have allowed their fleshly desires to dictate their doctrine.

Today the change agents may not be teaching the same doctrines as in 1Peter, but the direction they are taking is similar.

Ultimately what we are seeing a push towards sensuality. These change agents are now teaching and practicing things which appeal to one's fleshly desires. It is the new Christianity based upon what feels good and what satisfies one's desires.

They are false teachers because what they are promoting is not part of the Christian doctrine. These things are not authorized in the scriptures.

Trans: The second aspect of the false teachers we want to consider is their character.

2. The character of the false teachers

A. Their motivation

1. Greed - a desire for money
 - a. **2 Peter 2:3**
 - b. **2 Peter 2:14**
 - c. **2 Peter 2:15,16**
2. Lust - desire to gratify the flesh
 - a. **2 Peter 2:1**
 - b. **2 Peter 2:14**
 - c. **2 Peter 3:3**

B. Their attributes

1. Like animals without conscience or reasoning power, **2 Peter 2:12**
2. They are untaught and unstable, **2 Peter 3:16**
3. They are unprincipled, **2 Peter 3:17**
4. They are deceptive
 - a. **2 Peter 2:1**
 - b. **2 Peter 2:17-22**, they promise what they cannot deliver.
5. They are disloyal to Christ
 - a. **2 Peter 2:1**, they deny him
 - b. **2 Peter 2:20-22**, they have returned to their old ways of sin.
6. They are daring and self-willed, **2 Peter 2:10**
7. They are mockers, **2 Peter 2:14**

Appl: As with the false teachers in 2 Peter, we find many of the same characteristics in the change agents today.

Many are motivated by greed; they want the large congregations where they can make lots of money.

Many are motivated by their own desires. They want Christianity to fit what they want and they will push to have it that way.

They have the same attributes - many are untaught, unstable and unprincipled. They are deceptive, daring and self-willed. And they too find themselves being disloyal to Christ, although they might not think so.

Evangelical Lutheran leader suggests Bible not the final authority

Associated Press - 12/7/2009 7:20:00 AM

CHICAGO - The presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is suggesting that the Bible isn't the last word on homosexuality.

In a town hall meeting Sunday, Bishop Mark Hanson said, "the understanding we have of homosexuality today does not seem to be reflected at all in the context of the biblical writers." Therefore, he said, Lutherans should consider more modern views on sexual orientation.

At its churchwide convention in August, the ELCA lifted its ban on partnered gay and lesbian clergy, prompting some traditional congregations to withhold funds and begin forming a separate denomination.

But Hanson insisted the ELCA can accommodate both views. In his words, "God is still speaking to us."

He also suggests that more homosexual-friendly policies may help the denomination grow.

2Peter

Introduction Part 2

I. We live in a world today where few believe absolute truth is a reality. Truth has become a relative concept. It depends upon the person or situation.

II. This same way of thinking has found its way into how people view Christian doctrine.

1. This can be seen by the mere fact that so many denominations exist all teaching varying doctrines.
2. This is also supported by the fact that these same denominations accept the other without question of what is being taught, as if truth was relative to that particular group.
3. The only time something is considered error is when it is to the extreme
 - a. Mormons
 - b. Jehovah Witnesses

III. But is this the way the first century viewed truth? Was there an acceptance of varying Christian beliefs or was there a call to unity?

1. 1Cor. 1:10
2. Phil. 1:27
3. 2John 9,10

IV. In my lesson last week I began my introduction to the epistle of 2Peter.

1. In this epistle Peter is dealing with the problem of false teachers.
2. He is describing what they teach; what their character is like; what methods they use, and they result of their teachings.

V. *This study is intended to give us some insights into how false teachers work and how we might be better prepared to handle them.*

VI. So far we have covered two facts about false teachers, as described in 2Peter.

- 1. The doctrine of the false teachers**
- 2. The character of the false teachers**

1. The doctrine of the false teachers

- A. They deny that there is to be a judgment day at the coming of Christ,
2Pet.3:3,4
- B. They advocate a worldly lifestyle, (since there is no judgment)
2Pet. 2:10

2. The character of the false teachers

- A. Their motivation
 1. Greed, **2 Peter 2:3**
 2. Lust, **2 Peter 2:12-14**

B. Their attributes

1. They are deceptive, **2 Peter 2:1**
2. They are untaught and unstable, **2 Peter 3:16**

VII. This morning we want to turn our attention to the two remaining points concerning false teachers.

3. The methods of the false teachers

4. The fruit of the false teachers

VIII. Again, *This study is intended to give us some insights into how false teachers work and how we might be better prepared to handle them.*

Trans: Lets not consider how these false teachers in 2 Peter are getting their work done.

3. The methods of the false teachers

- A. They remove truth, which confronts and refutes them
1. **2 Peter 1:16-18**, they reject the apostles teachings (fables)
 2. **2 Peter 1:19-21**, they reject prophetic revelation (human interpretation)
 3. **2 Peter 3:16**, they distort all the Scriptures
- B. They target weaker brothers
1. **2 Peter 2:14**, they entice unstable souls
 2. **2 Peter 2:18**, prey on those who barely escape those who live in error.
- C. They promote their error in craftiness.
1. **2 Peter 2:1**, they employ stealth in their approach, secretly
 2. **2 Peter 2:1**, they preach their opinions, (destructive heresies) as truth
 3. **2 Peter 2:3**, they are forced to use false words, to accommodate their deception, (2 Peter 2:13)
 4. **2 Peter 2:17-22**, they preach and promise what people want to hear
 5. **2 Peter 3:5-13**, they omit from their teaching obvious biblical truths

Appl: As we consider this point about the false teachers Peter is referring to I believe we see some of the clearest examples of what is taking place today.

Those who are seeking to change the Lords church today have very similar methods as those in the first century.

1. They remove the truth that confronts and refutes them by saying we need a new Hermeneutic (way of interpreting scripture).
2. They target those brothers that are less taught and more able to be swayed.
3. They go about the work in an underhanded crafty way. Slowly introducing their false doctrines. ie. women serving the Lord's table at night, or a contemporary service in the evening.

The same methods that were used in the first century are being applied today. And the result sadly is the same.

Trans: This takes us to our final point.

4. The fruit of the false teachers

- A. What they produce for them shows they are false teachers
 - 1. **2 Peter 2:21**, swift destruction
 - 2. **2 Peter 2:9**, their own judgment
 - 3. **2 Peter 2:14**, they become accursed
 - 4. **2 Peter 2:12**, they are headed for destruction
 - 5. **2 Peter 2:19**, they are slaves of corruption
 - 6. **2 Peter 2:20**, they are in a worse state than an unbeliever
 - 7. **2 Peter 3:7**, they are headed for judgment and destruction
 - 8. **2 Peter 3:16**, they are destroying themselves.

- B. What they produce concerning the church shows they are false teachers
 - 1. **2 Peter 2:2**, they will lead many away
 - 2. **2 Peter 2:2**, they hurt evangelist efforts through maligning the truth
 - 3. **2 Peter 2:3**, brothers are exploited and financially support error
 - 4. **2 Peter 2:13**, Christians are led to carouse with them.
 - 5. **2 Peter 2:14,18**, Weaker brothers are corrupted
 - 6. **2 Peter 2:17**, Christians fall from their steadfastness.

Appl: When you look at what is taking place in the church today and compare it to what Peter is writing about the results of what is taking place is no different.

The fruit of false teaching will always be the same. The false teachers will bring upon themselves their own destruction and the church will be hurt in the process.

Con:

- 1. The doctrine of the false teachers**
- 2. The character of the false teachers**
- 3. The methods of the false teachers**
- 4. The fruit of the false teachers**

Holding to Scriptural Authority **2Peter 1:1-4**

I. From the beginning of time there have been those who have tried to change the God's will for mankind, Gen. 3:1-6

II. Today there are those who are seeking to change the church that Christ built.

1. I am not speaking about denominationalism.
2. This change is coming from within the church.
3. This people have come to be known as "change agents."

III. In the end what they will accomplish is the destruction of souls. This has always been the case whenever God's word is altered, **Acts 20:28-30**

IV. To help combat this problem we will be considering the epistle of 2Peter. In studying this epistle we find many similarities between what Peter is speaking about and what is happening today.

1. The problem is internal, a Christian problem, **2Peter 2:1**
2. The subject is enlightened knowledge, (Peter uses the word knowledge or a form of it 16 x's in this epistle).
1:2; 1:3; 1:5; 1:6; 1:8; 1:12; 1:20; 2:12; 2:20; 3:3; 3:18
3. Peter is dealing with incipient Gnosticism; which is foolish or unwise knowledge. The false teachers are telling these Christians that they really don't know the whole truth and that they possess a clearer and truer knowledge than these Christians.

V. As Peter begins his second epistle his approach in dealing with these false teachers is to establish a few facts up front.

1. He establishes His authority and thus the authority of what he is about to say.
2. He establishes that these Christians including himself are presently in the faith apart from what these false teachers are offering.

VI. This should be the same approach we take. *If we hold to the authority of the Scriptures we can be sure that we are in the faith apart from what some are attempting to teach today.*

Trans: To begin, lets consider this concept of authority.

1. Biblical authority must be established when dealing with false teachers.

A. As Peter begins his second epistle, he uses two phrases that establishes the authority of what he is going to be teaching, **v.1**

1. First, Peter refers himself as "Simon Peter"
 - a. This name includes his Jewish birth name "Simon" and the name Jesus gave him, "Peter"

b. By doing this he makes an intimate connection between Jesus and himself.

2Pet. 1:13,14; (John 21:18-19)

2Pet. 1:16-18; (Matt. 17:1-13)

c. Unlike these false teachers, Peter can support the authority he has and the authority in what he speaks. He walked and live with Jesus personally, they didn't.

2. Secondly, Peter refers to himself as an "apostle of Jesus Christ"
 - a. Brother Guy N Woods states, **"These words, "an apostle," are descriptive of the nature of Peter's work in the service of the Lord, and "of Jesus Christ," the source of the authority by which he exercised it."**
 - b. The word apostle refers to an envoy or ambassador, ot signifies one sent on a mission with proper credentials, **2Pet. 3:1,2**
 - c. Peter establishes that he has the authority to say the things he is going to say. He is an apostle of Jesus and thus establishes his credentials.

Appl: As we consider how Peter begins his second epistle there is a lesson to be learned in dealing with false teachers. We must always uphold the authority of Gods word.

Peter did it by showing he had a personal relationship with Jesus and then by declaring his apostleship. Peter appealed to this as his means of authority.

We too must do the same thing. We appeal to the relationship that all God's inspired writers had with Him, and thus recognize the authority of the things they wrote.

Trans: Once Peter has established the concept of Biblical authority, he now turns his attention to those he is writing to.

2. When dealing with false teachers we must remember where we presently stand in regards to the faith.

A. 2Peter 1:1b-4

B. The false teachers Peter is dealing with are telling these Christians that they have yet to be truly enlightened, 2 Pet. 2:18,19.

C. To counter this Peter establishes the relationship these Christians presently have with the Lord.

1. They have already received a faith as the same kind as Peters and others, **v.1**
 - a. This faith they possess does not come through some outside knowledge of man but by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

- b. This faith Peter is speaking about refers to where they now stand in the faith. It is indicative of their relationship with God, **Gal. 1:22,23.**
 - c. In other words, they are already part of the faith as a religious system.

- 2. They possess grace and peace through the knowledge of Jesus, **v.2**
 - a. The knowledge Peter speaks of here is not the normal word for knowledge, but is actually a stronger word. *It is a knowledge directed towards an object, is always maturing and is fixed closely upon the object. It is a full knowledge.*
 - b. It is in this full knowledge that grace and peace are multiplied because this knowledge is not merely a possession of facts, but a deep loving contemplation of the object.

- 3. They have all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Jesus, **v.3**
 - a. Again Peter uses the stronger form of the word knowledge, as in v.2.
 - b. It is in this full knowledge, which they presently possess, that they are granted all things that pertain to life and godliness.
 - 1) Life, refers to the spiritual life of the soul
 - 2) Godliness refers to the reverence and piety needed to maintain it.

- 4. They have already been granted the precious and magnificent promises so that they can be partakers of the divine nature, **v.4**
 - a. Partakers of the divine nature refers to the spiritual state of the Christian in relationship to God.
 - b. The precious and magnificent promises were granted so that they might share in God's glory and holiness, **Heb. 12:10.**
 - c. Through these promises they have escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.
 - d. These precious and magnificent promises must then refer to the forgiveness of sins through Jesus, which allows one to become partakers of His divine nature,
 - 1Pet. 1:14-16
 - 2Pet. 3:13,14
 - e. Illust: **Rom. 6:12-13**

Appl: In laying out his argument to fend off the false teachers, Peter reminds these Christians of four facts about where they currently stand.

- 1. Already have a faith like Peter and other Christians, v.1
- 2. Already possess grace and peace and it is being multiplied in their lives, v.2
- 3. Have already been granted all things that pertain to life and godliness, v.3
- 4. Already have the promises and are partakers of the divine nature, v.4

They possess all of this through the full knowledge of Jesus Christ and apart from the foolish knowledge these false teachers are trying to bring in.

Peter shows them that there is no need for what these false teachers are teaching because it cannot and will not add to what they already have.

This is what we need to remember today. When the change agents move in they will attempt to enlighten us. They will proclaim that we have not yet reached the level of spirituality as they have. We are still living in the dark ages of Christianity.

But nothing they have to offer can add to what we already possess and we must remember that.

If what we already have provides all that we need, then what they are seeking to bring in cannot be part of what we need.

Con: This should be the same approach we take in dealing with the change agents.

1. We must challenge them to support what they are teaching, through the authority of the scriptures.
2. We must remember what we already possess and where we stand apart from what they are offering.

If we hold to the authority of the Scriptures we can be assured that we are in the faith apart from what some are attempting to teach today.

Continuing on the path of the divine nature

2Peter 1:5-8

I. It never ceases to amaze me how people who claim to be Christian have so little respect or regard for the Word of God. For example, I came across an article from the AP dealing with the Presbyterian Church USA and their view of John 14:6.

II. This same type of thinking has found its way into the church today.

1. Some are rejecting baptism as necessary for salvation.
2. Some have turned the Lord's Supper into a romantic meal, complete with candles and background music.
3. Others seek to expand the parameters of fellowship by embracing all who merely believe in Jesus.

III. The question we should be asking ourselves is, "Do any of these teachings actually relate to our current state as a Christian?"

IV. In our lesson from 2 Peter last week we noted that the Christians Peter is writing to are facing false teachers. These false teachers are introducing doctrines contrary to what these Christians have already been taught, **2Pet. 2:1**

V. But Peter shows them that they are already in a saved state, apart from what the false teachers are introducing.

1. He reminded these Christians that they arrived at their current state through Jesus, **2Pet 1:1,2**
2. As Christians they are partakers of the divine nature, **2Pet. 1:3,4.**
3. Nothing the false teachers have introduced had any part in making them what they are.

IV. Peter is now going to show that what these Christians need to add to their faith has nothing to do with what these false teachers are introducing.

V. The message is the same for us today. *What Christians need to add to their faith are those things which render them neither useless or unfruitful.*

Trans: To keep them on this path Peter gives 7 true qualities of the Christian life that they must add to their faith.

1. 7 True Qualities of the Christian life

A. 2 Peter 1:5-7

B. Here Peter lists seven qualities we are to be adding to our Christian faith.

1. The word *applying* (NASB), *add* in the KJV, Literally means, "bringing in by the side of."

2. Peter is saying, God did His part in providing the means to become partakers of the divine nature, you must do ours by bringing these qualities in alongside of your faith.

3. These qualities are all connected to and stem from our faith and from nothing else.

4. We are also told as Christians that we are to pursue after these with a fervor, **v. 5**, and make them a permanent possession of ours, **v.8**

C. Now, let's consider the seven qualities we are to add to our faith,

1. Moral excellence, also translated virtue (KJV) - v.5

a. This is the determination to do what is right, **1Cor. 16:13**

b. This word is also used in reference to Jesus, 2Peter 1:3

2. Knowledge - v.5

a. This is an intellectual knowledge that is gained and grows out of the pursuit and practice of moral excellence.

b. Since we have determined to do what is right we must seek to know what is right, **Heb. 5:14; Eph. 5:10,17.**

3. Self-control - v.6

a. The word self control is derived from a word that means "one who holds himself in," and denotes self governance.

b. Compared to a life of giving in to our fleshly desires as the false teachers are promoting, the Christian is to be in self-control, Gal. 5:22-23

4. Perseverance - v. 6

a. This is a conscious submission of our human will to the Holy will of God and it involves more than resignation to life's difficulties.

b. This is a courageous resistance to hostile attack.

c. Unlike patience it has an active content. We must keep on keeping on.

d. **2Tim. 4:1ff**

5. Godliness - v.6

a. This is not the concept of God-like-ness, but God-ward-ness

b. It is a humble, reverent, deep piety towards God that leads to a godly life, **2Pet. 3:14; 2Tim. 3:12**

d. This is something the false teachers don't have.

6. Brotherly kindness - v.7

a. This is a love for the brethren, a brotherly love

b. It is to be kind, generous, and courteous to the brethren

c. The false teachers don't have this love, **2Peter. 2:18**

7. Love - v.7

- a. This is the final quality of the Christian character.
- b. This is the agape love, not a love of emotion but of intellect.
- c. It is a decision of the mind that seeks the highest good for others.
- d. Again, the false teachers do not possess this because they are seeking what pleases their own lusts, 2Peter 2:12-14

Appl: An interesting fact about these qualities is that they stand in direct opposition to what the false teachers are offering.

2Pet 2:2 - a life of sensuality

2Pet 2:3 - a life of greed

2Pet. 2:10 - a life indulging in the flesh

2Pet. 2:13 - a life of reveling and carousing

2Pet 2:14 - a life full of sin and eyes full of adultery

The message Peter gave to these Christians is the same message we need to hear and understand today.

Instead of pursuing after what these change agents are bringing in, we must continue to follow the path of the divine nature.

Nothing that the change agents are bringing in today will help us become partakers of this and their teachings add nothing to our faith.

We must diligently seek to add **THE SEVEN** Christians qualities to our lives Peter speaks of.

In our faith...

1. We must make a determination to do what is right
2. In seeking to what is right we must seek to know what is right
3. Knowing what is right we will control our desires to do what is wrong.
4. In controlling our desires we will need to actively stand against the hostile attacks of sin and those who oppose our life.
5. In persevering we must have an attitude that is humble and reverent towards God so we might continue on.
6. Having that humble and reverent attitude we will love our brethren and we will seek their highest good.

What is the outcome of this path as compared to what the false teachers are offering?

2Pet. 1:8

What Christians need to add to their faith are those things which render them neither useless or unfruitful.

Presbyterian Church USA: Some reject John 14:6

Associated Press - 2/11/2010 5:50:00 AM

LOUISVILLE, KY - A poll of members of the Presbyterian Church USA shows a significant percentage of them now reject the exclusivity of the gospel message.

The Statement of Faith of the nation's largest Presbyterian denomination says God through Jesus Christ delivers followers "from death to life eternal."

But a poll done by the Presbyterian Panel's "Religious and Demographic Profile of Presbyterians" found that 36 percent of members disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement: "Only followers of Jesus Christ can be saved."

Another 39 percent, or about two-fifths, agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

Assurance of Our Future Inheritance **2Peter 1:8-11**

I. In our lesson last week I noted that Peter is instructing his Christian brethren to continue on the same path that led them to become partakers of the divine nature in the first place. To do this he gives them seven Christian qualities they are to add to their faith.

II. These seven qualities are,

- 1. Moral excellence** - determination to do what is right
- 2. Knowledge** - intellectual knowledge, knowing what is right
- 3. Self-control** - a self-governing mind-set
- 4. Perseverance** - a courageous resistance against hostile attacks
- 5. Godliness** - a humble, reverent, deep piety towards God.
- 6. Brotherly kindness** - love for the brethren
- 7. Love** - a decision of the mind that seeks the highest good for others.

III. Peter is saying, “Rather than following after the heresies being introduced by these false teachers, these Christians need to seek true spiritual things.”

IV. As Peter continues his argument he now tells them why they must follow this path, **2Peter 1:8-11**. Peter tells them by doing this they can be assured of their future.

V. This is our message for today, *“By following the path on which we started we can be assured of the future inheritance we seek.”*

Trans: As we consider our text this morning, note that Peter divides this section into two parts, the negative and the positive.

1. The negative result of not adding to our faith.

A. 2 Peter 1:8,9

B. In these passages Peter clearly shows that to not continue on the right path will lead to a falling away from the faith, **2Pet. 1:10**

C. This being the case Peter gives 4 characteristics of one who does not add the 7 spiritual qualities to their faith.

1. Useless, v.8

- a. If the qualities are not yours as a Christian – you are useless
- b. The false teachers did not possess the qualities
- c. Unprofitable, idle, unemployed, same word in, **Matt. 20:3**
- d. It is the concept of faith without works, James 2:20

2. Unfruitful, v.8

- a. If the qualities are not yours– you are unfruitful
- b. The false teachers did not possess these qualities
- c. To be unfruitful means without fruit, barren.
- d. This is the mark of the heretic, **Jude 12**
- e. These false teachers produce no spiritual fruit

3. Blind or shortsighted, v. 9

- a. When these two words are used together it is speaking of a specific kind of blindness.
- b. One who blinks his eyes while looking at objects far away.
- c. The medical term is myopia - one who can only see things near to the eye.
- d. In this sense, this person can only see the present world in front of him. He cannot see the greater glories of what is ahead.
- e. Demas is an example of this, **2Tim. 4:9,10**

4. There is a forgetting of the purification from former sins, v.9

- a. This is a voluntary action.
- b. When one rejects pursuing after the Christian qualities he loses sight of what is up ahead and willfully forgets his purification from sin.
- c. This is the path the false teachers have taken,
 1. **2Pet. 2:14,15**
 2. 2Pet. 2:20-22

Appl: In 2Pet. 1:8,9 we can see that there is a warning for those who choose not to add the seven qualities of the Christian faith to their faith.

Overall the warning is the surety that you will fall from the faith.

That is what these heretics have done. They did not add to their faith and lost sight of what was ahead. They became focused on the only thing they could see clearly, the world. Focusing on the world, they went after it and right back into what they had escaped from.

For us today the message is the same, if we choose not to add to our faith we can be assured that we will fall from the faith.

Trans: In 2Peter 1:8-11 Peter also describes what happens if we add the 7 Christian characteristics to our faith. This is our second point.

2. The positive result of adding to our faith.

A. 2Peter 1:10-11

B. As Peter begins to describe the positive side of adding to our faith he first gives a warning.

1. He begins by saying, **therefore**. *Knowing what will happen if you don't add to your faith; be sure that you do add to your faith.*

2. So we are told to be all the more diligent. This phrase, "all the more diligent" in the NASB is a combination of two Greek words.

a. It is hasten

b. And secondly, even more so. This is a sense of urgency.

c. This is also in the middle voice, which means you are acting in reference to yourself. You have to do this.

C. In what follows, Peter shows three positive results of continuing on the right path, contrary to what the false teachers are promoting.

1. We can be certain of His calling and choosing of us, v.10

a. We need to clarify that the calling and choosing are two different things,

b. This calling refers to the divine call of God in Christ Jesus.

1. **2Tim. 1:9**

2. It is God who calls, John 6:44,45

3. It is a calling that comes through the gospel, to live righteously, **2Thess. 2:14,15**

c. The choosing is God's acceptance of us,

1. God chose us because we have obeyed the calling,

2. Matt. 22:1-14

d. God calling us, and our obeying the calling leads to our being chosen.

e. Being "all the more certain" means these acts will not be in vain.

2. We will never stumble, v.10

a. Stumble literally means, "*to strike ones foot against an object and fall.*"

b. Peter is saying that if we add to our faith the 7 spiritual qualities previously mentioned we will never fall from the faith.

c. There is also a warning here, "*If we don't practice these things we can fall from grace.*"

d. **Phil. 2:12**

3. Entrance into the eternal kingdom is abundantly supplied, v.11

- a. Here we have the completion of our faith.
- b. By adding to our faith the seven Christian qualities and by being diligent to increase in them we are assured of our eternal home.

Appl: What the false teachers are promoting will never accomplish what adding the seven Christians qualities to your faith can.

It is only through this avenue that we can be assured of our future inheritance of the eternal kingdom.

“By following the path on which we started we can be assured of the future inheritance we seek.”

Con: So many today seem to have forgotten what is it they need to following. It seems that people have become shortsighted, looking only at what’s in front of them and not what’s down the road.

This can be seen in the fact that they are doing things that are not authorized by the Scriptures. They are appealing to the flesh and not the spirit.

If we are to be assured of our inheritance then we must follow the path that God has laid before us. If we are going to add anything to our Christian faith it must be the seven qualities Peter has mentioned.

In doing this I can be assured of the inheritance that is before me. No man made innovation can provide that assurance.

“By following the path on which we started we can be assured of the future inheritance we seek.”

The reason for the reminder

2Peter 1:12-15

- I. As I have been going through this series on 2Peter I have been mentioning false teachers quite a bit.
- II. The importance of this subject cannot be overstated.
 1. The New Testament books speak of false teachers regularly. (cf. Chart)
 2. This tells me that the problem of false teachers is an important subject.
- III. Since false teachers are mentioned so often in the Bible, it's apparent that God wants it preached. But why?
 1. Our salvation is so important, God made sure we would be aware of the difficulties we would face as Christians. One of those difficulties is false teachers.
 2. It would be a shame to be eternally lost because we were unaware of the false teaching that is out there.
- IV. Peter understood this; and knowing of the work of the false teachers, he set out to protect the brethren from the heresies that would lead them away from God, **2Peter 1:12-15**.
- V. It's clear that Peter wants to remind them of some things so that they will not lose their salvation.
- VI. This is why it is so important for us to hear these things today.
 1. We need to remind ourselves of what God has done for us through Jesus, **2Peter 1:1-4**
 - a. We have a faith like Peter and others
 - b. Peace and grace are multiplied to us
 - c. We have all things that pertain to life and godliness
 - d. We have escaped the corruption of the world and are partakers of the divine nature.
 2. We need to remind ourselves to grow in our faith, **2Peter 1:5-7**
 - a. Moral excellence
 - b. Knowledge
 - c. Self control
 - d. Perseverance
 - e. Godliness
 - f. Brotherly kindness
 - g. Love
 3. We need to remind ourselves of the result of adding to our faith, **2Peter 1:8-11**
 - a. We can be certain of His calling and choosing us
 - b. We will never stumble
 - c. Entrance into the eternal kingdom is supplied.

VII. We need to remind ourselves of these things because there are false teachers out there and they are seeking to lead us away from God, **2Peter 2:1**

VIII. The point is, “**We must never forget what we know to be true lest we too fall into the trap of the false teachers.**”

IX. Peter supports this idea with two points.

- 1. Being reminded stirs us up**
- 2. The teacher will not always be around**

Trans: Lets consider what Peter has to say about the need for reminding them of these things.

1. Being reminded stirs us up.

A. **2Peter. 1:12,13**

B. Some times it’s easy for us to become complacent in our faith because we already possess some knowledge and we are confident in our salvation.

1. Peter says these Christians already knew these things, v.12
2. He also says they are already established in the truth, v.12

C. But they cannot become complacent lest they find themselves moving away from the faith, Heb. 2:1

D. Sometimes something can become so common place in our life that we neglect it.

E. To keep this from happening, Peter says he wants to stir them up.

1. In the original language this word is present infinitive, which means it’s a continuous action. Peter wants to continually stir them up.
2. To stir up is to excite them, to arouse them, to awaken them,
3. This is the way they need to always be, **2Peter 3:17**

F. Consider how many times this concept is mentioned in the NT

1. Rom 15:15
2. 1Cor. 4:17
3. 2Tim. 2:14
4. Jude 5

Illust: What did I speak about two Sundays ago, not generally but specifically? (**The 7 virtues**)

Appl: There is always a need to stir up the mind of the Christian. Peter says this can be done by way of reminder.

We cannot fool ourselves into thinking that we will not be affected by false teaching and false teachers. We must do what's necessary to stay faithful and so we must stir ourselves up by way of reminder.

The point is, **“We must never forget what we know to be true lest we too fall into the trap of the false teachers.”**

Trans: Peter gives a second reason for the need to be reminded.

2. The teacher will not always be around

A. **2Peter 1:14,15**

B. Peter knows that his death is imminent. It is either coming shortly or will happen quickly; either way he will be gone.

C. Peter wants to be sure these Christians will stay faithful after he is gone.

D. In writing these things down, Peter assures they will always be able to call these things to mind, **2Pet. 3:1,2**

E. This has always been God's plan,

1. It seen in the sending of the H.S. John 14:26

2. It's seen in the things that were written before, Rom. 15:4

3. Its seen in those appointed to serve the church through teaching, **Eph. 4:10-15**

Appl: This is something we must be aware of.

Sometimes congregations go through a period when they have an ample supply of sound knowledgeable teachers, but for one reason or another they loose those teachers.

What you then have is a congregation without those capable of reminding the brethren of what faithful living is all about. This is an open door for the false teachers.

We need to be constantly reminded of the need for teachers in our congregation, because the ones we have will not always be here.

But, we must also be willing to remind ourselves of what it means to live faithfully by diligently seeking out God's will as we look into his written word. In doing this we can fend off the false teachers.

The point is, **“We must never forget what we know to be true lest we too fall into the trap of the false teachers.”**

Con: At the close of 2Peter chapter 1, we have the purpose of this epistle. Peter wants to remind these Christians of some important things.

This too is the reason for these lessons. Although we might already know these things and we might already be established in them, there is always a need to remind ourselves of these things so we might remain faithful to them.

Without question, there are false teachers in the world. If we do not go back over what was brought to us today, we might find ourselves becoming prey for the false teachers.

So, let us remind ourselves of these things because there are false teachers out there and they are seeking to lead us away from God,

The point is, **“We must never forget what we know to be true lest we too fall into the trap of the false teachers.”**

Assured of the Message Preached

2Peter 1:16-21

I. I think we would all agree that assurance is a wonderful thing. Assurance determines whether we commit to something or not, especially when it comes to important issues

1. For example, lately Toyota has been having problems with their gas pedals getting stuck. People have been killed because of this.
2. Toyota knows how important this issue is, that's why they have recalled millions of cars and are running a whole new advertising campaign trying to reassure the public that they are taking care of the problem.
3. Toyota knows that if they cannot reassure the consumer that this problem is fixed their sales will plummet.

II. When it comes to the word of God assurance is also a must. If I cannot be assured that Bible is the word of God, I will not put my trust in it.

III. Assurance that the Bible is the Word of God keeps me faithful to it because I can be certain that I am following the will of God.

V. In our lesson this morning we want to consider how this assurance motivates us to stay faithful.

1. As we have been looking into 2Peter, Peter has been instructing these Christians to continue on the path on which they started.
2. To assist them in staying the course, Peter turns to the assurance they have in the message being preached.
3. In doing this he also refutes the claims of the false teachers.
4. **2 Peter 1:16-21**

VI. Peter is telling these Christians that they can be sure of their standing in God because of the assurance of the message being preached.

VII. This is the same for us today. **We can be sure of our standing with God because we are assured that the Bible is His Word.**

VIII. In our text under consideration Peter provides two assurances that the message they are hearing is true.

1. **Eyewitness testimony provides assurance.**
2. **The source of message provides assurance.**

Trans: In a court of law eyewitness testimony carries a great amount of weight because it is testimony from one who actually heard and saw what happened. Judges and jurors feel more assured that their verdict is correct when a credible eyewitness is involved.

1. Eyewitness testimony provides assurance.

A. **2Peter 1:16-19**

B. From Peter's words it is clear that the false teachers are trying to convince these Christians that what they have heard from the apostles is not accurate,

2Peter 1:16a

2Peter 3:3,4

C. Peter assures them that they can trust his message, because he is giving eyewitness testimony, **2Peter 1:16b**

D. Peter then makes it clear that besides the eyewitness testimony, our assurance also comes from what was witnessed.

1. Peter says they witnessed His majesty, **v.16-18**

2. What he is referring to is Jesus' transfiguration, Matt. 17:1-5

3. Upon His transfiguration, God gave His approval of Jesus by saying, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to Him!"

4. What Peter is saying here is similar to, 1John 1:1-4.

E. With this eyewitness testimony and the content of that testimony what is Peter's conclusion?

1. **2Peter 1:19**

2. Until Jesus comes this is what you need to be listening to.

Appl: Although some were trying to distort the word of God, Peter assures us that what he speaks is the truth.

Peter and others were eyewitnesses to what transpired with Jesus. They both saw Him and heard the Father's approval.

Peter is telling these Christians they can be sure of the message they hear and have heard because the testimony is coming from an eyewitness. It is factual and supported.

It is the same for us. We can be assured that the message of the Bible is true because the eyewitnesses preserved that message for us.

And we can always be sure of the message if we support all that we teach through the words of the Bible.

We can be sure of our standing with God because we are assured that the Bible is God's Word.

As for the false teachers then and now, they cannot offer this assurance if they cannot support their teachings through the word of God.

Trans: Not only do they have the eyewitness of Peter but, they can be sure that what they have heard about Jesus is true because of the source of the message. This is our second point.

2. The source of message provides assurance.

A. 2Peter 1:20,21

B. Here Peter assures these Christians that they can trust the message preached because it did not originate from man,

1. 2Peter 1:20

2. This word “interpretation” in the NASB literally meant a loosening, unloosing. It refers to the origin.

C. In other words, the message of Jesus was not preached on the whims of man, **1Peter 1:21a**

D. These Christians can be sure that the message they have heard is true because the source of the message is God and it was revealed through the agency of the Holy Spirit, **1Peter 1:21b**

E. Peter is assuring these Christians of the accuracy of the message by stating how the source of the message and how it was revealed.

1. Peter starts by saying, “But know this first of all” v.20

a. This phrase puts importance on what Peter is about to say.

b. To recognize the truths he is about to speak is of primary importance.

1). First, recognize that prophecy of Scripture did not come from man.

2). Secondly, recognize that it came from God.

2. Peter states that men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God

a. Literally, the message from God was borne along by the Holy Spirit

b. The word borne along (moved NASB) is in the passive mode. That is to say these men were passive in this act. It was not done on mans initiative,

c. It’s the same word used in Acts 27:15-17

d. The fact that these men were passive in this act puts the initiative on God.

e. It was God who revealed the prophecies, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, by the hand of man. **John 14:26.**

Appl: Consider what this means to the false teachers Peter is dealing with. If they deny the message then they deny the messenger.

The message given by those who spoke from God was the message He wanted spoken. To guarantee this these men only spoke what was borne along by the Holy Spirit.

These brethren can trust the message being preached because it comes straight from God.

As well, **“We can be sure of our standing with God because we are assured that the Bible is God’s Word.”**

It is the same for us. We can be assured that we are doing what God desires by following the message carried along by the Holy Spirit.

As for the false teachers then and now, they ca not offer that assurance when the preach things not carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Con: So weigh out the evidence. Do you believe these false teachers or do you believe Peter?

How would you support your decision? Here are your two choices.

You can accept Peters testimony

1. Peter is an eyewitness to what happened to Jesus when he was transfigured.
2. Peter heard the words spoken by God concerning Jesus.
3. The words spoken by the prophets concerning Jesus came directly from God.

Or you can accept the words of the false teachers.

1. They were not eyewitnesses.
2. They deny the words spoken by the prophets
3. They offer no words spoken from God. What they say is from their own initiative.
4. They are not offering words from the Holy Spirit.

Consider our situation today.

1. We can either accept what we read in the scriptures as the word of God and follow it.
2. Or we can allow false teachers to persuade us that what we are reading is somehow being applied improperly and is really being taught wrong, even though the scriptures are clear.

We can be sure that we are doing what God desires because we know the message is true.

- 1. Eyewitness testimony provides assurance.**
- 2. The source of message provides assurance.**

With that, **“We can be sure of our standing with God because we are assured that the Bible is God’s Word.”**

The Devastation of False Teachers

2Peter 2:1-3

I. As we have been working our way through 2Peter we have been considering the reality of false teachers.

II. Now I understand that many are uncomfortable with this topic. They believe it shows a lack of tolerance for religious differences.

III. But, it is apparent that God wants this issue addressed since the entire epistle of 2Peter has been dedicated to the topic.

IV. The reality is, false teachers exist, and they are not going away. This being the case we must understand the damage they cause.

V. If we don't recognize the existence of false teachers, we could find ourselves falling prey to their destructive practices.

VI. It's like those people who put themselves in harms way, not recognizing the true danger of what they are doing.

1. You see this a lot kids participating in extreme sports activities – I'm not talking about professionals
2. Drug use is another example

VII. In this mornings lesson we are going to be considering the characteristics of the false teacher so we can see just what kind of danger they really are.

Trans: In chapter 1 of this epistle, Peter has been giving instructions on remaining faithful to God. In chapter 2 the reason why becomes more apparent. Let's consider their characteristics.

1. Characteristics of the false teacher.

A. 2Peter 2:1-3

B. As I stated in the beginning of this lesson, false teachers have always been around. Peter says as much in this first verse, **1Pet. 2:1**

1. The phrase "among the people" has OT implications
2. **Jer. 14:14**
3. **Ezek. 22:28**

C. Having established the fact that false teachers were a reality of the past, Peter then states that false teachers will be among them also, **2Pet. 2:1.**

D. Since false teachers exist, God wants us to understand some things about them. Peter lays out for us three characteristics of the false teachers; **(1) their methods of operation, (2) the nature of their actions and (3) the consequences of their work.**

E. Let's consider what God has to say about these false teachers.

1. First He gives their methods operation.

A. They work from within the body,

1. They were followers, **2Pet. 2:1**

a. Among you

b. Denying the master

2. **2Pet. 2:20,21**

3. Acts 20:28-30

B. They secretly introduce destructive heresies, 2Pet. 2:1.

1. The false teacher employ's stealth in their approach.

2. They are deceptive, **2 Peter 2:13.**

a. Their deceptiveness is seen in their words.

1. 2Pet. 2:3

2. 2 Peter 2:18-19

b. In their deceptiveness they omit obvious biblical truths, **2 Peter 3:5**

C. They appeal to mans fleshly weaknesses, 2 Pet. 2:2

2 Pet. 2:18

2. Having established some methods of operation, God tells us of the nature of their actions.

A. They are sensual, **2Pet. 2:2**

B. They are greedy, **2Pet. 2:3**

1. The idea of covetousness

2. Financial gain is a factor

C. They focus on self, 2Pet. 2:10

1. They are indulgent

2. They despise authority

3. Daring

4. Self-willed

5. They are not fearful

D. They are careless, **2Pet. 3:16**

3. Finally God tells us of the consequences of the false teachers work.

A. The way of the truth is maligned, 2 Pet. 2:2

1. To malign the truth is to cause someone to speak reproachfully of or speak evil of the truth.
2. They hurt true evangelistic efforts.
3. 1Cor. 5:1

B. They lead faithful Christians away from the truth.

1. **2 Peter 2:2**, many will follow them
2. **2 Peter 2:3**, brethren will financially support error
 - a. The word exploit has to do with trade or sales
 - b. Here is means to use a person for gain
3. **2 Peter 2:13**, Christians are led to carouse with them.
4. **2 Peter 2:14,18**, weaker brothers are corrupted.

C. They destroy themselves

1. **2 Peter 2:21**, swift destruction
2. **2 Peter 2:9**, their own judgment
3. **2 Peter 2:14**, they become accursed
4. **2 Peter 2:12**, they are headed for destruction
5. **2 Peter 2:17**, blackness of darkness is reserved for them
6. **2 Peter 2:19**, they are slaves of corruption
7. **2 Peter 2:20**, in a worse condition than an unbeliever
8. **2 Peter 3:7**, they are headed for judgment
9. **2 Peter 3:16**, they are destroying themselves.

Appl: What conclusion can be drawn from what we have seen this morning?

It is clear that these false teachers are not innocently mistaken in their doctrine.

What they do, they do willfully. They secretly introduce opinions that destroy themselves and others

1. We should not expect false teachers to just stand up and declare that they are false teachers.
2. We should realize that false teachers will arise from within the church.
3. We should realize that they are hurting themselves, the work of the church and the brethren.

Knowing all this, we must be prepared. False teachers have always been around and they always will be.

If we don't recognize the existence of false teachers, we could find ourselves falling prey to their destructive practices.

I am thankful God has given me His word and instructed me on this topic.

Pronouncement of Judgment

2Peter 2:4-13

I. It seems that we live in a world where people face less and less consequences for their actions.

1. Our court system has followed this trend with slap on the wrist sentences.
2. Some parents have followed this trend – letting their kids off with no real punishment for their actions.

II. But the truth is we never really escape the consequences for our actions. Sooner or later they will catch up with us.

1. **Drunk driving – there are consequences**
2. **Drug us – there are consequences**
3. **Break the law – there are consequences**

III. The word consequence refers to...

1. **A conclusion derived through logic.**
2. **It refers to something produced by a cause.**
3. **We can even refer to it as, “Cause and effect.”**

IV. Although consequences exist in every situation, sometimes we don't consider those consequences or don't care about them.

There is the story of a pig that ate his fill of acorns under an oak tree and then started to root around the tree. A crow remarked, “You should not do this. If you lay bare the roots, the tree will wither and die.” “Let it die,” said the pig. “Who cares as long as there are acorns.”

V. From this illustration we should understand that ignoring consequences doesn't change the fact that they exist.

VI. In 2 Peter we find that the problem of ignoring consequence exists in the religious world as well.

1. Peter has told us of some false teachers who do not believe certain Christian doctrines; although at one time they were followers of Christ.
2. For example, they do not believe in the second coming of Christ nor the final judgment, **2Peter 3:3-7**
3. Because they didn't believe in these things they lived ungodly lives, 2Pet. 2:1-3
 - a. They secretly introduce destructive heresies, **2:1**
 - b. They deny the master who bought them, **2:1**
 - c. They live lives based upon sensuality, **2:2**
 - d. They malign the truth, **2:2**
 - e. They exploit the Christian brethren with false words, **2:3**

VI. These false teachers lived like Jesus wasn't coming back, and that there wasn't going to be a judgment. They lived like there were no consequences for their actions,

VII. But as we are going to see, this is not the case.

1. Peter is going to let these false teachers know that there are consequences for their actions.
2. He does this through a proclamation of judgment.
 - A. The reality of previous judgments.**
 - B. The assurance of coming judgment.**

X. The same is true today. **False teachers cannot ignore God's will and expect not to face the penalty for their actions.**

Trans: To assure these false teachers that there are consequences for what they are doing, Peter turns our attention to past judgments of God. Let's consider this pronouncement of Judgment.

1. The reality of previous judgments

A. Peter begins by reminding these Christians of the previous judgments of God.

1. 2Peter 2:4-9

2. In this passage Peter gives three examples of past judgments.

a. The Angels that sinned

- 1). **2Pet. 2:4**
- 2). This refers to the angels who rebelled with Satan.
- 3). **Rev. 12:7-9**
- 4). **Since the angels sinned they faced judgment.**
- 5). Matt. 25: 41

b. The ungodly in the time of Noah.

- 1). **2Pet. 2:5**
- 2). These individuals had a mind set on evil continually.
- 3). **Gen 6:5**
- 4). **Because they sinned God brought judgment upon them.**

c. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

- 1). **2Pet. 2:7**
- 2). Here we have the story of Lot and those who oppressed him.
- 3). The people of his time were wicked, Gen. 19:1-5
- 4). **Because they sinned God brought judgment upon them.**

3. In each example Peter explained why these people faced judgment.

- a. They sinned against God, **v. 4**

- b. Because they were ungodly, **v.5**
- c. Because of their lawless deeds, **v.8b**
- d. As an example to those who would live ungodly thereafter, **v.6**

Appl: If the false teachers believe that their actions will not have consequences they are mistaken.

Peter assures them that, just like those of the past who chose to sin against God through ungodly and lawless deeds, their rebellion will also be met with judgment. The judgments of the past are an example of the judgments to come.

False teachers cannot ignore God's will and expect not to face the penalty for their actions.

Trans: Having established past judgments Peter now turns to the coming judgment of the false teachers.

2. The assurance of coming judgment.

1. 2Peter 2:9-13

- 2. Consider who Peter is addressing in this passage
 - a. **The unrighteous, v.9**
 - b. **Those who indulge in the flesh in its corrupt desire, v.10**
 - c. Without question and from the context, these are the false teachers Peter is writing about.
 - 1). 2Peter 2:1,2
 - 2). 2Peter 2:13-15
- 3. Peter makes it clear that these will face judgment just like those in the past did, **2Pet. 2:9,10**
- 4. Why will they face judgment?
 - a. They despise authority, **v.10**
 - b. They are daring, self willed, **v.10**
 - c. They do not tremble when they blaspheme, **v. 10**
 - d. For doing wrong, **v.13**
 - e. Because they are no different than those previously mentioned.

Appl: The lesson Peter is trying get across here is a simple one. Through this section of scripture Peter has been speaking of judgment

- 1. 2Peter 2:3
- 2. 2Pet. 2:4
- 3. 2Pet. 2:9

God wants these false teachers to know that from the beginning of time he has pronounced judgment upon those who chose to rebel against His will and live ungodly.

By providing a list of previous judgments these false teachers have been placed in the same category as the angels that sinned; the unrighteous in the time of Noah and the ungodly of Sodom and Gomorrah.

In other words,

They have rebelled, like the angels.

They are living according to their own sensuality, like those in the time of Noah.

They are distressing the righteous Christians through their ungodly living.

And like all of these they too will face God's judgment.

The same is true today.

False teachers cannot ignore God's will and expect not to face the penalty for their actions.

It's Their Nature 2Peter 2:12-19

I. Have you ever referred to someone's nature?

1. For example we might say, "that's just his/her nature."
2. Or we might say it's not in their nature to do this or that.

II. When we speak of someone's nature what we are speaking of is "the intrinsic or essential qualities of somebody."

III. Along with this are the characteristics of a person. This is "a feature or quality that makes somebody or something recognizable," and thus these are extensions of their nature.

IV. An example of this is found in 2 Peter

1. In 2Peter 2:1-3, Peter provides some characteristics of some false teachers.
 - A. They secretly introduce their destructive heresies.
 - B. They deny the Master who bought them.
 - C. They are destructive.
 - D. These are extensions their nature

2. In 2Peter 2:12-19 we find why they are like this. Peter says they act as if this is their nature and he compares their nature to the nature of some other things.

- 1. Their nature is like an animals nature.**
- 2. Their nature is like a natural phenomenon.**

V. This is an important lesson for us today. Understanding the nature of a person helps us understand why they do what they do.

VI. In regards to the 2 Peter – **Some have given themselves over to sin so freely - that sinning is their entire nature and they are destined for destruction.**

VII. The only option is to remove them from our midst through exposing them.

Trans: So with this in mind let's consider the nature of these false teachers so we might better understand them.

1. The nature of the false teacher is like an animals nature.

A. **2Peter 2:12-16**

B. Notice how Peter compares the false teachers to animal's, **v.12**

1. They are unreasoning, like animals.
2. They are creatures of instinct, like animals.

- C. What does this say about these false teachers?
1. Like unreasoning animals they do not reason through what they are doing.
 - a. They don't reason that the message preached is the word of God, **2Pet. 1:20-21**
 - b. They don't reason that denying their master will bring swift destruction, **2 Pet. 2:1**,
 - c. They don't reason that living sensual lives will bring judgment, **2Pet. 2:9,10**
 - d. They don't reason that things remaining the same means God is patient, **2Pet. 3:3-4,8-9**
 - e. They don't reason that since all of this is true they need to live a certain way, **2Pet. 3:11**

 2. Like creatures of instinct they give themselves over to their desires.
 - a. They don't keep their sin for the night they *find pleasure* in sinning even in the daytime, **v.13**
 - b. *They revel* in their deceptions, **v.13**
 - c. They have *eyes full* of adultery, (always seeing women sexually), **v.14**
 - d. They *never cease* from sin, **v.14**
 - e. They have a *heart trained* in greed, (like an athlete) **v.14**
 - f. Destroying others is not a problem for them, **2Pet. 2:3,18**
 - g. Peter refers to their instincts as that of a dog and a sow, **v.22**

Illust: Consider the wolf for a second.

1. A wolf does not reason that by going after a sheep the rancher will attempt to kill him.
2. The wolf acts upon its instincts. It is hungry and the sheep is food so it attacks.
3. It does this because it must. Killing is part of it's nature There is no option.
4. The only hope the rancher has is to destroy the predator.

Appl: So it is with these false teachers. They act just like the wolf. They do not reason through their actions.

The false teachers act's as if what they do is instinctual.

They act as if they can't help themselves

They give into their desires as if it is just part of who they are.

They focus on what they want rather than reason through what God has said.

We need to realize that ... **Some have given themselves over to sin so freely - that sinning is their entire nature, and they are destined for destruction.**

Christians cannot allow unreasoning self-indulgent false teachers to go unchallenged.

Trans: Let's consider the second way Peter describes the nature of these false teachers.

2. The nature of the false teacher is like a natural phenomenon.

A. 2Peter 2:17-19

B. Peter uses two phenomena here to describe the false teachers.

1. Like springs without water.
2. Like the mists driven by a storm.

C. In considering these two natural phenomena we find that they have some things in common and apply to the false teachers,

1. The springs without water and the mists driven by the storm cannot control what happens to them.
 - a. A spring does not decide if it has water or not.
 - b. The mist does not control where it goes.
2. These false teachers are like this in that they lack control
 - a. They entice with fleshly desires, by sensuality, v.18
 - b. They have become enslaved to their desires, v.19
 - c. They are not in control, their desires are. Their desires drive them along, **Rom. 6:16**
3. The springs without water and the mists driven by the storm promise something they cannot deliver.
 - a. A spring should provide what the name implies, water.
 - b. When one sees the falling mist in the sky they assume water is on the way.
 - c. But Peter says the spring is dry and the mist is driven by the storm.
4. The false teachers are like the springs without water and the mists driven by the storm in that offer something they can't deliver.
 - a. Their words are vain, v.18
 - b. They claim freedom but they don't even have it, v.19
 - c. Sin entangles them and they are overcome, **2Pet. 2:20-22**
 - d. They claim to be refreshing, but they are not.

Illust: Can you imagine being in a situation where you needed water to survive but when you got to the well it was dry? Or if you were a farmer waiting for the storm clouds to bring in the rain for your crops, but the rain was always passing you by.

Appl: That's the way it is with these false teachers.

How many times do the false teachers promise a better refreshing way? Yet they cannot deliver what they promise. Why?

They allow their desires to take the place of God's word as their doctrine. Instead of allowing God's word to carry them along their desires guide and control them.

They are enslaved to the wrong thing.

Some have given themselves over to sin so freely - that sinning is their entire nature, and they are destined for destruction.

Christians cannot allow dry wells and uncontrolled storms to go unchallenged.

Con: It's interesting to think that many false teachers have the nature of unreasoning animals led by their instincts and like a natural phenomenon that is not in control of itself and cannot deliver what it promises.

But Peter says this is the way it is and we must recognize it.

The reality of apostasy

2Peter 2:20-22

I. Have you ever considered the possibility that some day you might turn from serving Christ in His kingdom and go back into the world of sin? I am sure we are all familiar with Demas, 2Tim. 4:10.

II. Although there are some who teach one can never fall away from a saved condition, the reality that we can is seen in the false teachers Peter is writing about.

III. As we have been considering 2Peter we have already noted that Peter is addressing some important facts about the false teachers of his time.

IV. In chapter two Peter has revealed that these individuals.

1. Cause damage to the truth, themselves and other Christians, 2Pet 2:1-3
2. Will be facing a coming judgment because of their practices, 2Pet. 2:4-12
3. Have a nature like that of unreasoning animals and creatures of instinct, and like the creation, they lack control over themselves. 2Pet. 2:12-19

V. In Peter's final admonition to these false teachers, he describes their spiritual condition as they continue to live a life based upon sensuality. In this he is also warning those who would seek to follow them that their spiritual condition will be the same.

VI. The warning is clear for us as Christians today. **If we chose to depart from God's will, we will find ourselves back in the world, once again lost in sin.**

Trans: To begin and to make sure this applies to us as Christians we must establish whom Peter is referring to. This is our first point.

1. Identifying those to whom Peter is referring.

A. To begin, in 2Peter 2:20,21 Peter uses several different terms in describing these individuals.

1. He refers to them as **having escaped the defilement's of the world, v.20**

- a. They have been freed from the defilement's of the world.
- b. The defilement's he speaks of refers to sin, **Titus 1:15,16**
- c. **James 2:15-17**

2. He states they escaped **by the knowledge the Lord and Savior, v.20**

- a. This word knowledge is not the regular word for knowledge.
- b. It is a knowledge directed towards an object that is always maturing and is fixed closely upon the object. It is a full knowledge.
- c. Peter uses this word in referring to Christians, **2Pet. 1:2,3**

3. He refers to their two different states, last and first, v.20
4. Peter says they have known the way of righteousness, v.21

B. In considering **2Peter 2:1**, we find that Peter refers to these individuals he is speaking of, as those who deny the Master who bought them.

1. The only way one is bought is through the blood of Jesus,

Acts 20:28

1Peter 1:17-19

2. Being bought is without question referring to one who has been saved.

1Cor. 6:19,20

Appl: If I were to describe to you an individual's spiritual state and I stated...

1. This person has escaped the defilement's of the world by a full knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
2. This person has moved from one state to another in regards to their spiritual life.
3. This person knows the way of righteousness.

What would you conclude about this person's spiritual state? Without question we would have to conclude that this person is a Christian. Add to that that this person has been bought and has a Master, spiritually speaking, again you would have to conclude that this person is a Christian.

In our discussion on 2Peter 2:20-21, we find that this is the case. Peter is referring to those who were at one time followers of Christ. There should be no question about this.

Trans: Having determined who Peter is referring to we can now turn our attention to what has happened to them. This is our second point.

2. The present spiritual state of the false teachers.

A. As Peter has been describing the past spiritual condition of these false teachers were, he has also been describing their present spiritual condition.

1. Although they had escaped the defilement's of the world, Peter says they are again entangled and overcome, v.20

a. This is the figure of fish being overtaken by the fishermen's net and being entangled in its meshes.

b. Spiritually, they have been recaptured by their own lusts and are once again slaves of sin,

Rom. 6:16

2Peter 2:19

2. Although they had known the way of righteousness, Peter says they have now turned away from the holy commandment delivered to them, v.21

- a. The Holy commandment refers to the whole of Christian teaching,
- b. **Jude 3**

B. Adding to this, Peter describes what has happened to their spiritual state as a going back to where they once were.

C. In his description he uses two animals as a comparison to what has happened to them spiritually.

1. There is the dog that returns to eat it's own vomit.
 - a. When a dog vomits it is discarding that which was meant to be rejected.
 - b. The dog got rid of what was making it ill.
 - c. In comparing the false teachers to this dog Peter is saying they have returned to take back that which was abominable.
2. There is the sow who has been washed and then returns to wallowing in the mire.
 - a. To better understand this description we must not think of our pigs today, but in the time of Peters writing.
 - b. Here is a sow that has been cleaned up, **Titus 3:5**
 - c. But this sow returns to the mire. According to Moulton's Greek Lexicon, the word mire, refers to mud, dung, and filth.
 - c. Wallowing is to roll around in, or to roll ones self in.
3. In both of these descriptions Peter states that they have returned to doing this. To return means implies a time of once leaving. They have gone back to that old life of sin. And in our description that life is viewed as something disgusting.

Appl: Going back to the first description given of these individual, If I now described that person in this manner what would you conclude?

1. They have gone from a state of freedom to entanglement.
2. They have turned from where they once were
3. They are following the nature of the animal once again.

You would definitely see a returning to an old way of life. One that is described in some very disgusting terms.

Con: The reality of one falling away for the Lord is clearly seen in these passages.

Peter has made it clear that these individuals were once walking with the Lord, but have now returned to their old sinful life.

They are now once again separated from God.

This is the warning we must all heed. In reference to the change agents within the church their fate is the same as these false teachers,

When one who is a Christian deviates from the truth and begins to promote doctrines not consistent with the scriptures, they too will find themselves separated from Christ and they too will pay the penalty of their error. Just like the false teachers in the time of Peters writing.

Gal. 5:4

Rev. 3:2-5

If we chose to depart from God's will, we will find ourselves back in the world, once again lost in sin.

Stirring up sincere minds

2Peter 3:1,2

I. Carl Von Clausewitz, a Prussian soldier, military historian and military theorist has been credited with the saying, “The best defense is a good offense.”

II. The idea might be summed up like this, “If we are always on the offensive our opponent will not have time to attack, thus we are always defending ourselves through our offense.”

III. This principle is also true in the realm of Christianity. Christians must always be moving forward in their faith if they are to defend against the work of the devil.

IV. In 2Peter, we have seen that false teachers are on the attack and in the process they are leading faithful Christians back into a life of sin. To keep this from happening Peter says Christians must be on the offensive when it comes to their faith, **2Pet. 1:2-7**.

V. One of the ways we add these qualities to our faith is to remind ourselves of them. This is what Peter says in **2Peter 3:1,2**.

VI. If we are to avoid the trap of the false teachers we must continually seek to remind ourselves of what God’s will really is.

Trans: In 2Peter 3:1,2 Peter lets us know why we need to be reminded of the things found in Gods word, and that is what we want to consider first.

1. The reason for the reminder.

A. **2Peter 3:1**

B. Peter says the reason for the reminder is to stir up our sincere minds

C. There are two parts to what Peter is saying that we need to consider.

1. The fact that this is a reminder means they already know these things,
2Pet. 1:12

2. This reminder will only stir up a sincere mind, **2Pet. 1:13**

D. When we consider the fact that Peter is reminding them of some things they already know we must understand that Peter is speaking of the need to grow in the knowledge of God’s will, **2Pet. 3:14-18**

E. Reminding ourselves of God’s will is a defensive offense, **Psalms 143:8-12**

- F. We need to also remember that this only works if we have a sincere mind.
 - 1. A sincere mind is one that is different from the false teachers Peter is speaking about. The false teachers have no desire to hear the word of God.
 - 2. A sincere mind is one that is uncontaminated by the heresies of the false teachers.

Appl: In this passage Peter is saying he wants to excite us, to arouse us, to awaken us, to stir us up to through reminding us.

If we have a sincere mind, one that seeks to know the will of God, then that mind will be stirred up by way of reminder.

Friends, **If we are to avoid the trap of the false teachers we must continually seek to remind ourselves of what God's will really is.**

Trans: Being reminded of the things in God's word also has its benefits. This is our second point.

2. The result of the reminder.

A. 2Peter 3:2

B. The reminder is to result in their remembering what was spoken beforehand.

C. Notice what they are to remember

- 1. The words spoken by the holy prophets.
- 2. The commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by their apostles.

D. As I said earlier this is the problem with the false teachers Peter speaks about.

- a. This is one of the reasons they have gone astray.
- b. They stopped listening to the words spoken by the prophets, **2Pet. 1:20,21**
- c. They have turned from the holy commandment delivered to them, **2Pet. 2:21**

E. As children of God our desire should be to remember what God has said to us, **Ps. 119:49-56**

F. When we desire to be reminded of the things spoken beforehand then we will remember what God desires of us. In doing so, we can be sure that we will not be led astray from the truth, **2Pet. 1:8-10**

Appl: Today to many people are not being reminded of the things spoken beforehand. They are not being reminded of the holy commandment delivered to them. And what is the result? People are being led astray.

If God had not taken the time to remind the apostles of His will where would we be today? Remember **John 14:26**?

Without God seeking to remind us we would be without His word and helpless.

The same is true today. Without being reminded of Gods word we will find ourselves in jeopardy of turning from Him.

Friends, **If we are to avoid the trap of the false teachers we must continually seek to remind ourselves of what God's will really is.**

The downfall of the false teacher

2Peter 3:3-9

- I. In last week's lesson we were considering why Peter wrote 2Peter.
- II. I stated that in 2 Peter 3:1,2 Peter provides a twofold reason.
 - 1. It was to stir up their sincere mind by way of reminder, v.1
 - 2. It was to cause them to remember the words spoken beforehand, v.2
- III. In the context of 2 Peter, both of these were necessary to keep these Christians from following after the false teachers and straying from God.
- IV. Now in **2Peter 3:3-9**, Peter continues to remind us of the reason for him writing this epistle.
- V. In this passage of scripture Peter once again reminds us of the reality of false teachers, and he gives us some insights into how the mind of these individuals works.
- VII. Ultimately the willingness of the false teacher to ignore clear evidence will lead to their destruction.**

Trans: Let's begin by being reminded once again of the reality of false teachers.

1. The reality of false teachers.

A. **2Peter 3:3**

B. Peter begins this passage by using the phrase "Know this first of all."

- 1. He has used this exact same phrase previously, **2Peter 1:20**
- 2. In the original Greek this phrase is, "This firstly knowing."
- 3. The point is, as this phrase was used to support the facts in 2Pet. 1:20, and as the order of the words in Greek emphasizes a specific thought, we conclude that Peter is assuring these Christians of this one fact. *There is no doubt that false teachers are a reality and this needs to be known beforehand, 2Peter 3:16,17*

C. After once again assuring these Christians that false teachers do exist, Peter makes reference to the time of their coming.

- 1. It is in the last days.
- 2. We know that these false teachers were already troubling the Christians Peter is writing to; so then we also know when the last days were.
- 3. The last days embrace the period of the Christian era.
- 4. **Acts 2:15-17; Heb. 1:1,2**

Appl: What does all this mean to us? It means that false teachers are a reality and we must be aware of this before it is too late. By that I mean before we are led away by their empty promises.

We must realize that the time of their coming began in the first century and will continue until Christ returns, and so those same types of false teachers exist to this very day.

This may sound like common sense to you, but let me say not everybody accepts this teaching. (Denominationalism for example)

Trans: Having explained the reality of the false teacher Peter now reveals some interesting facts about the mind of these individuals. This is our second point.

2. The mind of the false teacher.

A. 2Peter. 3:3b-9

B. In describing these false teachers Peter uses a new term that reveals something about their mind set. Previously he had called them false teachers, 2Pet. 2:2

1. He describes them as “mockers coming with their mocking” **v.3**
2. This phrase really defines their attitude towards the teaching of Christ's second coming, **v.4**
3. It's not simply disbelief, they actually ridicule and hold in contempt the whole idea of it. They make jest or sport at the thought of Jesus' second coming.

C. Peter also describes these false teachers as having a mind set on denial, even in the face of overwhelming evidence, **2Pet 3:5-7**

1. In this passage Peter states that these mockers willfully choose to ignore the facts when he writes, “For when they maintain this it escapes their notice.”
 - a. The definition for the Greek word maintain is, *bent, or inclination.*
 - b. The definition for the Greek word escapes is, *unnoticed.*
 - c. These mockers are bent on letting certain facts go unnoticed.
 - d. They don't want to know these things.

2. For example, they maintain that everything has remained the same from the beginning of creation, **v.4**. They are saying “if nothing has changed from the beginning, why should we expect it to change in the future” (The second coming of Christ).

3. But Peter shows them that they willfully choose to ignore the facts.

4. In verses **5-7** Peter shows that things have not remained the same.
 - a. Peter reminds them that in the beginning there was a change in the creation itself. It didn't stay the same, **v.5, Gen. 1:2,9,10**
 - b. He then refers to the flood of Noah's time, where the world once again changed, **v.6**

- c. Things have not remained the same from the beginning as they claim. The evidence is overwhelming.
5. A key to the willful ignorance of false teachers is seen in verse 5.
 - a. In this passage Peter says by the **word** of God things changed.
 - b. Since they have changed, as already seen, this statement is true.
 - c. Peter then says that the second coming of Christ is also according to God's word, **v.7**
 - d. So, just like the creation changing by the word of God is true, the second coming of Christ by His word is also true.
 - e. One fact proves the other.
- D. The third description of the mind of the false teacher is found in **2Pet. 3:8,9**
1. Here Peter shows that these false teachers have a mind that does not seek to understand God's reasoning.
 2. They have concluded that since Jesus has yet to come back, He won't be coming back.
 - a. The coming of Christ was always believed to be imminent, **1Thess. 4:13-18**
 - b. The false teachers state that the fathers fell asleep waiting for his return.
 1. "Fathers" refers to the first generation Christians
 2. "Fell asleep" is in reference to death, **John 11:11-13**
 3. But this kind reasoning leaves out God's plan.
 - a. God is not on a man made time schedule
 1. His years are not our years, v.8
 2. Our slowness is not His, v.9
 - b. God's plan involves the salvation of mankind, which is going to take some time.
 - c. That fact that Jesus hasn't come back simply demonstrates God's plan at work. He is patiently waiting for man to turn to him, **2Pet. 3:14,15**
1Pet 3:18-20

Appl: As we can see from Peter's description, the false teachers of his time definitely had a mind set on doing as they desired and they didn't want anything to stand in the way.

Their mind was set on willfully ignoring the facts and ridiculing those who believed otherwise. They were unwilling to see the patience of God in the fact that Christ had yet to come.

Ultimately the willingness of the false teacher to ignore clear evidence will lead to their destruction.

The Second Coming of Christ and Our Conduct

2 Peter 3:10-18

I. As we have been studying through 2Peter two facts about the false teachers have been made clear.

1. They did not believe in second coming of Christ, **2Pet. 3:3,4**
2. They chose to live a life that demonstrated their disbelief, **2Pet. 2:12-15**

II. In 2 Peter 3:4-9, the false teachers heresies are silenced when Peter disproves their arguments for not believing in the second coming of Christ.

III. With the fact of Jesus' second coming firmly established Peter turns his attention to what the second coming of Christ will be like.

IV. But he doesn't stop there, he then turns his attention to those who believe in the second coming and he gives them a warning and exhortation.

V. Peter is going to show that.... **Those who know Jesus is coming should live in accordance with holy conduct and godliness.**

Trans: To begin lets consider Peter's description of Christ's second coming.

1. The description of His second coming.

A. 2Peter 3:10

B. Peter reveals some startling facts that leave's those who don't follow Christ without hope.

1. He begins by speaking of "The Day of the Lord"
 - a. These people understood what this meant.
 - b. In the past this phrase generally referred to coming judgment.
Isa. 2:12; 13:6-9
1Cor. 5:5
 - c. He says there is no question that judgment is coming
2. He will come like a thief.
 - a. The word for thief is were we get our word "Clepto"
 - b. It means to remove secretly, to take away stealthily.
 - c. In other words, the time will be unknown, **1Thess. 5:1-2**
3. The Heavens will pass away with a roar.
 - a. The Heavens will cease to be.
 - b. Pass away is used for the Christians past life, **1Pet. 4:3**
 - c. The heavens refer to the atmosphere around our planet.
 - d. It will take place with the sound of a mighty rushing wind.

4. Elements will be destroyed with intense heat.
 - a. Elements refer to all that make up our planet.
 - b. The word destroyed can also be translated loosed.
 - c. What we have here are the atoms that hold all things together being loosed and dissolved with intense heat.

5. The earth and its works will be burned up.
 - a. This points to the sinfulness of man rather than to the physical creation.
 - b. This is the concept that after all the physical is taken out of the way, all that remains is the works of man while on this earth, and this will be destroyed as well.
 - c. If it is speaking literally of the earth and its works being burned up, the result is the same. Complete destruction.

Appl: As Peter begins to describe what will take place at the second coming of Christ his focus is on the destruction of the earth.

He doesn't speak of Christ coming in His glory, as he does in **1Pet. 4:13**

Why? Peter wants these false teachers to know that there is no escape. He is not trying to speak of Jesus' glory at his coming, but rather showing that there will be a price to be paid for not following the teachings of Christ.

All that these false teachers hold dear will be utterly destroyed. Nothing will be left except for the exposing of their deeds. There will be no escape for them.

This is going to be a worldwide destruction, just like the flood of Noah's day those sinners could not escape, neither will these false teachers.

Trans: As Peter continues his discussion he now gives a warning and exhortation to the believers. This is our second point.

2. Maintain proper conduct knowing He will come again.

A. 2Peter 3:11-18

B. The warning is seen when he uses the phrase "since all things are to be destroyed", **v.11**

1. The participle "be destroyed" is in the present tense.
2. This implies the certainty of what is being said
3. They can be certain that the destruction of the world will take place.

C. Peter then asks a question in **v.11**

1. Knowing judgment is coming, what sort of people should you be?
2. The Greek word for "what sort of people" means literally, "of what country"

3. This brings to mind, **Heb. 11:13-16**
4. The words “should you be” denote continuous action.
5. In Holy conduct, **1Pet. 1:15**
6. In Godliness

- D. The reason this is asked is because of what is to come, **v.13**
1. We are looking for a new heavens and a new earth.
 2. Some might see this as a rejuvenated physical place, but this is not easily supported, **Heb. 1:10-13**
 3. Whatever the place it makes no difference, it is where righteousness dwells, which excludes the false teachers and includes those of Holy conduct and godliness.

- E. Because the earth and its works are going to be destroyed and because we are looking for a new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells we are then instructed in how we are to live while we sojourn on this earth, in **v.14-18**
1. We are to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless.
 - a. We are to be like a sacrificial offering.
 - b. Preparing ourselves for what is ahead, a dwelling place of righteousness
 2. Regard His patience as salvation, unlike the false teachers, **v.15**
 3. Be on guard against false teachers, because these untaught and unstable men distort the scriptures to their own destruction, **Gal. 1:6-8**
 4. Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
 - a. We are to grow in God’s favor (grace) by acquiring a full knowledge of Jesus.
 - b. We grow in God’s favor by drawing nearer to His Son.

Appl: As Peter closes out this epistle he points the faithful in the direction they are to be heading.

There is no sense going back over what is taking place with the false teachers, save the coming judgment.

What lies ahead becomes the motivation for what now is.

For the Christian, knowing that Christ is coming, it is imperative that we continually live a life of Holy conduct in reverence to God.

We must always be moving closer to God, through a true knowledge of His Son and by moving away from the false teachers.

In doing so we will grow in God’s favor and a place in the new heavens and the new earth will be preserved for us.

The false teachers will face their own fate.