

# Peter and His Epistles

Lesson # 19: False Teacher  
2 Peter 2:1-22

## I. Introduction

“Peter does not identify any specific false religion, cult or system of teaching. In a general characterization, they teach destructive heresies. They deny Christ and twist the Scriptures.” (John MacArthur)

## II. False teachers among you (2:1-3)

- A. Israel had false (or lying) prophets (see Deut. 13:1-5 and 18:20)
- B. Notice Paul’s concerns regarding these teachings that lead to darkness and damnation.

Galatians 2:4 *“This matter arose because some false believers had infiltrated our ranks to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus and to make us slaves.”*

2 Cor. 11:13-15 *“For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.”*

- C. Their condemnation and destruction is illustrated with three biblical examples of previous judgments (2:4-8)

- 1. Fallen angels (see Jude 6, Rev. 12:9)
- 2. Those living at the time of the flood (see Gen. 6:1-7)

Note: Peter has referred to the flood in his first letter (1 Pet. 3:18-22) and he will again in Chapter 3 (vs. 5-6)

- 3. The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah (see Gen. 13:10, 18:20-29 and Luke 17:29-37)

- D. The behavior of these false prophets (2:10-19)

- 1. “They walk after the flesh” (vs. 10)  
Note the contrast to life in the spirit as described in Romans 8.
- 2. “They despise government” / “not afraid to speak evil of dignities” (vs. 10)
- 3. “Speak evil of the things they understand not” (vs. 12)
- 4. “Count it pleasure to riot in the day time” (vs. 13) reveling in broad daylight (1 Thes. 5:7)
- 5. “Having eyes full of adultery” (vs. 14) wanting to turn church services into times of debauchery.
- 6. “Cannot cease from sin” / “beguiling unstable souls” (vs. 14-15)
  - a. They “work out” at doing evil

- b. The illustration of Balaam (Num. 22:5-24:25) – “who loved money and was willing to pursue it instead of obeying God.”
- 7. “Wells without water” (vs. 17)  
 Contrast that with Christ being a spring of water (John 4:13-14) offering “streams of water” (Jn. 7:31-38)
- 8. “Promise liberty / servants of corruption” (vs. 19)  
 Note: “everyone who sins is a slave to sin” (Jn. 8:34)
- E. False prophets are “entangled again” (2:20-21)
  - 1. Some believe this is a loss of their salvation. More likely, they were not “real” sheep.
  - 2. Two illustrations from two proverbs (one from scripture)
    - a. Dog back to his vomit  
 Prov. 26:11 *“As a dog returns to its vomit, so fools repeat their folly.”*
    - b. Pig wallowing in the mire  
 Lev. 11:7 *“And the pig, though it has a divided hoof, does not chew the cud; it is unclean for you”*
    - c. Remember, both dogs and pigs were considered vile by Jews.

### III. So what?

Religious “activity” does not equal spiritually substance. We must “test the spirits” (1 John 4:1). In the end, our true nature displays itself. Avoid these teachers!

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### Discussion Questions:

In what practical way do you “test the spirits”?