

Study on Books of 2nd Peter
“A Letter Of Warning”
Facilitated by Pastor Larry D. Weaver

Chapter 2 - Read 2 Peter 2:1 – 22

Introduction: There is nothing more offensive to God than the distortion of His Word. To falsify the facts about who God is and what He said, even promoting Satan’s lies as if they were God’s truth—is the vilest form of hypocrisy. With eternity at stake, it is hard to believe that anyone would intentionally deceive other people, teaching them something that is spiritually catastrophic. Yet, such atrocious arrogance is exactly what characterizes the pseudo-ministries of false teachers. As the father of lies, Satan is constantly using deception and false doctrine to attack the church—employing false teachers to infiltrate the true flock.

Read John 8:44 Claiming to teach truth, these spreaders of demonic error disguise themselves as angels of light, attempting to creep into the church unnoticed. As a result, throughout redemptive history, God has repeatedly warned believers to be on the alert against such men and women.

In **Deut. 13:1 – 5** it contains an early warning from Moses against false prophets. He prescribes a severe punishment for these men, along with all those who endorse their lies.

Read Deut. 13:1 – 5; Deut. 18:20 – 22 This same seriousness is echoed in the New Testament by Christ and the apostles, who carefully warn believers about false teachers and their deceptions. **Read Matt. 24:11; 2 Cor. 11:13 - 15** In light of this satanic threat, the New Testament writers emphasize the importance of being armed with the truth for the purpose of discernment. For them, doctrinal purity was a very high priority and a heartfelt concern. In fact, the apostles reserve their harshest criticism for those who distort the truth. The verdict from both Old and New Testaments is unmistakable: God does not tolerate false prophets. Ironically, many in today’s church do exactly the opposite—tolerating any teacher who claims to be Christian, regardless of the content of their teaching. Such mindless acceptance, in the name of love and unity, has tragically produced a careless indifference to the truth. As a result, some Christians view biblical absolutes as an embarrassment, preferring to embrace false teachers despite the Bible’s clear protest.

Note that Satan’s attacks are often external, through the spread of false religions and cults. But he also uses internal tactics, seeking to destroy God’s people from within. His servants, wolves in sheep’s clothing, do their best to infect the flock with the doctrine of demons. Because this false teaching comes in subtle forms, the undiscerning are often deceived,

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being unable to distinguish error from the truth. Peter understood the danger that false doctrine posed for his readers. In his first epistle, he had already warned them to be aware of the devil's tactics. **Read 1 Peter 5:8** In this passage, he again addresses the strategies of the Evil One—exposing Satan's servants for who they really are. In fact, he gives us a clear portrait of false teachers—looking specifically at the sphere, secrecy, sacrilege, success, sensuality, stigma, and sustaining motive of their operations. As a result, Peter's insights are as relevant today as they were yesteryears ago, since they address a problem that continues to plague the contemporary church.

2 Pet. 2:1 “But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.”

2 Pet. 2:1 NLT “But there were also false prophets in Israel, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will cleverly teach destructive heresies and even deny the Master who bought them. In this way, they will bring sudden destruction on themselves.”

- Having just discussed the sure word of truth in the previous chapter, Peter now shifts his focus to the deceptive words of false prophets here in **chapter 2**. The coordinate conjunction **but** marks this contrasting transition. Through genuine prophets, God has spoken the truth to His people, but, through false prophets, Satan has always tried to obscure or contaminate God's message. As servants of the Deceiver, false prophets propagate lies and untruth in their systematic attack on the truth. Throughout history, these **false prophets** have plagued God's flock. Even in Old Testament times they **arose among the people** of Israel, spreading their deceptions and causing devastation. **Read Jer. 5:30 - 31; Jer. 6:13 - 15; Jer. 23:14 - 16, 21, 25 - 27** We can see Old Testament Israel is in view here is evidenced both by Peter's terminology, where similar usages of **the people** clearly refer to the Jewish people and the mention of **just as there will also be false teachers among you**. Note that even during Jesus' ministry, false prophets were still a serious problem for the Jewish people. For that matter, the entire religious establishment was corrupt, with the Pharisees providing the prototypical example of false religion. Here Peter reveals **just as** he knew false prophets had

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assaulted Israel, he also understood that **there will also be false teachers among** the church. Jesus had predicted that in the last days the church would have to endure a variety of false teachers. **Read Matt. 24:4 – 5** The warning from Scripture is clear: false teachers *will* arise in the church. In fact, the church is one of Satan’s primary spheres of operation. For that reason, the true shepherd must continually be on guard—constantly studying, proclaiming, and defending the truth. **Titus 1:9b says, “... so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.”**

- In the **b-portion** of **verse 1** it reveals these false teachers “... **will secretly introduce destructive heresies...**” What this teaches is false teachers are never honest and straightforward about their operations. After all, the church would never embrace them if their schemes were unmasked. Instead, they **secretly** and **deceptively** enter the church, posing as pastors, teachers, and evangelists. That is why Jude describes them in **Jude 4** as “**certain persons [who] have crept in unnoticed.**” The verb “**to creep in**” from **pareisduō** means to “**slip in without being seen,**” or “**to sneak in under false pretenses.**” The term refers to a clever defendant attempting to fool a judge, or a criminal secretly returning to a place from which he was banished.
- Posing as true shepherds, false teachers **introduce destructive heresies** or literally, “**heresies of destruction.**” The term **destructive** means “**utter ruin**” and speaks of the final and eternal condemnation of the wicked. In this context, the term indicates that the tricks of these men have disastrous eternal consequences, both for them and their followers. Peter marked those **heresies** as contrary to the gospel—they damn rather than save. The term **heresies** denotes “**an opinion, especially a self-willed opinion, which is substituted for submission to the power of truth, and leads to division and the formation of sects.**” Their teaching is nothing more than a **religious counterfeit**, or a **Christian knockoff**. In our text here **heresies** refers to the worst kind of deviation and deception—teaching that claims to be biblical but is actually the very opposite. Because false teachers teaching is as lethal as it is subtle, the self-styled opinions can damn the souls of unsuspecting, professed believers. Unless they repent, believe the truth, and turn to Christ, those who embrace these heretical doctrines will be eternally lost.

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- In the **c-portion** and final clause of **verse 1** it says, “...**even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.**” Here the conjunction **even** underscores the unthinkable magnitude of the false teachers’ arrogance, pride and evidenced itself by denying the Master. **Denying** is a strong term meaning, **to refuse, to be unwilling, or to firmly say no.** Here in this passage, Peter’s use of the word **deny** from **arnoumenoi** is a present tense participle and denotes a habitual pattern of refusal, indicating that false teachers characteristically reject divine authority.
- The text reveals the one they **deny** and identifies Him as **the Master.** The word **Master** from **despotēs** means “**sovereign, ruler, or lord.**” The word appears ten times in the New Testament and always refers to one who has **supreme authority.** Here and in our text it directly refers to Christ or God. Here Peter writes the supreme sacrilege and irreverence of false teachers is that **they deny the sovereign lordship of Jesus Christ.** They may not outwardly deny Christ’s deity, atonement, resurrection, or second coming. But internally, they stubbornly refuse to submit their lives to His sovereign rule. As a result, their immoral and rebellious lifestyles will inevitably give them away. Then the phrase **who bought them** fits Peter’s analogy perfectly. He is alluding to the master of a house who would purchase slaves and put them in charge of various household tasks. Because they were now regarded as the master’s personal property, they owed their complete allegiance to him. While false teachers maintain that they are part of Christ’s household, they deny such professions through their actions, refusing to become servants under His authority. The word **bought** used here means “**to purchase, or to redeem out of the marketplace.**” The false teachers of Peter’s day claimed Christ as their Redeemer, yet they refused to accept His sovereign lordship, thus revealing their true character as **unregenerate enemies of biblical truth.** Many take this statement **the Master who bought them** to mean that Christ actually has purchased redemption in full for all people, even for false teachers, which is not true. Therefore, false teachers’ sins were not paid for in the atonement of Christ. Contrary to what some Christians believe today, people who reject Christ’s lordship are not merely to be designated as second-class Christians as believers, but not disciples. No this means, those who reject Christ’s sovereign lordship will face **swift destruction** if they do not repent from such rebellion.

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Swift here simply means, “**quick, or imminent**”, and **destruction** again refers to “**damnation or eternal damnation in hell.**” This horrible fate, coming either at death or at Christ’s return and awaits false teachers and all who follow their unrepentant path.

2 Pet. 2:2 – 3 “Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned 3 and in their greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.”...”

2 Pet. 2:2 – 3 NLT “Many will follow their evil teaching and shameful immorality. And because of these teachers, the way of truth will be slandered. 3 In their greed they will make up clever lies to get hold of your money. But God condemned them long ago, and their destruction will not be delayed.”

- The words in the **a-portion** of **verse 2** says, “**Many will follow their sensuality...**” The Bible is clear that **many** more people follow the broad way that leads to destruction than adhere to the narrow way that leads to life. **Read Matt. 7:13 - 14** In part, credit is due to false teachers for the popularity of the “wide road,” as they usher people onto the broad way and encourage them not to look back. Their message of independence, personal freedom, and self-exaltation is inherently appealing to fallen human hearts, who would rather serve themselves than submit to Christ. The words **follow their sensuality** speaks of following the wrong thing or wrong person. The word **sensuality** is a strong word referring to **habitual sexual immorality** and **unrestrained, corrupt conduct**. By using the plural form of the noun **sensuality**, Peter emphasizes that the false teachers’ sexual lewdness came in many forms and extremes. Because they had rejected the lordship of Christ, their lives were characterized by unrestrained indulgence and lawlessness. They intentionally refused to place any restraints on their fleshly desires or their sexual escapades. Their decadent behavior caused Jude to compare their sins with those of Sodom and Gomorrah. **Read Jude 4, 7** A teacher may claim to be God’s spokesperson, but if their life is characterized by corruption, lust, and immorality, it proves that they are actually a fraud.
- In the **b-portion** of the **verse 2** it says, “**and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned;**” The words, “**... the way of the truth**” used here refers to right doctrine and the accurate proclamation of the gospel. But **because of them** referring to false

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teachers, and the spiritual wreckage they leave behind, the biblical message has often been criticized in the eyes of the world. By their deceptive teaching and immoral behavior, false teachers have **maligned** or literally “**blasphemed, slandered, or defamed**” the gospel. When unbelievers associate the conduct of false teachers with the practice of the true church, the name of Christ is inevitably defamed. Therefore to counter these relentless, satanic efforts, the church must be doctrinally pure, and Christians must live the kind of righteous lives that make the transforming power of Christ believable. With that in mind, the apostle Paul exhorted the Philippians and wrote in **Phil. 2:15**, “**Prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world.**”

- Peter continues in **2 Pet. 2:3** and says, “... **and in their greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.**” What this verse teaches here is false teachers are not ultimately motivated by a fascination with false doctrine, rebelliousness, or even a proclivity for sexual immorality, even though they actively participate in each of those activities. Note that people can do all such sins without being teachers. Instead, the primary motivation driving false teachers is an unbridled love of money. The words “... **and in their greed they will exploit you with false words..**” supports their motivation. The term for **greed** **pleonexia** connotes an **uncontrolled, covetous desire for money and wealth**. Later in this chapter in **2 Pet. 2:14** Peter describes false teachers as “**having a heart trained in greed.**” They crave as much money as possible and are experts at bilking people in the church out of their wealth. This is a standard biblical indictment and characterization of religious fakes, frauds and imposters. **Read Jer. 6:13; Jer. 8:10; Titus 1:7**
- To accomplish their materialistic goals, false teachers **will exploit** people **with false words**. The word **exploit** means “**to traffic in, or to realize gain from.**” Such men want to get rich from the people to whom they “minister.” Although they claim to serve others, they are only interested in serving themselves, using **false words** to enrich their own pockets. Interestingly, the word **false** from **plastos** and is where we derived our English term **plastic**. In keeping with its etymological roots, **plastic** originally had the connotation of

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something not completely authentic. After all, **plastic** items often look as if they are manufactured from another substance, such as wood, metal, china, and so forth. Thus **plastic** at first glance “**deceives**” consumers. In a similar way, false teachers deal in phony doctrine. Their theology is not really based on biblical truth, but only molded by false reasoning to appear genuine. Satan’s goal, then, is to deceive as many people as possible, both inside and outside the church, by means of false teachers. In contrast, God’s goal is to identify and expose such hypocrites. Through Peter’s warning, the Holy Spirit makes it clear that false teachers are everywhere and have been since the dawn of redemptive history. In response, believers need to be vigilant and discerning, taking to heart the apostolic admonition of Paul to the Ephesian elders in **Acts 20:28 – 32 (Read)**

- In the **b-portion** of **verse 3** it says, “... **their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.**” Although false teachers will not face their eternal **judgment** until death, their sentence was decreed by God and promised a long time ago. The phrase **from long ago** translates one word, **ekpalai**, which simply means “**from a long time.**” Throughout history, from the first pronouncement of judgment on the serpent in the Garden in **Gen. 3:13 - 15**, God has condemned all those who distort divine truth. **Read Zeph. 3:1 – 8** The expression **is not idle** strengthens the sobering reality of divine retribution; God’s sentence against every lying teacher is actively accumulating wrath until each perishes into hell. Finally, with the words **destruction is not asleep**, Peter personifies eternal damnation as if it were an executioner, who remains fully awake, ready to administer God’s just sentence of condemnation at His appointed time on those who falsify His Word.

Transition: In **2 Peter 2:4 – 8** Peter continues his denouncement of false teachers by referencing three well-known accounts of divine judgment from the book of Genesis. It may have been tempting for some of Peter’s original readers to doubt whether or not the false teachers would really ever be punished. For the moment, they seemed to be flourishing—circulating their spiritual lies and basking in their popularity, sensuality, and wealth. So Peter reminded his readers of some biblical history, noting that just as God judged faithfully in the past, so He will also judge faithfully and uphold justice in the present.

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As the apostle gives an overview of three Old Testament examples, he highlights the height of God’s wrath in the case of fallen angels, the breadth of God’s wrath in the case of the ancient world at the time of the Flood, and the depth of God’s wrath in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah. In other words, there are no creatures too lofty, too numerous, or too immoral to escape God’s divine judgment or His vengeance which will be meted out on all who oppose Him. And, as Peter points out in this passage, the false teachers of his day were no exception. First he starts with the fallen angels.

2 Pet. 2:4 “For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment...”

2 Pet. 2:4 NLT “For God did not spare even the angels who sinned. He threw them into hell, in gloomy pits of darkness, where they are being held until the day of judgment.”

- The short phrase **for if** introduces a conditional sentence that extends through **2 Pet. 2:8**. **If**, however, does not imply uncertainty here and is probably better rendered “since.” Since God did not spare the **angels** of heaven when they sinned against Him nor did He provide any means for their salvation, humans who pervert His truth should not expect to escape His vengeance either. Angels, like mankind, were responsible to honor God and obey His truth and those who rebelled were sentenced to eternal punishment. The spiritual dynamics of how and why angels **sinned** remains, in many ways, a theological mystery. The highest ranking of all the angels, Lucifer, wanted to exalt himself to a position of equality with God. As depicted in the dramatic language of **Rev. 12:3 - 9**, one-third of the angels joined Lucifer’s heavenly revolt, arrogantly opposed God, and were expelled from heaven. **Read Isa. 14:12 – 21** But here in our text Peter is probably not referring here to the angels who originally fell, since they were not immediately incarcerated in **hell** nor confined permanently **to pits of darkness** to await their final judgment. In fact, they are the demons who are now loose in the world, securing Satan’s unholy purposes. The apostle Paul identified them when he wrote **Eph. 6:12** saying, **“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”** Note here when the Lord returns, the demons

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along with Satan will be bound during Christ’s millennial reign and eventually cast into the lake of fire. **Read Rev. 20:1 - 3, 10**

- Peter further describes this demonic incarceration by saying that God **committed** the fallen angels **to pits of darkness**. The word **committed** means, **to turn over for imprisonment**. Some ancient manuscripts read “**chains**.” Whether the rendering is **pits** or “**chains**,” the idea is the same—it refers to loss of freedom in a place of confinement, a fate demons feared. **Read Matt. 8:12, 29** Those who were sent there were **reserved for judgment**, like guilty prisoners awaiting final sentencing and execution at the last day. / Note here that Peter’s primary purpose here was not to get lost in the details of this account about fallen angels, especially since his readers were apparently already familiar with it. Instead, he used this illustration to emphasize the main thrust of his argument—namely, that God severely judges all those who oppose Him and His truth. Like those angels, rebellious false teachers will face divine wrath.

2 Pet. 2:5 “...and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly...”

2 Pet. 2:5 NLT “And God did not spare the ancient world—except for Noah and the seven others in his family. Noah warned the world of God’s righteous judgment. So God protected Noah when he destroyed the world of ungodly people with a vast flood.”

- Not only did God judge certain fallen angels, but He also **did not spare the ancient world**. In fact, He wiped out the full breadth of earth’s population by drowning all **of the ungodly** in the Flood. **The ancient world** refers to the people living at the time of the Flood, all of whom were wicked. **Read Gen. 6:5 – 7** However, God **preserved Noah**, who was righteous, a true worshiper of God immersed in a wicked and corrupt society. Resisting the suffocating evil around him, Noah walked with God, along with his wife, his sons, and their wives, who constituted the **seven others** whom the Lord **preserved** from destruction in the ark. More than a century before the Flood actually came, God revealed to Noah His plan to send judgment. **Read Gen. 6:8 – 13**

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- While building the ark, Noah also labored as a **preacher of righteousness**, warning people of impending death and divine retribution and calling them to repent. In the **b-portion of verse 5** it says, “... **when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly...**” Note it was God that brought the flood upon the earth and the ungodly. The word **flood** translated from **kataklusmos**, is where we derive our English word **cataclysmic**. The Genesis account, along with current geological evidence, indicates that the Flood truly was **cataclysmic** in every sense. **Read Gen. 7:10 - 24** All of this happened because of man’s sinfulness. God destroyed every person and every land animal except those in the ark, covering the entire planet with water—even the peaks of the highest mountains. The word **ungodly**, from the Greek word **asebeia**, is the one-word characterization of ancient humanity, a term that refers to a complete lack of reverence, worship, or fear of God. The early church fathers used it to describe **atheists** and **heretics**. Like the false teachers of Peter’s time, the **ungodly** of Noah’s day, through their rebellious immorality, eventually brought God’s judgment upon themselves.

2 Pet. 2:6 “... and if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter...”

2 Pet. 2:6 NLT “Later, God condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and turned them into heaps of ashes. He made them an example of what will happen to ungodly people.”

- The third historical illustration of divine judgment, Peter descended to the perverted depths of **Sodom and Gomorrah**. At one time, they were the main cities of the Jordan plain or basin, located in the Valley of Siddim or Salt Sea, near the southeast corner of the Dead Sea. Before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Genesis favorably describes the area as fertile—an ideal place for raising crops and animals in **Gen. 13:8 – 10 (Read)** But because of their gross sin, God **condemned** both cities **to destruction**. The judgment described in **Gen. 19:1 - 28** was a small-scale parallel to the worldwide Flood. Like Noah and his family, Lot and his daughters were the only inhabitants to escape. All of the other citizens of **Sodom and Gomorrah** were obliterated, this time by incineration and asphyxiation rather than drowning. **Read Gen. 19:24 - 25** The word rendered **destruction** in **verse 6** is from the word **katastrophē**, of which the English

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word **catastrophe** is a transliteration which indicates **a complete overthrow** and **total ruin**. The devastation was so thorough that it reduced those cities to nothing more than **ashes**. The phrase **reducing them to ashes** is described by one word and can also be translated “**covered with ashes**.” In fact, God’s judgment was so complete that the ruins remain undiscovered, and the cities’ precise location is still unknown. That **destruction** refers to more than physical death is clear from the parallel text in **Jude 7**, which says the people of those cities are “**an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire**.” Divine judgment not only buried the people’s bodies under the ashes, but it plunged their souls into eternal judgment. It is because of eternal punishment that the cities are examples, as are the angels. Although the citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah probably knew the message of righteousness and judgment, they chose to live in sin and perversion, most notably homosexuality based on **Gen. 19:4 – 11 (Read)**.

- More than twenty times in Scripture these cities are used as **an example to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter**. God used them and their holocaust to send an unmistakable warning to future generations of rebellious sinners—namely, that depraved people cannot pursue ungodliness and also escape God’s vengeance and everlasting judgment. **Read Matt. 10:14 - 15; Matt. 11:23 – 24** Prior to their destruction, God revealed the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah to Abraham. **Read Gen. 18:20 – 21** In response, Abraham the patriarch expressed his sincere concern for any righteous people who might still be living there. He implored the Lord to withhold His judgment for their sakes. **Read Gen. 18:23 - 33** The Lord was willing to spare the city if as few as ten righteous inhabitants could be found. But when even that minimum could not be met, the Lord destroyed the wicked population.

2 Pet. 2:7 – 8 “... and if He rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men 8 (for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds)...”

2 Pet. 2:7 – 8 NLT “But God also rescued Lot out of Sodom because he was a righteous man who was sick of the shameful immorality of the wicked people around him. 8 Yes, Lot was a righteous man who was tormented in his soul by the wickedness he saw and heard day after day.”

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- As in the previous illustration of the Flood, Peter comforted his readers by reminding them of those who escaped punishment. During the Flood, God graciously preserved Noah and his family. In this instance, during the demolition of Sodom and Gomorrah, God **rescued righteous Lot**, along with his two daughters. Those who are familiar with the Genesis account may wonder why **Lot** is designated as **righteous** no less than three times in **verses 7 - 8**. After all, when he first appears in Scripture, Lot is described as implicitly superficial, selfish, and worldly in **Gen. 13:5- 13**. During the events of Genesis 19, he displayed unambiguous moral weakness and incredibly poor judgment when, in place of the visiting angels, he offered his daughters to the lustful Sodomites in **Gen. 19:6 - 8**. Later, he hesitated when the angels urged him to leave the city immediately. Even after he escaped God’s wrath, he displayed shockingly sinful behavior, including drunkenness and incest in **Gen. 19:30 - 35**. However, there are, nonetheless, reasons to designate Lot as **righteous** or as **a believer**. For instance, like his uncle Abraham, Lot was righteous in the sense of being a believer to whom God had credited righteousness by his faith. This did not mean that either Lot or Abraham was free from sin for an example of Abraham’s disobedience, but they were righteous in the forensic sense. God imputed His own righteousness to them because they were true believers. Thus Lot, like Abraham, is an Old Testament illustration of justification. To be sure, Lot also showed several signs of the Holy Spirit’s work in his heart. For example, his reverence toward the holy angels who visited him provided a stark contrast to the perverted advances of his neighbors. And, although he was initially hesitant to leave the city, he ultimately obeyed God’s command and even warned his sons-in-law about the impending doom. Furthermore, when he finally left, he obediently refused to look back.
- Peter, then in the **b-portion** of **verse 7** points out that Lot was righteous in heart, as is clear from the fact that he was **oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men**. His hatred for the sin of those around him was a sure indicator that he was a believer. At times, Lot might have been materialistic and morally weak, but he did not want any part of the **sensual conduct** that characterized Sodom’s **unprincipled** culture. The term **sensual** from the word **aselgeia** means “**outrageous behavior**,” while **unprincipled** denotes actions that are “**unrestrained and without lawful standards**”—violating both the

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conviction of conscience and the commandment of God. The blatant immorality of his fellow citizens greatly **oppressed** Lot. The word **oppressed** used here conveys the idea of exhausting someone by **wearing him down and deeply troubling his soul**.

- Finally in **verse 8** the depth of Lot's dismay is found in Peter's parenthetical statement: **“... for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds.”** The word **tormented** literally means **“to torture,”** and demonstrates the sheer excruciation Lot experienced as he was exposed to the lewdness all around him. Peter knew his readers, living in the midst of their corrupt culture, could identify with Lot's difficult position. Their own situations were equally soul-distressing as they witnessed the immoral excesses of the false teachers and their followers. Like Noah and his family, Lot stood against the sin of his day and refused to follow the demonic doctrines and immoral practices that permeated ancient society. By recalling the account of God's judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah, Peter warns his readers of the doom that all of God's enemies and, specifically, false teachers will face. But, by highlighting the salvation of Lot, the apostle simultaneously comforts the righteous, reminding them that they have nothing to fear.

2 Pet. 2:9 - 10 “... then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, 10 and especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties...”

2 Pet. 2:9 - 10 NLT “So you see, the Lord knows how to rescue godly people from their trials, even while keeping the wicked under punishment until the day of final judgment. 10 He is especially hard on those who follow their own twisted sexual desire, and who despise authority. These people are proud and arrogant, daring even to scoff at supernatural beings without so much as trembling.”

- In **verses 9 and 10**, Peter provides the conclusion to his earlier conditional clause which says, **“if God did not spare angels... the world... and Sodom and Gomorrah. “If” or since** God knew whom to judge and whom to rescue in the past, **then** He certainly **knows how** to do the same in the present and the future. Put simply, **the Lord knows how** to judge the wicked while simultaneously preserving His own. For Peter, then, the

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pattern of divine judgment is clear. First, there is comfort in the fact that **the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation**. God knows how to save those who belong to Him; therefore they have absolutely nothing to fear. In this context, the word rendered **temptation** translated from **peirasmós**, which usually conveys the concept of testing signifies the idea of an attack with intent to destroy. Believers, then, are called to trust in the infinite wisdom and sovereign power of their divine protector.

- In the **b-portion** of the **verse 9** it also declares God not only knows how to rescue His children but how **to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment**. He is holding them **for the day of** final reckoning while continuing their **punishment** in the meantime. **The unrighteous** are like prisoners in jail who await final sentencing and transfer to their final fate. While they wait, they continue to accumulate more guilt. They will then face **judgment** at the Great White Throne, the future tribunal where God condemns all the ungodly from all the ages to eternal hell, the lake of fire.

Read Rev. 20:11 - 15

- The **a-portion** of **verse 10** teaches the Lord **especially** targets **those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority**. Thus Peter brings the discussion full circle, again recounting the false teachers' two primary characteristics. Like the wicked contemporaries of Noah and Lot, false teachers are slaves to sin. The Greek indicates that their lives are characterized by a continual “going after flesh in defiling lust.” They are dishonest, disrespectful, and displeasing to God—actively pursuing their sensual fantasies and eagerly parading their irreverent blasphemies. The word **corrupt** is translated from the word **miasmou** and means **“pollution.”** Our English word **miasma** which means **unpleasant** and **unwholesome**, is derived from this same term. The word **authority** from **kuriotēs** means **“lordship”**, and in this context indicates that the false teachers rejected the sovereign lordship of Jesus Christ over their lives. As discussed in **verse 1**, they superficially identified with Him but refused to live by His commands. In keeping with God's unmistakable promise, divine judgment will ultimately come upon all His enemies.
- The **b-portion** of **verse 10** says, **“Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties...”** Ever since Satan's initial rebellion, pride has been the

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primary characteristic of God’s enemies. False teachers, of course, can be no exception to this and both their words and their actions betray attitudes of self-centered arrogance and **self-willed** presumption typical of the unregenerate who are the devil’s children. They are brazen and audacious, **daring** which literally means “**darers**” or “**reckless ones**” who defy God in exalting themselves, no matter the consequences. **Read 2 Chron. 32:25; Est. 3:5; Dan. 4:30; 5:20, 22 - 23.** They are determined to have their own way at any cost, being stubborn and **self-willed**, a term that signifies a **self-pleasing conceit and obstinacy**.

- To illustrate the extent of their unshakeable presumption, Peter notes that these false teachers **do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties**. The word **revile** from **blasphēmō**, of which the English word **blaspheme** is a transliteration, and means “**to slander**” or “**to speak lightly or profanely of sacred things.**” The words **angelic majesties** in this context **refers to demons**, who are **majesties** in that they possess a transcendent, supernatural being, beyond the human level. Although these false teachers were mere mortals, who were by nature “lower than the angels” they arrogantly considered themselves superior to angelic beings. It should be recognized that many modern false prophets in the extreme sectors of the modern religious movement make their fortunes supposedly binding and superficially damning demons, as if they had real power over them. Those who propagate doctrinal deception invite the highest levels of divine denunciation and condemnation that is deserved for at least five reasons: their presumption, their practices, their premium, their prophecies, and their perversion.

2 Pet. 2:11 – 12 “... whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord. 12 But these, like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed...”

2 Pet. 2:11 – 12 NLT “But the angels, who are far greater in power and strength, do not dare to bring from the Lord a charge of blasphemy against those supernatural beings. 12 These false teachers are like unthinking animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed. They scoff at things they do not understand, and like animals, they will be destroyed.”

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- In contrast, even righteous **angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them** speaking about the **angelic majesties** in **verse 10 before the Lord**. Since there is no modifier, the term **angels** refers to the **holy ones** who are certainly **greater in might and power** than either fallen men or demons. But even from their exalted position, holy angels do not disrespect their fallen counterparts like the false teachers do. For example, the preeminently powerful Michael, it reveals in **Jude 9 “...when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you!’ ”** Like Michael, believers should not confront Satan and his minions alone. Instead, they should seek God’s intervening power against demons. Yet false teachers, by stark contrast, are **so self-confident, brazen, and reckless** that they did what even Michael “**did not dare**” to do—directly condemning angelic majesties as though they had authority over them.
- In **verse 12** it likens the reckless blasphemies of God and angels by false teachers demonstrate that they are like **unreasoning animals**. Here they are compared to beasts that have no rational capability, operating solely on self-indulgence and unthinking passion. Peter uses **animals** here because they are **born as creatures of instinct**, meaning that their responses to stimuli are preprogrammed, having been built into their genetic makeup by God. Because they operate on instinct, animals are not rational; thus they make no intellectual contributions to society. In fact, for most of them, their primary role in the ecological system is **to be captured and killed**, thereby providing meat for other members up the food chain.
- In the **b-portion** of **verse 12** it reveals spiritual pretenders, dishonestly presenting themselves as true teachers, exhibit an animal-like ignorance, **reviling where they have no knowledge**. They ridicule divine truth and heavenly authority, including things they do not even understand. The end of **verse 12** predicts that they **will ... be destroyed**; they will not escape God’s future wrath. When God’s fire consumes the entire world and all its creatures, false teachers will **also** be finally wiped out **in the destruction of those creatures**. **Read 2 Pet. 3:7, 12** Again, as God’s enemies, having intentionally distorted the message of His Word, false teachers will all face eternal punishment in the lake of fire.

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2 Pet. 2:13 – 14 “... suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong. They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you, 14 having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children...”

2 Pet. 2:13 – 14 NLT “Their destruction is their reward for the harm they have done. They love to indulge in evil pleasures in broad daylight. They are a disgrace and a stain among you. They delight in deception even as they eat with you in your fellowship meals. 14 They commit adultery with their eyes, and their desire for sin is never satisfied. They lure unstable people into sin, and they are well trained in greed. They live under God’s curse.”

- In **verse 13** the suffering it speaks of is the lake of fire where false teachers will forever endure the fury of God’s wrath, **suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong**. The words **suffering wrong** from the Greek word **adikoumenoi**, means, **“to be damaged, harmed, or be injured**. Those who dedicate themselves to false doctrine, exhibiting a presumptuous approach to spiritual things, will eternally be punished for their transgressions. **Gal. 6:7** reveals the epitome of the law of sowing and reaping: **“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.”**

Read Jer. 29:32

- As a general rule, sinners tend to engage in wickedness at night. **1 Thess. 5:7** says, **“For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night.”** According to historians, pagan Roman society tolerated dissipation and revelry as long as it was discreetly confined to the cover of darkness. But it frowned on and disapproved of debauchery during the daytime when it could be viewed by everyone. Because of its public nature, such behavior was considered inappropriate, even by Roman unbelievers. Nonetheless, the false teachers of Peter’s day were so consumed with lust, greed, and immorality that they considered **it a pleasure to revel in the daytime**, not wanting to wait until nightfall. In light of their passion for perversion, Peter likened these spiritual charlatans to **stains and blemishes**—two terms that speak of filthy spots, defects, scabs, and things diseased. Like malignant sores, the false teachers were **reveling in their deceptions** and openly enjoying the fruit of their sin. At

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the same time, they deceived those under their teaching influence by actively promoting wickedness in the lives of their followers. **Read Rom. 16:18**

- The words in the closing clause of **verse 13** support that when it says, “... **as they carouse with you...**” To make matters worse, the false teachers brought their lewdness into the church, purposefully choosing to **carouse with** the saints. The word translated **carouse** comes from a Greek word that means “**to eat together, or entertain together, as in a public meal**. By faking faith in Christ, the false teachers pretended to have a rightful place at the table. But in fact they were a polluting influence.
- In **verse 14**, Peter shifts the focus from the false teachers’ public behavior to their private thoughts and actions. In the **a-portion** of **verse 14** it says, “**having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin**” indicating that these spiritual frauds no longer possessed any moral self-control; they could not even look at a woman without viewing her as a potential object of their adultery or fornication. Put simply, their lustfulness was overpowering and unquenchable—an appalling form of unrestrained sexual desire that was brimming with sinful desire. Yet, even as menacing predators, these false teachers still gained a following within the church. As agents of Satan, the text reveals they were **enticing unstable souls**—preying upon the spiritually weak, convincing them to believe doctrinal lies, and enticing them into wicked lifestyles. The word **enticing** from **deleazō** literally means “**to catch with bait**,” and the false teachers, like fishermen using a lure, tricked their victims to believe their deceptions. Under the guise of authentic ministry, they targeted the unsuspecting, the spiritually immature, undiscerning, or unbelieving. Peter knew that the only sure defense against their tactics was a strong foundation in God’s Word. **Read 1 Peter 2:1 - 3**
- Beyond sexual favors, the false teachers of Peter’s day were also interested in accumulating wealth. The phrase “**having a heart trained in greed**” indicates that their immorality was always accompanied by **greediness**. The word **trained** from **gumnazō**, from which we derive the English word **gymnasium**, is an athletic term meaning “**to exercise**,” or “**to discipline**.” As a verb, it presents a disturbing description of the false teachers. These people have actually trained and equipped and taught their minds and hearts to concentrate on nothing but the forbidden desire. Peter understood that their

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actions were not accidental. Their offenses were crimes of premeditation, not momentary lapses of judgment, they were masterminds of sin. These false teachers had planned their attacks and purposed their hearts toward sensual and materialistic ends.

- Finally in the closing clause of **verse 14** Peter responds with disgust and gives a blunt but appropriate name for these, calling them **accursed children**. As liars and hypocrites, the false teachers epitomized those whom God has cursed to hell. Peter’s phrase is a Hebraism expressing the idea that people are “**children**” of whatever influences most dominate their lives. As servants of Satan and slaves to sin, they were rightly denounced as children of hell’s curse.

2 Pet. 2:15 – 16 “... forsaking the right way, they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; 16 but he received a rebuke for his own transgression, for a mute donkey, speaking with a voice of a man, restrained the madness of the prophet.”

2 Pet. 2:15 – 16 NLT “They have wandered off the right road and followed the footsteps of Balaam son of Beor, who loved to earn money by doing wrong. 16 But Balaam was stopped from his mad course when his donkey rebuked him with a human voice.”

- In the case of false teachers, Peter revealed that their primary incentive was and is personal gain. Put simply, a price tag, they were motivated by money. In order to further illustrate his point, Peter compared the false teachers to the Old Testament false prophet Balaam found in **Numbers 22 – 24**. The false teachers, like Balaam before them, were **forsaking the right way**. The **right way** here is an Old Testament metaphor indicating obedience to God’s Word. **Read Gen. 18:19; 1 Sam. 12:23; Ps. 18:30** The word **forsaking** here describes a direct, deliberate rebellion against Scripture. By rejecting God’s Word, the false teachers of Peter’s day refused to walk in obedience, choosing instead to wander away in spite of the eternal consequences. In so doing, they foolishly **followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor**. The story of **Balaam** is a classic example of a prophet who was motivated by financial gain. Having been hired by Balak, the king of Moab, Balaam attempted to curse the people of Israel as they wandered in the wilderness. **Read Num. 22:1 - 6** Balak saw the Israelites as a military threat and

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hoped to defeat them with Balaam’s help. In the first half of Numbers 22, Balaam appears to be a faithful prophet. But later having garnered a reputation as a prophet-for-hire, Balaam was primed for picking. But after his encounter with the angel, in the end, Balaam did not curse Israel but rather blessed her. Nonetheless, he was more than willing to accept Balak’s riches because he **loved the wages of unrighteousness**. If God had not intervened on Israel’s behalf, Balaam would have willfully sinned for his own material profit. Even though Balaam claimed to speak only the words of God, the Lord knew that he wanted to curse Israel in exchange for money.

- In **verse 16** it reveals because of his greed, Balaam **“received a rebuke for his own transgression.”** While he was riding on his **mute donkey**, the Lord miraculously caused the animal to speak to him in **Num. 22:22 - 35** and **the madness of the prophet was restrained**. The term translated **madness** from **paraphronia** literally means **“beside one’s own mind.”** In other words, Balaam was so greedy that he was **“beside himself.”** His love of money had caused him to act irrationally. When his attempt to curse Israel failed, **the prophet** tried to ruin the Hebrews through moral corruption. He used his influence to promote relationships that God had strictly forbidden namely, marriages between the Israelites and their pagan neighbors, the Moabites and Midianites. In **Numbers 31:16**, Moses identifies Balaam as a primary corrupting influence saying: **“Behold, these [pagan women] caused the sons of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor.”** Balaam encouraged the Israelites to practice idolatry, immorality, and intermarriage in a second attempt to destroy them—this time by assimilating them into pagan Canaanite society. The prophet’s apostasy not only assaulted God’s holiness, but it also threatened the very existence of His chosen people. Although Balaam knew better, he allowed fleshly impulses to guide his choices. And, as a result, he suffered the ultimate penalty of death in **Num. 31:8. (Read)**
- 2 Pet. 2:17 – 19 “These are springs without water and mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been reserved. 18 For speaking out arrogant words of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error, 19 promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved.”**

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2 Pet. 2:17 – 19 NLT “These people are as useless as dried-up springs or as mist blown away by the wind. They are doomed to blackest darkness. **18** They brag about themselves with empty, foolish boasting. With an appeal to twisted sexual desires, they lure back into sin those who have barely escaped from a lifestyle of deception. **19** They promise freedom, but they themselves are slaves of sin and corruption. For you are a slave to whatever controls you.”

- Three main features have always characterized the ministry style of false teachers. **First**, they are authoritarian, invariably ruling over their churches in a domineering fashion, and strongly denouncing any who question their authority. **Read Jer. 5:31** To make matters worse, they almost always lack formal training or reputable ordination, operating beyond any legitimate biblical or theological accountability. **Second**, false teachers minister in a man-centered way, pandering to what they think people want to hear and accept. **Read 2 Tim. 4:3 - 4** As a result, they preach their own visions of health, wealth, prosperity, and false peace. The true teacher emphasizes God’s holiness, man’s sinfulness, and the desperate condition that results. But false teachers prefer messages of their own making—syrupy deceptions that appeal to the carnal appetites of their listeners. **Third**, they treat the historic, Scripture-based doctrines of the church with contempt. Instead of proclaiming biblical belief, they promote their own self-styled novelties, methods, and doctrines. They purposefully distance themselves from the past, arrogantly endorsing some new-fangled approach to ministry, and often claiming private revelation from God in its defense.
- Peter begins in **verse 17** describing the false teacher’s prophecies as “**...springs without water and mists driven by a storm...**” Here Peter chose two metaphors that represent water, the most essential natural commodity of the arid Middle East. Due to its relative scarcity and vital importance, water provided the perfect illustration of spiritual sustenance. In fact, the Lord Jesus Christ had used this same metaphor years earlier when he promised His disciples in **John 7:37 - 38**: “**If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’**” Like mirages in the hot desert sand, Peter describes the false teachers as those who promise what they do not deliver. They are

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springs without water, offering the spiritually thirsty nothing more than false hopes of relief. They are also **mists driven by a storm**. In the eastern Mediterranean region, sea breezes periodically bring in mist and fog that appear to signal rain. But sometimes the atmospheric moisture stays only briefly and produces no significant rainfall. The land is left dry and parched; the inhabitants are left disappointed. Like those **mists**, false teachers are without substance and provide no life-changing refreshment.

- In the **b-portion** of **verse 17** Peter again did not hesitate to announce the terrible judgment that awaits these false teachers and says, “...**for whom the black darkness has been reserved.**” Here the **black darkness** mentioned refers to hell—the place of eternal punishment where both fire and darkness coexist. **Read Matt. 25:41; Matt. 22:13**

2 Pet. 2:18 - 19 "For speaking out arrogant words of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error, 19 promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved."

2 Pet. 2:18 – 19 NLT “They brag about themselves with empty, foolish boasting. With an appeal to twisted sexual desires, they lure back into sin those who have barely escaped from a lifestyle of deception. 19 They promise freedom, but they themselves are slaves of sin and corruption. For you are a slave to whatever controls you.”

- Despite the fact that they have no spiritual substance to offer, false teachers invariably claim great wisdom and knowledge—**speaking out arrogant words of vanity**. Through high-sounding rhetoric, they fool their followers into believing that they possess deep theological scholarship, profound spiritual insight, and even direct revelations from God. As in Peter’s day, contemporary false teachers use their empty, haughty speech to **entice** their listeners **by fleshly desires, by sensuality**. What this speaks of is these false teachers do not care about bringing the truth to people’s minds; instead, they target people’s lusts—offering a carnal, feelings-oriented message that feeds the sensual instincts of its hearers. More about emotions than sound doctrine. Peter says, individuals who follow such false teachers are **those who barely escape from the ones who live in error**. In other words, they are men and women who through moral resolution are

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trying to better themselves. They include people who struggle with broken relationships, wrestle with emotional “felt needs” and spiritual problems, and desperately desire relief from guilt, anxiety, and stress. They are dissatisfied with the lifestyle of **the ones who live in error** and seek some better way to live or some form of religious experience. But that does not mean they are truly redeemed. In fact, in their dissatisfaction, loneliness, and self-betterment attempts, they are highly vulnerable to the seductive exploitations of false teachers.

- In **verse 19** Peter teaches, in appealing to such people mentioned in **verse 18**, false teachers **promise freedom** and victory “... **while they themselves are slaves of corruption.**” As these false teacher promise empty guarantees include liberation, purpose, prosperity, peace, and happiness. They themselves do not even possess those blessings. In fact, the **b-portion** of **verse 19** it reveals, they are slaves to their lust, “**for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved.**” The bottom line here is they are so thoroughly dominated and controlled by their sinful nature that their teaching is void of any divine power. Although they offer freedom, they are slaves to sin, utterly unable to bestow true spiritual freedom because they reject Jesus Christ—the only One who can truly liberate the soul. **Read John 8:31 - 32, 36**

2 Pet. 2:20 – 21 “For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of Christ, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. **21** For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them.”

2 Pet. 2:20 – 21 NLT “And when people escape from the wickedness of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and then get tangled up and enslaved by sin again, they are worse off than before. **21** It would be better if they had never known the way to righteousness than to know it and then reject the command they were given to live a holy life.”

- Make no mistake here the false teachers of Peter’s day were outwardly religious people. They had professed faith in Jesus Christ and probably convinced the people that they knew far more about Him than they actually did. Otherwise they would not have been

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able to infiltrate the church so effectively. In pursuing religion, specifically Christianity, **they** in a sense **escaped the defilements of the world**. The words **defilements**, or “**pollution**,” from **miasma**, is a transliterated word in English that conveys the same meaning as it does in Greek: “**a vaporous exhalation formerly believed to cause disease ... an influence or atmosphere that tends to deplete or corrupt.**” The debauched system **of the world** produces, as it were, poisonous vapors, infectious evils, and moral pollutions in every conceivable form. Unsaved humanity is heavily contaminated by the world’s immorality and vanity, and some, such as those who become false teachers, seek to escape it. They do so **by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**, finding provisional shelter in the church. Such **knowledge** is an accurate awareness **about** Christ, but it is not a saving knowledge **of** Him. **Read Matt. 7:21 - 23; Heb. 6:4 - 6; Heb. 10:26 – 29** Thus, their efforts ultimately result in nothing more than temporary and superficial moral reform through religion—the religion of insignificant Christianity, devoid of genuine faith and repentance.

- In the **b-portion** of **verse 20** it reveals it is evident that false teachers are not really in Christ because **they are again entangled in** the world’s defilements **and are overcome**. Since there is no real salvation for them—no grace received to overcome the power of sin, walk by the Holy Spirit, and persevere in the faith, they therefore sink back into the pollution of the world and completely reject the gospel of salvation. The final clause of **verse 20** states **this last state** is much **worse for them than the first**. **NLT** says, “... **they are worse off than before.**” What this teaches is, those who understand the truth and still turn away will face far greater judgment than those who have never heard it. **Read Matt. 10:14 - 15; Matt. 11:22 - 24**
- **Verse 21** continues to stress the point of **verse 20** and says, in light of this, “**it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them.**” The words **the way of righteousness** speaks of the Christian faith. Because of the greater condemnation they face, false teachers would be better off not hearing about Scripture and doctrine than, having contemplated it, to reject it. Their insincere consideration of the gospel gives them access to divine teaching in God’s Word, which is **the holy commandment**. But

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they ultimately renounce Christ and His saving truth. Thus, they therefore reject the only true way of salvation and are subsequently left without any hope of eternal life. The writer of Hebrews gives a similar warning against apostasy: **Read Heb. 6:4 – 6** What this reveals is false teachers, as Peter describes them, actually develop from within the church and were partially disclosed from the muck of society’s wickedness, they hear the truth but ultimately reject it. Like Judas Iscariot, they breed in close proximity to Jesus Christ and His Word—cloaking themselves in the artificial righteousness of hypocrisy. Ultimately, they use the church solely for their own selfish purposes, like spiritual parasites, seductively seeking to drag as many as possible down with them, to the cruel satisfaction of the hosts of Satan.

2 Pet. 2:22 “It has happened to them according to the true proverb, “A dog returns to its own vomit,” and, “A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire.”

2 Pet. 2:22 NLT “They prove the truth of this proverb: “A dog returns to its vomit.” And another says, “A washed pig returns to the mud.”

- In a final portrayal of their despicable nature, Peter described the false teachers by using graphic imagery from the animal kingdom. His first analogy of what **happened to them** is **according to the true proverb, Proverbs 26:11, “A dog returns to its own vomit.”**
- The second is probably borrowed from an ancient secular adage, **“A sow, after washing, returns to wallowing in the mire.”** In biblical times, dogs and swine were both contemptible animals. Dogs, for instance, were rarely kept as household pets because they were usually half-wild mongrels—often dirty, diseased, and dangerous.

Read Matt. 7:6 They lived on garbage and refuse, and were even willing to eat their **own vomit**. It is not surprising, then, that the Jews treated dogs with contempt and disgust. Swine similarly represented filth, being the ultimate in uncleanness to the Jews. This was primarily because the Mosaic Law declared them ceremonially unclean. Peter’s comparison, then, is unmistakable: False teachers are the epitome of spiritual uncleanness and grime. Unfortunately 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

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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.