

**II PETER 2:10-22**  
**PRIDE OF FALSE TEACHERS!**

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to II Peter chapter 2 as we continue our in-depth study of this letter that Peter wrote to persecuted Christians, warning them of the dangers of false teachers.

We have been in this letter for several weeks now and before Peter even speaks of these false teachers with their false doctrine, he speaks of what we are to do so we can stay clear of these people.

We started out by looking at – ***GROWING IN CHRIST!***

And how important that is. We are not to be stagnant in our Christian faith but continue to grow and mature in the faith.

We then looked at – ***PURSUE THESE THINGS!***

Part of growing in Christ is what you focus your life on, and Peter is telling them and us to focus on Christ and let His attributes be seen in your life.

But how are we to do that?

Peter goes on to say that we have – ***THE SURE WORD!***

Make no mistake about it, without the sure word of God we would not have a plum line to live by and everyone would be doing what is right in their own eyes! And that is not a good thing because our hearts are desperately wicked and we need direction, and that direction does not come from the world, but from the Lord!

Peter was an eyewitness of these things and there is a certainty in what he is writing in regard to the Bible, that it is ***TRUTH!***

In fact, Peter tells us that the Word of God is more certain than what he has seen with his physical eyes, and he witnessed Jesus in all of His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration!

This is what Peter wrote, **“And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”** II Peter 1:19-21.

That means we can trust the Word of God, that it is truth and it is important for us to understand that point because the world wants to conform us into its image and God wants to transform our lives by His Word opened up to us by His Spirit!

It is after Peter has laid down this foundation that he speaks of – ***THE DANGER OF FALSE TEACHERS!***

And Peter’s point is that these things that these false teachers are teaching people are damning their souls in Hell and not bringing them to saving faith. If that is true, and it is, then these doctrines that they are bringing forth are nothing more than doctrines of demons!

Thus, the ***DANGER OF THESE FALSE TEACHERS!***

But please understand that they will not get away with anything as Peter speaks of next – ***THE JUDGMENT OF FALSE TEACHERS!***

And Peter gives to us examples of those who were judged by God showing that He has done this before, and He will do it again!

He also shares that God knows how to deliver the righteous from this judgment and the only righteousness that God will accept is the righteousness of Christ that has been imputed into our lives by faith. (II Corinthians 5:21)

And this morning we will be looking at the – ***PRIDE OF FALSE TEACHERS!***

When you look at how they behave, what they are doing, what is driving them, that should be a warning to avoid them, but for many, the lust of what they are saying with their false teaching catches them in the web of these false teachers!

Let me share this with you and you will see what I mean of the danger in what they are doing, how they portray themselves in a deceptive way to get you to believe!

We are told,

Marvin Gardiner wrote the twentieth-century novel *The Flight of Peter Fromm*. Set on the streets of Hyde Park, within the shadow of the University of Chicago, the book traces the disheartening journey of one young man, Peter Fromm, from his belief in the gospel to something else, a faith more suitable for his enlightened age. At one point in the narrative, the young man's mentor schools his student on the makeup of a good preacher.

***To be a minister today in the typical church of a prosperous suburb, one must be as skilled politician in the rhetoric of ambiguity, circumlocution [indirectness], and doubletalk.***

***He must talk plain language though in such a way that no listener can take offense.***

***He may attack race prejudice, but it must be done obliquely so that no one in the congregation imagines that it refers to him.***

***He may attack business ethics, but it must be done in such a manner that no businessman who listens will think that he is implicated.***

***Today's preacher can indeed use all doctrinal phrases but always so cunningly that conservative listeners will take them one way, liberal listeners another.***

***In brief he must learn to preach without saying anything.***

Isn't that what we are seeing today. I think he nails it and yet, so many Christians are taken in by these charlatans with their false doctrine or really, as Paul said – ***DOCTRINES OF DEMONS!***

Make no mistake about it, these false teachings are given to us by gifted communicators. They are probably very entertaining in their presentation. They will make you feel good and thus, you keep coming back for more and more.

***“And don't forget, we have books and DVDs for you to purchase!”***

Yes, they will make a fortune off these false teachings. There is a great profit they will make, even if it is for a short period of time!

I have broken down the verses we will be looking at into the following main points. They are,

***BEHAVIOR OF FALSE TEACHERS – II PETER 2:10-14***

***LUST OF THE FLESH – II PETER 2:15-16***

***THEY SPEAK WITH EMPTY WORDS – II PETER 2:17-21***

***WHY DO THEY BEHAVE LIKE THIS – II PETER 2:22***

With that as our introduction, let's begin reading in II Peter chapter 2, beginning in verse 10 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word and look at this topic – ***PRIDE OF FALSE TEACHES!***

## II PETER 2

### VERSES 10-14

Remember in II Peter 2:9 how Peter closed that verse out. He said regarding these false teachers that for them, God will “**... reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment.**”

Now Peter is showing the – ***BEHAVIOR OF FALSE TEACHERS.***

In other words, what is seen in their lives, how do they live out this so-called faith. And please understand that they are not saved and thus, their actions reflect that.

How can I be so sure that they are not saved?

Notice how Peter opens up this section. He says, “**... those who walk according to the flesh ...**”

What Peter is saying is that these false teachers tend to live their lives according to the lust of the flesh. And we will deal more with that in our next section.

But the idea here is that they are being controlled or walking according to their fallen nature.

What is the difference?

There is a big difference because, as Paul said in Galatians 5:16, “**I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.**”

The way in which Paul wrote this when he is speaking of our walk is that we are to keep on walking in the Spirit. Not just now, not just for an hour but each and every day we are to walk in the Spirit or be controlled by the Holy Spirit and walk accordingly.

That is what Paul said in Ephesians 4:1, **“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called.”**

And then, how that is seen as we walk in the Spirit, as we surrender to the Holy Spirit’s leading in our lives is like this, **“with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”**  
Ephesians 4:2-3.

What does the works of the flesh look like?

Paul, after he tells us to walk in the Spirit, goes on to say in Galatians, **“Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”** Galatians 5:19-21.

And when you look at the behavior of these false teachers here in II Peter chapter 2, they reflect the works of the flesh and not the fruit of the Spirit because they are not saved!

And Paul, back in Galatians chapter 5, very clearly tells us that if this is what is manifested in your life day in and day out, if this is what you are doing, then you **“... will not inherit the kingdom of God.”**

It is not that good works save us, but what is the passion of your life and here it is not the Lord but the desires of your heart which are that fallen nature!

I like the way one writer summed this up for us. He wrote,

It is no secret that false religious leaders, posing as ministers of Christ, are often characterized by low moral standards.

They not only indulge in illicit sexual activities themselves, but they openly advocate libertinism [Debauchery, Depravity, Immorality, and Licentiousness].

The Episcopal Chaplain of a girls' school in Baltimore, Maryland, wrote: ***"We all ought to relax and stop feeling guilty about our sexual activities, thoughts and desires. And I mean this, whether those thoughts are heterosexual, homosexual or auto-sexual . . . Sex is fun . . . and this means that there are no laws attached which you ought to do or not to do. There are no rules of the game, so to speak."***

- William MacDonald

It is hard to even imagine something like that being said by a so-called Christian and now to young women, young girls!

All I can say is that the Episcopal Chaplain is a false teacher, and you can see it clearly by what he promotes, not the things of God but fleshly things!

And notice the behavior of these false teachers.

Peter starts out by saying that as they walk in the flesh they do so **"in the lust of uncleanness."**

This is speaking of walking in the lust of defilements, and I like the way that J. Vernon McGee sums this up for us. He wrote, ***"This is a picture of those who are really lower than animals. They are those who delight in that which is vulgar, vile, and vicious. They relish that type of thing."***

Why do they act like animals?

Because, like animals they are controlled by their base instincts, the flesh and not by the Spirit of God.

Not only that, but we need to understand that the fallen nature is not only *morally corrupt*, but it is also *rebellious!*

Now this is interesting to me because they speak of God and many times, they will even speak of Jesus, but it is just lip service. What ends up happening is that they become the divine authority to their followers.

What that shows me is that they replace the authority of God and His Word which causes all kinds of false teaching that then comes forth because they are the – *AUTHORITY!*

Peter then tells us that they are *presumptuous* or very bold.

They absolutely speak with authority, but it is not the authority of God they are speaking but their own false teaching that they are speaking forth!

Also, they are *self-willed* or the reason they are doing what they are doing is to please themselves!

Jesus spoke of these false teachers in Matthew 7:15 when He said, “**Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.**”

They dress like sheep, they look like sheep, but it is just for show. They are wolves and they are prepared to devour the people with their false teaching! Thus, beware!

Not only that but these false teachers are *not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries.*

What does that mean?

This word, “**dignitaries**” speaks of “*glorious ones*”, and it can be speaking of earthly leaders that have places in human government.



The Bible does speak of this in Romans 13:1-2, as well as other places. Here in Romans Paul wrote, **“Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.”**

That is very true, but when you look at the context in this section of Peter’s letter, I think it is speaking of something else.

And remember what I have told you as you read the Scriptures. Context, context and context!

Don’t read into a verse something that the writer is not speaking about, no matter if that point is true or not, it just may not apply to that portion of Scripture.

I think J. Vernon McGee gives us some insight into what Peter is speaking about and then when you look at what II Peter 2:11 says, it will make more sense in the context of this verse.

J. Vernon McGee wrote,

***“And despise government.”*** Many commentators say that this refers to government here on earth. I have reason to believe, since this word occurs so few times in the Word of God, that it really means ***“dominion.”***

The same word *kuriotēs* is translated ***“dominion”*** in verse 8 of Jude and ***“lordship”*** in the first chapter of Ephesians.

In Ephesians it has to do with spiritual governments.

In other words, they despise that which is spiritual, that which God has ordained above us: the angels and the way God is running His universe.

They are the ones who ask God to damn everything under the sun. They are not pleased with anything.

- J. Vernon McGee

And then look at II Peter 2:11 where Peter wrote, **“Whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.”**

Peter is speaking of what we see going on in the so-called *“spiritual warfare”* movement where they do battle with Satan and his demons.

We see in the ultra- charismatic movement these false prophets who are making fortunes off of people as they are supposedly binding and damming Satan and his demons, as if they had the power.

Jude tells us, **“Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you!’ But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves.”**

Jude 9-10.

And yet these people, filled with pride, are casting out demons over here, stomping on them over there as if they had the power to do that.

Folks, our victory is in Jesus, and I will let Him deal with Satan.

I will submit to God and in doing so I am resisting the Devil, his influence upon my life, and he will flee!

Remember the story in Acts 19:13-16 of the Jewish exorcists.

We are told, **“Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, ‘We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches.’ Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, ‘Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?’ Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.”**

We are not to bring reviling accusations, scorn them, put them down but let God deal with them because vengeance is His and He will judge them!

These false teachers are proud, they are arrogant, they despise authority and as Peter said, **“By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words . . .”** II Peter 2:3a.

The amazing thing is, many follow their destructive ways, their false doctrine and folks, we are accountable before God.

These false teachers are in business to make a profit, and they will make a profit off of you!

They peddle the false gospel, healing ministry, prosperity teaching for financial gain!

***“You want to be rich in God’s Kingdom, send in your money to me and I will show you how!”***

It is sickening, it is disgusting, and it is taking advantage of people!

And make no mistake about it, we don’t have to be taken in by these false teachers with their false teaching because we have the truths of God given to us in the Word of God opened up to us by the Spirit of God to expose their lies! Don’t fall prey to their deceptions!

And Peter then talks about these false teachers as *speaking evil of things they do not understand!*

I like the way that Barclay sums this up for us. He tells us, *“What these evil men, who were troubling Peter’s people, were doing, was to say that they loved and served Christ, while the things they taught and did were a complete denial of him.”*

Exactly.

Now what are they speaking of that they just don’t understand?

Primarily what they speak evil of is the Bible, the Word of God and because they don’t know the Scriptures, even though they make people believe they do, they get a warped concept of who God is and what He desires in our lives!

Again, one writer put it like this.

Their ignorance is never more glaring than when they criticize the Bible.

Because they are devoid of divine life, they are utterly unable to understand the words, ways, and works of God (1 Cor. 2:14).

Yet they pose as experts in the spiritual realm.

A humble believer can see more on his knees than they can see on their tiptoes.

They will be destroyed in the same destruction as the animals. Since they choose to live like animals, they will die like them.

Their death will not mean extinction, but they will die ingloriously and without hope [in the Lake of Fire].

- William MacDonald

Let me give you this example and many don't see anything wrong in what this pastor is saying. But listen closely.

Steven Furtick, leader at Elevation Church, who holds onto a false gospel and yet ministers to thousands of people said this.

And this false gospel that he presents is like this. *“Furtick often emphasizes personal growth, success, and self-actualization, sometimes presenting the gospel as a message of empowerment and life enhancement rather than focusing on sin, repentance, and the need for reconciliation with God. This approach can lead to a view of sanctification that prioritizes personal achievement over spiritual transformation.”*

That is not the Gospel!

Not only that but listen to what he tells us about Jesus. He said,

*“God broke the law for love!”*

And he uses an illustration of a mother taking her child who fell off the monkey bars to the hospital. And even though the speed limit sign said *“30 mph”* she was going 50. In other words, she broke the law out of love for her child and so did Jesus!

And we could all relate to that and thus, many take it in as being true!

It is a false teaching.

How do I know that?

Because, if Jesus broke the Law, then He would be a sinner!

In fact, we are told by Jesus in Matthew 5:17, **“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”**

Now you may not think much about that and maybe thinking that I am making much to do about nothing.

Hear me out on this.

If Jesus broke the Law, what does that make Him?

I already told you. It would make Him - *A SINNER!*

There is the problem because the Bible is very clear on this. Jesus had no sin, not even one and if He did then He could not atone for our sins!

We need to be careful, because they speak with authority the things of God and yet, they do not even understand what they are speaking of.

Now, let me ask you this.

What is the difference between the saved and the unsaved person?

The saved person is controlled or guided by the spirit and the unsaved person by the lusts of the flesh.

Thus, Peter's conclusion here is these unsaved false teachers are like animals, controlled by the flesh, controlled by their lustful desires and not by the Spirit of God! And they can go on and do as they please, but they also need to understand that God's judgment is coming, and they will not escape!

So we have seen the – *BEHAVIOR OF FALSE TEACHERS!*

As we read on, we will be looking at the – *LUST OF THE FLESH!*

### VERSES 15-16

Remember what we were just told, these sins of these false prophets and by their actions, they showed that they were not children of God.

And Peter doesn't hold back but lists the sins of these false teachers whose focus is self-gratification!

They are a stain, a flaw, pretending to be workers of Christ but in reality, they are not.

They attend the love feasts and pretend to be one of the brethren as they deceive and are being deceived.

Their sensual lusts are out of control as they look at women with the idea of committing adultery with them.

And because of their position and their lifestyles, they get others to follow them down this destructive path.

They have forsaken the right way, which is a metaphor that is speaking of obeying God.

Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 7:21-27, **“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’ Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”**

You see, it is not just empty words, but a relationship that is manifested in our life, in the things we do. It is obedience to the Lord, not out of the Law but out of love. It is not doing your own thing, but what God has called you to do.

Now please, none of us are perfect and because of that, as we read these words that Jesus spoke, we feel condemnation.

If you feel that way, please understand that God is not condemning you, He loves you and is showing you areas that you need to change. The Devil is the one who brings condemnation into our lives to draw us away from God and God convicts us to draw us closer to Him!

And here's the thing. You can't lose your salvation because you did nothing but receive that free gift of life that is found in Jesus by faith.

He saved you; He will sustain you and one day you will be taken to glory, not because how great you lived out your life, but because how great and merciful our God is!

In I John 2:3-6 people once again are troubled by what John said. Let's read through those verses and then we will deal with what the problem is and understand what John is saying.

We are told, **“Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.”**

In saying that, how many of you, once you were saved have never sinned again?

Okay, anyone who raised his or her hand, guess what? You have the sin of pride in your life and many more if you are honest with yourself. Sorry.

Then what is John speaking of here?

He said that anyone that does not keep the commandments of God is a liar and thus, is John saying we have lost our salvation?

Not at all.



Remember what Paul said in Philippians 1:6, and we did speak about this issue already, but listen carefully because this should give you great comfort and hope. Besides the fact that Jesus does not lose any of His sheep.

We see Jesus speak of that fact in John 6:39, **“This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.”**

Jesus is Almighty God and His promise to us is that He will not lose any of us. What a great comfort that should be.

And in John 10:27-29 Jesus said, **“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand.”**

We are safe in the hands of God and since He is Almighty God, there is no one greater than Him, then how in the world can someone or something remove us from His hand? They can’t and again, great comfort in knowing that.

Okay, this is what Paul said in Philippians 1:6, and you thought I would never get there!

He wrote, **“being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.”**

We have confidence in the One who saved us, Jesus! We have confidence in the One who has sustained us in this life, Jesus! And we have confidence in the One who will take us to glory one day, Jesus!

In other words, the work that God began in our lives, He will finish. It doesn’t say as long as you do this and don’t do that!

Now some take that to the extreme and they believe that they can sin all they want and since they are saved it is all covered under the blood.

No, not at all. If that is where your heart is at, then you were never really saved in the first place. If you love to sin and you feel no conviction in your life as you do, then I don't believe you were ever saved!

Spurgeon put it like this, *“Those men who think that God's grace, when fully, fairly, and plainly preached, will lead men into sin, know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm . . . Shall I hate God because he is kind to me? Shall I curse him because he blesses me? I venture to affirm that very few men reason thus.”*

Absolutely. We obey the Lord because we love Him!

And that really is John's point here in I John chapter 2. John is speaking of continual sin and no conviction, no evidence of your faith. It is truly an empty faith!

And that is what Peter is speaking about here in regard to these false teachers. Their lives are filled with the – **LUST OF THE FLESH!**

Instead of walking the right way, they have forsaken the right way, and Peter gives us an example to show us what he means. And the example that Peter gives to us is that of Balaam.

Balaam was a prophet who was motivated by financial gain. He was a for-profit prophet!

Thus, when Balak, the King of Moab saw the armies of Israel, when he heard of how God was for them and giving them victories, he hires Balaam to pronounce a curse upon the Jews.

At first, God told Balaam not to go but he persuaded God to let him go and God was not pleased with Balaam.

On the way Balaam's donkey stops and would not move any farther. You see, the Angel of the Lord stood in front with His sword drawn and the donkey saw what Balaam didn't, his eyes were blinded by greed, the love of money!

And finally, the Lord did open Balaam's eyes, and we are told in Numbers 22:35, **“Then the Angel of the LORD said to Balaam, ‘Go with the men, but only the word that I speak to you, that you shall speak.’ So Balaam went with the princes of Balak.”**

Thus, as he comes to Balak, instead of pronouncing a curse he pronounces blessings upon the Jewish people. And he blessed Israel not just once, but four times! And Balak was not happy with Balaam, and he was not going to pay him for his services!

Thus, even though Balaam didn't curse the Jews, he gave Balak instructions on how he could get God to curse them. He told them to send their women into the camp, dress them up looking sexy and then they were to date them and marry them. By being joined with these women they would be able to get them involved in the pagan activities, into sexual immorality and God would take care of the rest!

Listen to what we are told in Numbers 25:1-3, **“Now Israel remained in Acacia Grove, and the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. They invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. So Israel was joined to Baal of Peor, and the anger of the Lord was aroused against Israel.”**

Their actions did bring the judgment of God upon them as twenty-four thousand died in the plague that God sent. (Numbers 25:9)

Balaam thought he could do as he pleased, to make a profit for himself and in the end, it cost him his life.

We are told in Numbers 31:8, **“They killed the kings of Midian with the rest of those who were killed - Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian. Balaam the son of Beor they also killed with the sword.”**

In the depravity of those false teachers comes the judgment of God and that is no different today!

And sometimes it takes a donkey to restrain the madness of these false prophets – but sadly, many in the church today refuse to stand up and be heard. They allow these lies to continue on, but God will finally put an end to it! He will judge them!

Let me give you this illustration to show you what these false teachers are like.

There was this businessman, and he offered his accountant \$100,000 to doctor the books.

That is a lot of money and thus, the accountant agreed.

But that is not the end of the story.

The businessman then asked if he'd do it for a penny.

Well, you can imagine the response of the accountant. To say that he was upset is putting it mildly.

And the accountant snapped back, ***“Of course not, what do you think I am, a thief?”***

Well, the businessman replied, ***“I’ve already established that, all that’s undecided is your price.”***

How true that is, that ***“Every man has a price!”***

And that was true of these false teachers, they sold out the truth for material gain. They were not faithful in the truths of God found in the Word of God.

Their passion was the – ***LUST OF THE FLESH!***

That is not what a man of God should be like, not at all! A true man of God will be faithful no matter what he has to encounter, do or not do!

But what is the message that these false teachers are bringing forth?

That is what Peter is going to tell us next, and I find it interesting how he speaks of their teaching – ***THEY SPEAK WITH EMPTY WORDS!***

### VERSES 17-21

Again, Peter is making a very important point here and it is really very simple when you think about it.

He is telling us that the words, the teachings of these false prophets are empty, there is nothing to them.

Why is that?

Because their teachings do not bring forth light, they are not refreshing, there is no spiritual nourishment you can glean from them, there is no life to them but only blackness!

And yet, people are tragically drawn to them.

It is as the Lord said in Jeremiah 2:13, **“For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns - broken cisterns that can hold no water.”**

I like the way that William MacDonald put it in regard to Peter’s statement about false teachers and what they give to people. He wrote,

***They speak great swelling words of emptiness, or as Knox translates it, they use “fine phrases that have no meaning.”***

This is an accurate description of the words of many liberal preachers and false cultists. They are accomplished orators, holding audiences spellbound by their grandiose rhetoric. Their erudite [scholarly] vocabulary attracts undiscerning people.

What their sermons lack in content, they make up for in a dogmatic, forceful presentation. But when they have finished they have said nothing.

- William MacDonald

Exactly! Yes, it may make you feel good as you hear those words, but in the end, when you are done, you have nothing to hold onto because what they have spoken is not from God's Word, it is not going to transform your life, but make you feel good about whatever sin you are involved in.

I will give you this example of this from Lenard Sweet. He is an Emerging Church author and speaker who is really a New Ager dressed in sheep's clothing. And when you listen to his words, they are impressive but what do you get from them? Do they draw you closer to God?

You be the judge regarding the words he is speaking.

Listen to what he said.

The first of these five untheorized observations is that New Light embodiment means to be "*in connection*" and "*in-formation*" with other Christians.

Deeper feeling and higher relating go together. The church is fundamentally one being, one person, a comm-union whose cells are connected to one another within the information network called the *Christ consciousness*. [New Age teaching.]

New Lights offer up themselves as the cosmions of a *mind-of-Christ consciousness*. [As Christians, we have the mind of Christ as God's Word opened up to us by the Holy Spirit shows us these things. Again, that is a New Age phrase.]

As a cosmion incarnating the cells of a new body, New Lights will function as transitional vessels through which transforming energy can renew the divine image in the world, moving postmoderns from one state of embodiment to another.

- Lenard Sweet, Catalyst Conference

Let me just say this - *WHAT???????????*

I have no idea what he is talking about and that is the way it is with Lenard Sweet, he speaks these words, and I guess, it is for those who are intelligent to understand. I can only say – ***FOOLISHNESS!***

I guess Peter was right, nothing more than great swelling words of emptiness and who knows what is being said.

But, like the emperor's new clothes, no one wants to admit they have no idea what he is talking about!

Let me ask you this. What is the allure or attraction of these false teachers?

Peter tells us that in I Peter 2:18-19 and notice that Peter says that as they speak, they are doing so with **“great swelling words of emptiness.”**

And here is the sad part. These false teachers would disappear if there was no one who would listen to their teaching.

That is the problem, and it is what we see in churches today, an audience given to these false teachers that are spewing out their false doctrine!

And what they do, as we have seen, is that these false teachers try to minister to people's flesh, make them feel good about living in sin.

And they use big, fancy, flashy words but in the end, they are empty because only God's Word can bring forth life in us.

How do you catch a fish?

By using the right bait and you can hook them and that is what these false teachers are doing, appealing to the flesh and people are getting hooked!

Yes, they may say that they are giving you liberty, they are giving you freedom but that is never found in the flesh.

Only Jesus can set us free from the bondage of sin and if you don't seek Jesus, if He is not your Lord and Savior, then you will be a slave of corruption, you will remain in bondage to sin!

Make no mistake about this, these teachers and their doctrines are deadly!

A perfect example of how something that may look beautiful can be deadly is seen in the Judas tree that has beautiful red flowers that attract bees.

The only problem is that the nectar contains an opiate that is deadly to the bees.

And so, as you look at the base of these trees you will find hundreds of bees that have been put to sleep by the beauty of this tree and in the end, it cost them their lives!

The same is true with these false teachers. They are charismatic, they are colorful, but look at the destroyed lives, look at the lives lost because of their deadly teaching!

Look at those who have fallen asleep to the things of God because of the poison that they are taken in by these teachers!



Paul wrote in Romans 13:11-14, **“And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”**

It is time to wake up as Christians and be alert to the things around us. We need to walk properly, it is not time to be lackadaisical about our faith, but to be bold and live accordingly!

Also, it is as we are told in John 8:31-36, **“Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.’ They answered Him, ‘We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, “You will be made free”?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.”**

They were blind to the bondage that they were in because they refused to see the light that Jesus had for them and thus, they were not free.

Now, as we look at verses 20 and 21 of II Peter chapter 2, this can be confusing. Listen again to what Peter said, **“For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.”**

The Amplified Bible puts these verses like this, **“For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through [the full, personal] knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they again become entangled in them and are overcome, their last condition is worse [for them] than the first. For never to have obtained a [full, personal] knowledge of the way of righteousness would have been better for them than, having obtained [such knowledge], to turn back from the holy commandment which was [verbally] delivered to them.”**

Please understand that Peter is not saying that a person can lose their salvation, that is not what the Scriptures teach.

Then what is he saying?

He is speaking of people who knew the truth, they may have even said they embraced the truth, but as you look at their lives you can see they are far from it. They had the head knowledge, but it never sunk deep down into their hearts, their lives. These false teachers with their false disciples are not saved!

In other words, they were not a Jesus branch but a Judas branch, a false believer.

And remember that Jesus said back in Matthew 7:23, **“... ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”**

The truth will set you free from the lies of these false teachers but make no mistake about it, these false teachers are very good speakers, not good teachers because they are not speaking forth the truths of God from the Word of God.

Peter said that they are wells without water, which looks so good and you can't wait to get refreshed, but in the end, there is no water in the well!

The words that they speak are not life, but death and destruction. Thus, be careful, be warned, Peter is telling us!

In other words – ***THEY SPEAK WITH EMPTY WORDS!***

And again, as we will see, these are not believers and their actions reflect that.

But – ***WHY DO THEY BEHAVE LIKE THAT?***

## VERSE 22

Peter illustrates this point by speaking of a dog who has vomited the corruption that was inside of him but then, because of his nature, he goes sniffing around that vomit and then he licks it back up, he takes it back in.

Okay, gross but true. If you ever had a dog, you know what Peter is speaking of!

Then Peter speaks of a pig, who is cleaned up, looks nice and you leave him outside and he goes right back to the mud and gets dirty because that is his nature.

Here is the point that Peter is making.

The reason people who come to church for a while and stop doing some of the sinful things they used to do and eventually return to the filth of the world is because?

It is because that is – ***THEIR NATURE!***

Yes, as Peter told us, these people experienced some ***reformation*** as they heard the things of God, maybe a friend spoke with them about Jesus, shared the Gospel with them, and they may have received it for a time, but then went back to their old ways because they never were really saved in the first place.

There was not real genuine ***regeneration*** (salvation) which would have given them a new nature with new desires.

That is what Paul speaks of in II Corinthians 5:17, this new nature we have in Christ. He wrote, **“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”**

The reason they act like they do is because it is part of their nature, they are not born again, they may have tried to clean up their outward actions for a time, but inwardly there is no transformation and thus, they are unsaved.

Let me share these words with you and then I will close. We are told,

Contemporary Christianity, sadly, contains many people like the ones Peter describes in this passage. They have sought personal improvement and moral reformation in their quests for spiritual and religious experience.

Many of them have become teachers, preachers, and self-styled prophets within the professed church.

Tragically, like dirty dogs or unclean pigs, they eventually return to their old lifestyles – rejecting the only One who can truly reform them.

Those who become spiritual leaders are in reality false teachers, motivated by their own selfish pursuits and sensual desires.

In view of their appalling character and damning influence, Peter’s warning is clear: Stay away from false teachers and expose them!

Believers are to listen to the true apostles and prophets, not the false ones.

- John MacArthur

May we heed the warning!