

2 Peter

Lesson 3 Chapter 2:1-22

Participant Guide

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Lesson 3

2 Peter 2:1-22

False Teachers

They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them — bringing swift destruction on themselves. 2 Peter 2:1

Prayers

Read 2 Peter 2:1-14, False Teachers and Their Destruction

^{2Pe 2:1} But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them — bringing swift destruction on themselves.

^{2Pe 2:2} Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute.

^{2Pe 2:3} In their greed these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.

^{2Pe 2:4} For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment;

^{2Pe 2:5} if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others;

^{2Pe 2:6} if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly;

^{2Pe 2:7} and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men

^{2Pe 2:8} (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)—

^{2Pe 2:9} if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.

^{2Pe 2:10} This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature and despise authority. Bold and arrogant, these men are not afraid to slander celestial beings;

^{2Pe 2:11} yet even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not bring slanderous accusations against such beings in the presence of the Lord.

^{2Pe 2:12} But these men blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like brute beasts, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like beasts they too will perish.

^{2Pe 2:13} They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their pleasures while they feast with you.

^{2Pe 2:14} With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed — an accursed brood!

Discuss

1. What false teachings and destructive heresies does Peter address in verses 1-14
 - a. Verse 1
 - b. Verse 1

c. Verse 3

d. Verse 10

e. Verse 13-14

1. What parallels do you see between false teaching and heresy today?

a. The destructive heresy of salvation by being “good enough”

Mk 10:17 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”^v

Mk 10:18 “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good—except God alone.

Mk 10:19 You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.’”

Mk 10:20 “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.”

Mk 10:21 Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

b. Heresies about Jesus?

c. Made-up stories and promises to be healthy, wealthy, and wise

d. Following sinful nature or slandering angels?

Ro 8:8 Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

1Co 5:11 But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.

Gal 5:19 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery;

Gal 5:20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions^{Gal 5:21} and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

- a. Indulging in sexual immorality or adultery?

^{1Co 6:9} Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders ^{1Co 6:10} nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

^{Heb 13:4} Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

2. What examples does Peter cite that make God's judgment a certainty?

- a. Verse 4
- b. Verse 5
- c. Verse 6

Read 2 Peter 2:15-22, Balaam Son of Beor

^{2Pe 2:15} They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness.

^{2Pe 2:16} But he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey—a beast without speech—who spoke with a man's voice and restrained the prophet's madness.

^{2Pe 2:17} These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them.

^{2Pe 2:18} For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error.

^{2Pe 2:19} They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity—for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.

^{2Pe 2:20} If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning.

^{2Pe 2:21} It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them.

^{2Pe 2:22} Of them the proverbs are true: "A dog returns to its vomit," and, "A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud."

3. What was the sin of Balaam son of Beor that made it relevant to Peter's discussion on false teachers? See also Numbers 22:4-6

^{Nu 22:4} The Moabites said to the elders of Midian, "This horde [of Israelites coming out of Egypt] is going to lick up everything around us, as an ox licks up the grass of the field." So Balak son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at that time, ^{Nu 22:5} sent messengers to summon Balaam son of Beor, who was at Pethor, near the River, in his native land. Balak said:

"A people has come out of Egypt; they cover the face of the land and have settled next to me.

^{Nu 22:6} Now come and put a curse on these people, because they are too powerful for me. Perhaps then I will be able to defeat them and drive them out of the country. For I know that those you bless are blessed, and those you curse are cursed."

^{Nu 22:7} The elders of Moab and Midian left, taking with them the fee for divination.

4. In verses 17–19, Peter describes false teachers in terms of opposites -by the promises they offer and by the consequences that follow:
 - a. Verse 17, they promise to be a spring of water but:
 - b. Verse 18, They make boastful promises but:
 - c. Verse 19, they promise freedom but:

5. What do verses 20-22 reveal about the background of some false teachers?

6. After working through this lesson, I think, "Yuck, how depressing." We may not like the statistic trends in our country but let's face it, the people behind the numbers are our friends, children, and grandchildren, so we are still very much in the spiritual battle being waged in our country and the world. How can you cultivate a Godly spiritual heritage for others?

Closing Prayer