

2 Peter Chapter 2 Continued

2 Peter 2:13 "And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, [as] they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots [they are] and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you;"

“The reward of unrighteousness”:

Immorality and arrogant boldness will not pay in the end.

It will rob and destroy.

This is speaking of those who profess to know God, but are really not His.

Notice the statement (shall receive the reward of unrighteousness).

We have seen this, recently in the churches.

Men, who are professing to be leaders of the church, living very worldly lives.

They are attempting to cover their sins, and deceive the people into believing they are in right standing with God.

These false teachers are even worse than the people who have not made any commitment to God.

Everything these men do is deceiving.

They are not truly sold out to God.

They bring a false message and are not only deceived themselves, but deceive others as well.

“Riot in the day time”:

Sinning during the day without the cover of darkness was a sign of low-level wickedness in Roman society (1 Thess. 5:7).

But these false teachers are so consumed with lust and rebellion that they are pleased not to wait for the night.

Their unbridled passions consume them.

“Spots they are and blemishes” (see Jude 10).

That is, dirt spots and scabs.

They are opposite to the character of Christ (1 Peter 1:19).

The church should be like her Lord (Eph. 5:27).

Sporting ... while they feast with you”:

The false teachers, feigning to be teachers of truth while sitting with Christians at church love-feasts, were behaving arrogantly and immorally even on such occasions that was intended for Christian fellowship.

Though attempting to cover their corruption with religious talk, they were filthy defects on these church gatherings (2 John 9:11; Jude 12).

The church (all true believers), should be without spot or wrinkle.

Jesus Christ (our perfect Lamb sacrifice), was without spot or wrinkle.

He lighted the way for His followers.

2 Peter 2:14 "Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: a heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:"

“Eyes full of adultery”:

The false teachers had so totally lost moral control that they could not look at any woman without seeing her as a potential adulteress (Matt. 5:28).

They were uncontrollably driven by lust, never resting from their sins.

“Beguiling unstable souls”:

The metaphor is from fishing and appears also (in verse 18).

To entice is to catch with bait.

False teachers do not capture those strong in the Word, but prey on the weak, the unstable and the young in the faith (see 3:16; Eph. 4:14; 1 John 2:13).

“Hearts they have exercised with covetous practices”:

The word “trained” was used for training in athletics.

The false teachers have trained, prepared and equipped their minds to concentrate on nothing but the forbidden things for which their passions lust.

They are well schooled in the craft of self-fulfillment.

“Cursed children”:

This is a Hebraism for the curse of sin being the dominant thing in their lives, thus saying that they are damned to hell for their blatant wickedness (see Galatians 3:10, 13; Ephesians 2:1-3; and 1 Peter 1:14).

There are several key words in this; notice "children".

Children indicate sonship.

This is still speaking of those who profess to know Jesus, and yet are not His at all.

They are deceivers.

Notice, these children are cursed, because of their evil life-style.

The lust of the eyes has drawn them away from God and His Spirit into pleasing their own flesh.

These are among those who Jesus will tell to get away from Him, He never knew them, at judgment day.

Their argument will be that they did mighty miracles in His name.

The problem is not in them doing mighty miracles in His name, but because of their reasoning for doing the miracles.

God can see right through a phony.

He knows what is in our heart.

He knows what we do when it appears that no one is watching.

The worst part of all of this is the fact they lead others into sin with them.

2 Peter 2:15 "Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam [the son] of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;"

“Forsaken the right way”:

The “right way” is an Old Testament metaphor for obedience to God (Acts 13:10).

"Following" in the verse above, means follow out to the end.

“Balam”:

See Jude 11.

Balaam served as an illustration and example of such false prophets.

He was an Old Testament compromising prophet for sale to whomever paid him, who preferred wealth and popularity over faithfulness and obedience to God (Numbers chapters 22-24).

Through a talking donkey, God kept him from cursing Israel.

Balaam had drawn the Israelites into a fleshly religion.

I believe this is what is spoken of here.

Religion which appeals to the flesh is probably Christianity in form only.

"True Christianity" has to do with crucifying the flesh and living in the spirit.

The flesh must die that the spirit might live.

I tell our people, if it is pleasing to the flesh, run as far as you can the other way.

Flesh and spirit are mortal enemies.

The battle that every Christian faces, is the battle between the pleasing of our flesh, or pleasing the spirit.

Notice again "forsaken", which lets us know they were on the right track, they just left that straight and narrow path for a wider path.

Again, this is speaking of the apostate in the church.

Many times, the wages (money), draws us away from the truth.

2 Peter 2:16 "But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbade the madness of the prophet."

We will find in the Scriptures the determined Balaam who was stopped by God from doing a very foolish thing.

The Lord did not want him to go, and he went anyhow.

Look, with me, at what happened.

Numbers 22:22-33 "And God's anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the LORD stood in the way for an adversary against him. Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants [were] with him." "And the ass saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field: and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way." "But the angel of the LORD stood in a path of

the vineyards, a wall [being] on this side, and a wall on that side." "And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall: and he smote her again." "And the angel of the LORD went further, and stood in a narrow place, where [was] no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left." "And when the ass saw the angel of the LORD, she fell down under Balaam: and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff." "And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?" "And Balaam said unto the ass, Because thou hast mocked me: I would there were a sword in mine hand, for now would I kill thee." "And the ass said unto Balaam, [Am] not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was] thine unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee? And he said, Nay." "Then the LORD opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and he bowed down his head, and fell flat on his face." "And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I went out to withstand thee, because [thy] way is perverse before me:" "And the ass saw me, and turned from me these three times: unless she had turned from me, surely now also I had slain thee, and saved her alive."

We can see that this prophet had gone astray, as these last few lessons have been teaching us about the false prophets.

This, Balaam, is determined to follow evil.

Some of our ministers are determined to teach a false doctrine.

I wonder if it will be necessary for an ass to speak to us, before we will listen?

2 Peter 2:17 "These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever."

"Wells without water":

In this verse, Peter uses two poetic figures ("springs" and "mists"), which represent a precious commodity in the Middle East.

A spring or well without water would be a major disappointment in a hot and dry land.

Likewise, false teachers have a pretense of spiritual water to quench the thirsty soul, but they actually have nothing to give.

A well that does not provide water is a great disappointment.

I think that is what God is saying here. False teachers are a great disappointment to God.

Clouds that do not produce rain are speaking of the same thing.

"Water" symbolizes the Word of God.

This could be speaking of those ministers who do not bring the Word of God, and the great disappointment they are to God.

“Mist of darkness”:

The coming of clouds of “mists” would seem to promise rain, but sometimes the storm would blow the clouds on by, leaving the land dry and hot.

The false teacher might seem to promise spiritual refreshment, but were all show with no substance (Jude 12).

The darkness is hell (Matt. 8:12; Jude 13).

2 Peter 2:18 "For when they speak great swelling [words] of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, [through much] wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error."

“Swelling words of vanity”:

See Jude 16.

That is, ostentatious verbosity.

The false teachers deceive the weak with high sounding words that masquerade as scholarship or profound spiritual insight, and even as direct revelation for God.

They may contradict the plain historic teachings of Scripture which in some cases they are not able to explain properly because of their lack of adequate training and divine wisdom (see 1 Corinthians 2:14).

In reality, they say nothing genuinely scholarly, or spiritual, or divine.

Nevertheless, despite all the empty talk, false teachers entice others to their philosophies by appealing to people on the baser level.

Seduction, rather than the winsomeness of truth, is their ploy.

They offer people a kind of religion that they can embrace and still hold on to their fleshly desires and sensuality.

Peter may also be implying that those false teachers particularly aim to seduce women through sensual methods.

“Allure”:

Or enticing, which is a metaphor from fishing and appears also (in verse 18).

To entice is to catch with bait.

False teachers do not capture those strong in the Word, but prey on the weak, the unstable and the young in the faith (see 3:15; Eph. 4:14; 1 John 2:13).

“Escaped ... error”:

The preferred translation is “barely escaping” or “trying to escape.”

This is a description not of saved people, but of people who are vulnerable because they have high levels of guilt and anxieties, people with broken marriages, people who are lonely and tired of the consequences of sin and are looking for a new start, even for religion or help from God.

The false teachers exploit these kinds of people.

All of this is speaking of happening within the church.

This is not the world, but the church.

It is speaking of the devil using false prophets in the church, who appeal to the flesh of man, leading those who have been in right relation with God away from the Truth.

Wantonness is speaking of sins of the flesh.

It is a very dangerous thing for the church to use things that appeal to the flesh to get people to attend church.

The world and the evil desires of the flesh have no place in the church.

2 Peter 2:19 "While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage."

“Promise them liberty”:

False teachers promise those “trying to escape” the struggles of life, the very freedom they seek.

False teachers are further called “servants of corruption” because, despite their profession of salvation, they have become “entangled” in the world and “overcome” by it.

Therefore, their “latter end is worse” than their “beginning” profession, because they have now embarked on a course of action that denies their profession of Christ.

“Servants of corruption”:

The false teachers can’t deliver the freedom they promise, because they themselves are enslaved to the very corruption which people are trying to escape.

“Overcome ... bondage”:

Whoever puts himself, in the name of freedom, into the hands of a false teacher, who is a prisoner himself, also becomes a prisoner.

Bondage to corruption awaits all followers of false teachers.

When Christianity becomes too liberal, it has compromised with the world.

The liberty to do what they want to do and still be a church member is a very dangerous thing.

The way to Jesus is a straight and narrow path.

When we start compromising with the world, we become servant to sin.

Many of the things being done today in the churches to bring larger crowds in are nothing more than compromise.

When we compromise, we are no longer in right standing with God.

2 Peter 2:20 "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 therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning."

“Escaped the pollutions of the world”:

“Defilements” has the idea of putrid or poisonous vapors.

Morally, the world gives off a deadly influence.

Peter notes that at some point in time, these false teachers and their followers wanted to escape the moral contamination of the world system and sought religion, even Jesus Christ (on their terms, not His).

But these false teachers had never genuinely been converted to Christ.

They heard the true gospel and moved toward it, but then rejected the Christ of that gospel.

That is apostasy, like the people of (Hebrews 10:26-27).

Their last end is far worse than the first.

Hebrews (chapter 6), has a great deal to say about turning from God back into sin, and the danger of that.

Hebrews 6:4-8 "For [it is] impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost," "And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," "If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put [him] to an open shame." "For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:" "But that which beareth thorns and briers [is] rejected, and [is] nigh unto cursing; whose end [is] to be burned."

In both (Hebrews and 2 Peter), it is speaking of those who were in bondage to sin and received freedom from that sin in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When we receive Christ Jesus as our Savior and Lord, we are freed from the bondage of sin.

We become a new creature in Christ.

To turn away from so great salvation back into a life of sin is very dangerous.

It would be as if we were crucifying Jesus all over again.

The Word of God has helped us become a new creature in Christ.

To turn back into a sinful way of life, after having full knowledge of God is very serious.

Christianity is a daily walk in the footprints that Jesus left for us.

I cannot stress enough how dangerous it is to bring the world in the church.

The world is full of sin.

Stop trying to be like the rest of the world, Christian.

In fact, stop living your life and let Christ live in you.

2 Peter 2:21 "For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known [it], to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."

“To turn from the holy commandment”:

Literally “to turn back.”

This verse describes the perversion and defection of the false teachers.

They professed the Christian experience, the way of righteousness (Matt 21:32), and even had access to the true teachings of Scripture.

But by their lives they demonstrated that they ultimately had chosen to reject Christ (see Hebrews 10:26-31).

Such false teachers as Peter was describing were not made outside Christianity.

They are always bred in the church, half in and half out; but eventually they reject the truth and try to seduce others in their attempt to fulfill their self-gratification.

Righteousness is putting on the righteousness of Christ, putting us in right standing with God.

To be full of Christ and His teachings and then turn back into the world would be choosing the flesh over the spirit.

Jesus said: "If you love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

We must walk daily in the light of Jesus.

John 15:22 "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin."

Jesus gave His body on the cross for all believers in Christ.

His blood washed our sin away.

It no longer exists.

To boldly choose to go back into a sinful way of life, after we are freed from sin, would require a total turning away from God.

It would mean we had chosen the devil and his ways, rather than God's ways.

John 8:44 "Ye are of [your] father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.

He was a murderer from the very beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.

When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

2 Peter 2:22 "But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog [is] turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

This is speaking of Christians who were not 100% committed to the Lord.

"Dog ... Sow":

Two graphic analogies of an apostate.

The first is from (Proverbs 26:11), shown below and the second about the sow is Peter's here in verse (2:22).

The illustrations of the "dog" and the "sow" vividly portray their folly.

But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb "the dog *is* turned to his own vomit again"; and "the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire" (see Proverbs 26:11; and also 2 Peter 2:22).

Proverbs 26:11 "As a dog returneth to his vomit, [so] a fool returneth to his folly."

This reminds me so much of the seed that was planted by the wayside that sprang up, and then very soon withered away.

The lust of the flesh has allured this person back into the world.

In both instances, the dog and the sow have returned to the unregenerate life.

They have returned to a sinful way of life.

2 Peter Chapter 2 Continued Questions

1. Who is verse 13 speaking of?
2. Why is it worse for a teacher to be corrupt?
3. What should be the condition of the church?
4. Having eyes full of _____.
5. What are these false believers called in verse 14?
6. Why are they cursed?
7. They have forsaken the _____.
8. Who are they compared to in verse 15?
9. What does "following" in verse 15 mean?
10. Baalam had drawn the Israelites into a _____ religion.
11. What is "true Christianity"?
12. What is the great battle that every Christian faces?

13. What was unusual about the ass that Baalam rode?
14. What is a well without water?
15. False teachers are a great _____ to God.
16. What does "water" symbolize?
17. When they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the _____ of the _____.
18. What kind of sin is "wantonness" speaking of?
19. What happens to Christianity when it becomes too liberal?
20. What kind of path leads to Jesus?
21. Verse 20 says they escaped the pollutions of the world through the _____ of the _____ and _____.
22. What chapter in Hebrews deals with the same thing as verse 20 here?
23. What are they both speaking of?
24. For a Christian to turn back into a sinful way of life is a very _____ thing.
25. Christianity is a _____ walk.
26. Stop living your life and let _____ live in you.
27. Jesus said; "If you love me, keep my _____".
28. What washes the sin of the Christian away?
29. The dog is turned to his _____ again.
30. The sow that was washed to her _____ in the _____.
31. Both have returned to their _____ life.