

## The Great Falling Away (Pt. 2 of 3) & False Teachers

As mentioned last week in the writings of Paul, many will fall away from the faith due to false teachings via a spiritual leader. For the false teacher is an enemy of God, their teachings are not only of ignorance of God's word, but they have motives that God does not approve of at all! In the following passages, Peter writes to the people of then and as well as today what the false teacher looks like in behavior and speech. A false teacher does not have to be in a pulpit, but he or she is one who is simply teaching or proclaiming God's word in absolute error intentionally and not living by the example of the word of God.

**2 PETER 2:1-3 NLT** - (1) 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. (2) 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.

**Doom of False Teachers - 2 PETER 2:4-11 NLT** - (4) 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. (5) 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. (6) 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. (7) 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. (9) 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. (11) 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.

When we intend mischief, God sends many stops to hinder us, to say, take heed to what you do. His wisdom and power will surely affect the purposes of His love and the engagements of His truth; while wicked men often escape suffering here, they are kept to the day of judgment, to be punished with the devil and his angels.

**Depravity of False Teachers - 2 PETER 2:12-16 NLT** - (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. (13) 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<sup>[e]</sup> 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. (15) 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.

Refusing to bring every thought to the obedience of Christ, they act against God's righteous precepts. They walk after the flesh, they go on in sinful courses, and increase to greater degrees of impurity and wickedness. They also despise those whom God has set in authority over them, and requires them to honor. Let Christians stand at a distance from such.

**Deceptions of False Teachers - 2 PETER 2:17-21 NLT** - (17) 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. (20) 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. (22) They prove the truth of this proverb: "A dog returns to its vomit." And another says, "A washed pig returns to the mud."

The word of truth is the water of life, which refreshes the souls that receive it; but deceivers spread and promote error, and are set forth as empty, because there is no truth in them. In the midst of their talk of liberty, these men are the vilest slaves; their own lusts gain a complete victory over them, and they are actually in bondage. When men are entangled, they are easily overcome; therefore Christians should keep close to the word of God, and watch against all who seek to bewilder them. A *state of apostasy* is worse than a state of ignorance. To bring an evil report upon the good way of God, and a false charge against the way of truth, must expose to the heaviest condemnation.

**SCRIPTURE READING** – 1 JOHN 4:1

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK** – Lost time is never found.

