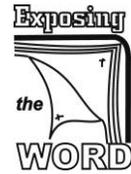


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The Epistles of 1 & 2 Peter

BY DR. EDGAR PIERCE



XVI- Remember What False Prophets Look Like: 2Pe 2:10-21

I remember a story told for the truth years ago. A friend of mine cut up deer for people at a school where he was an agriculture teacher. One man brought a goat in one day to be processed. My friend did not have the heart to tell him that it was not a deer. He did not know what a deer looked like evidently.

Now this may seem silly but it is not when you realize that someone who shot a goat is in the woods with you. One of the key things about gun and hunting safety is to know what you are shooting at. Identify your target; know the game you are pursuing. What does it look like? It is scary to be in the woods with what we might call a free shooter who does not discern what he is shoot at. A shoot and then check to see what you have killed.

Is it any less scary and eternally dangerous to be someone who has no discernment of spiritual matters. Someone who cannot tell a goat from a deer, so to speak. The real from the decoy. Paul speaking concerning the reason for spiritual gifts within the body of Christ said, *That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. Ephesians 4:14*

In this section of Peter we see he reminds us of what these false prophets and teacher look like. The *Layman's Bible Book Commentary* says, “The false teacher are denounced in this passage in such scathing, scalding terms seldom found elsewhere in the Bible” (vol 23 p 134)

Peter is very concerned that these teachers would bring into the church such actions and teachings that would harm the flock. Warren Wiersbe says, “Unlike some believers today, Peter was disturbed by the inroads the false teachers were making into the churches. He knew that their approach was subtle but their teachings were fatal, and he wanted to warn the churches about them.” (*The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol 2 p 451)

I wish to approach this subject by exploring three things we can about these false teachers and prophets.

First, their description; second, their actions; and third, their fate.

I- Their Description:

We will not break the text down as usually but will look at the description of these false teachers that begins in verse 10 and continues to verse 19.

The overarching thing about these men is when contrasted with true teacher their errors are evident. True teachers of the word emphasis purity and cleanliness before God but these men promote the opposite. Notice the following description.

1- Bold and Arrogant- 2Pe 2:10 “...*Presumptuous are they, selfwilled...*” The HCSB says, “*Bold, arrogant people!*”

2- Irrational Animals- 2Pe 2:12 “...*natural brute beasts*” The HCSB says, “*like irrational animals--creatures of instinct...*”

3- Spots and Blemishes- 2Pe 2:13 “*Spots they are and blemishes...*” “dark spots on a pure garment”, *Barnes Notes* says.

4- Accursed Children- 2Pe 2:14 “...*beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children.*” Literally children of the curse, the fallen children.

5- Lying Mirages- 2Pe 2:17 “*wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest*” Jude in his epistle uses the same language. They were wells and clouds that promised refreshment but did not deliver, a mirage.

6- Slave of Corruption- 2Pe 2:19 “...*they themselves are the servants of corruption.*” They are slaves to their sin and immorality.

II- Their Actions:

1- Speak Blasphemies- 2Pe 2:12 “...*speak evil of the things that they understand not.*” The HCSB says they “...*speak blasphemies about things they don't understand.*” They do not appreciate the things of God and therefore rail against them.

2- Carouse in Daytime- 2Pe 2:13 The KJV says “*they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time.*”

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The HCSB says “to carouse in the daytime.” Now when someone has become so brazen and bold to do things normally reserved for evil men under the cloak of darkness there are problems.

3- Delight in Deception- 2Pe 2:13 HCSB “delighting in their deceptions as they feast with you.” The KJV says, “sporting themselves.” Barnes Notes says, “...they take advantage of their views to live in riot and luxury. Under the garb of the Christian profession, they give indulgence to the most corrupt passions.”

4- Eyes Full of Adultery- 2Pe 2:14 “Having eyes full of adultery...” Gazing with desire, looking for sin. But not only that they seduce the unstable. NASB says, “...enticing unstable souls...”

5- Heart Trained in Greed- 2Pe 2:14 ESV “They have hearts trained in greed.” Like someone who goes to the gym to work out they had their hearts exercised with greed.

6- Follow Wrong Path- 2Pe 2:15 “have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray...”

I am reminded of a couple of verses here. **Pro 14:12** *There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*

Jesus said in **Matthew 7:13-15** *Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. 15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

7- Utter Empty Words- 2Pe 2:18 “...they speak great swelling words of vanity...” They use words to entice the flesh of men and women into fleshly desire and debauchery.

8- Promise False Freedoms- 2Pe 2:19 “...they promise them liberty.” They claim that they can be free by letting loose and giving in to the flesh but these are false freedoms that bring more bondage. My favorite way someone put this is it is like a 300lb man selling diet books.

III- Their Fate:

Scattered throughout this section we see the fate of these false teacher. This is not only taught by Peter. Notice **Jude 1:4** *For there are certain men crept in*

unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

1- Born for Destruction- 2Pe 2:12 “...made to be taken and destroyed.” Like an animal would be killed.

2- Gloom of Darkness- 2Pe 2:17 “... to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever.” Peter used darkness to describe the fate of fallen angels in hell. Hell is spoken of as both a place of fire and a place of darkness. **Mat 8:12** *But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

3- Last State Worse than First- Notice with me **2Pe 2:20-22** *For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. 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. 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.*

He had called them brute animals fit for destruction and now uses two despicable things to a Jew, dogs and hogs. By the way you can scrub a pig and a dog and it is just a matter of time before both are as bad as they ever were. Peter uses two proverbs or saying to emphasis that the last state is worse. Someone who has looked in and saw the truth but chose to reject the truth is in a worse state many times than someone who is hearing it for the first time.

The *Bible Knowledge Commentary* concludes 2 Peter 2 with these words:

Believers today do well to heed Peter’s warning against false teacher, to learn how to discern truth for themselves, and to teach it to others. The false teachers will themselves meet destruction and others will be destroyed by them. But Christians can wage spiritual warfare more effectively if they know their spiritual enemies, the techniques that heretics use, and the end result of their deception.” (p 874)