

Colossians 1:28

<sup>28</sup> Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

2 Peter 2:1-22

**2** *But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. <sup>2</sup> And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. <sup>3</sup> And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.*

*<sup>4</sup> For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains<sup>2</sup> of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; <sup>5</sup> if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; <sup>6</sup> if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; <sup>7</sup> and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked <sup>8</sup> (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard); <sup>9</sup> then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, <sup>10</sup> and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority.*

*Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones, <sup>11</sup> whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord. <sup>12</sup> But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction, <sup>13</sup> suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you. <sup>14</sup> They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children! <sup>15</sup> Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray. They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing, <sup>16</sup> but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with human voice and restrained the prophet's madness.*

*<sup>17</sup> These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm. For them the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved. <sup>18</sup> For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error. <sup>19</sup> They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved. <sup>20</sup> For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. <sup>21</sup> For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them. <sup>22</sup> What the true proverb says has happened to them: "The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire."*

## 2 Peter Outline

- I. Remember the Greatness of Salvation (1:1-11)
- II. Trust the Certainty of Scripture (1:12-21)
- III. Beware of Deceptive False Teachers (2:1-22)
- IV. Hope in the Promised Future (3:1-16)

### III. Beware of Deceptive False Teachers (2:1-22)

- A. High Alert for False Teachers (vs 1-3)
- B. Divine Precedent for False Teachers (vs 4-8)
- C. The Lord Knows (vs 9)
- D. Carnal Traits of False Teachers (vs 10-16)
- E. Awful Wreckage by False Teachers (vs 17-22)
  - 1. **Product of Empty Promises (vs 17)**
  - 2. Confusion of Confident Stupidity (vs 18a)
  - 3. Trap of Alluring Temptation (vs 18b)
  - 4. Promise of Freedom through Bondage (vs 19)
  - 5. A Bitter End for a Bright Beginning (vs 20-21)
  - 6. Slippery Slope of Self-Delusion (vs 22)

*17 These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm. For them the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved.*

Jude 12-13

<sup>12</sup> These are hidden reefs at your love feasts, as they feast with you without fear, shepherds feeding themselves; **waterless clouds**, swept along by winds; fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted; <sup>13</sup> wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; wandering stars, for whom **the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever.**

Southern part of Israel has a lot of desert - dry, arid, not someplace you want to get stuck without water

- During OT times, families and villages would live around the wells and water spots they found
- Multiple times in scripture there were arguments over “well rights”
- Water was life - so to come upon a dry well, it was greatly disappointing and possibly even deadly
- False teachers are full of empty promises that produce nothing but a gritty taste in your mouth

Jeremiah 2:13 (*Dry wells*)

<sup>13</sup> for my people have committed two evils:  
they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters,  
and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

Proverbs 10:11 (*Life in water*)

<sup>11</sup> The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life,  
but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.

*“Mists driven by a storm”*

- A brief taste of something good, but then it quickly vanishes
- Followed by violence and destruction, not the promise of a gentle mist

**Quick side comment by Peter** - > *“For them, the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved”*

2 Peter 2:4 - Demons in Tartarus are in “chains of gloomy darkness”

Jude 6, 13 - “gloomy and utter darkness”

Matthew 25:30 - “cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness, in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth”

Exodus 10:21 (*Ninth Plague*)

<sup>21</sup> Then the Lord said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward heaven, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, **a darkness to be felt.**”

E. Awful Wreckage by False Teachers (vs 17-22)

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***<sup>18</sup> For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error.***

*“Loud boasts”* - Gr. ὑπέρογκος (*hyperogkos*) - haughty, pompous, bombastic; of excessive bulk, swollen to great size

Beware of the yeller, the big talker, working up passionate antics up on stage, playing it up to the crowd (Steven Furtick)

- Lots of words with nothing to say
- The more they say, the worse it gets
- Giving the crowd exactly what they want

*“Folly”* - Gr. ματαιότης (*mataiotēs*) - futility, emptiness, useless, purposeless

Unfortunately, many people believe and follow the highly confident

- The concept that sometimes truth is stranger than fiction

2 Timothy 2:16-18

<sup>16</sup> But avoid **irreverent babble**, for it will lead people into more and more ungodliness, <sup>17</sup> and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, <sup>18</sup> who have swerved from the truth, saying that the resurrection has already happened. **They are upsetting the faith of some.**

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***18 For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error.***

“Entice” - Gr. δολιάζω (*deleazō*) - lure into sin, be seduced, literally “to catch with bait”

- 2 Peter 2:14 - “They entice unsteady souls”

“Sensuality” - Gr. ἀσελγεία (*aselgeia*) - debauchery, licentiousness, lewdness, unrestrained in moral attitudes and behaviors

- Peter uses in 1 Peter 4:3, 2 Peter 2:2, 7, 10, 13-14, 18-19
- 2 Peter 2:2 - “many will follow their sensuality”
- 2 Peter 2:7 - “Lot distressed by the sensual conduct”

“Passions”

- 2 Peter 1:4 - “sinful desires”
- 2 Peter 2:10 - “Lust of defiling passions”

Many false teacher lure followers for their own sexual pleasures at the same time appealing to people’s carnal desires all while giving divine approval.

- The world has always perverted God’s perfect gift and we see that today rampant with sex trafficking, sex slavery, and prostitution.

**In this verse, Peter is specifically talking about trapping those “who are barely escaping from those who live in error.”**

“Escaping” - Gr. ἀποφεύγω (*apopheugō*) - ap-of-yoo’-go - avoid, being safe from danger, flee

- from 575 (**apō**) off, away (as a prefix usually denotes separation, departure, cessation)
- and 5343 (**phēugō**) ; (fig.) to run away, to shun, to vanish
- 2 Peter 1:4, 2:18, 2:20

Believers **have escaped** the corruption of the world (2 Peter 1:4)

Some non-believers **want to escape** the entrapments and consequences of the their mistakes

Some non-believers are currently **trying to escape** from their current situations, their problems, their “hell on earth”.

- That’s Peter focus in vs 18
- People choose church because they want to “turn their lives around”
- They see the popular prosperity preachers and see a potential way out of their troubles
- They try to stop doing things, going places, spending time with certain people who have all been the direct cause of their pain and problems
- They are being scorned and pressured to return by all their previous comrades
- True shepherding pastors bear these burdens all the time and care for the flock
- False teachers manipulate these vulnerable souls causing greater and irreparable damage

**This is the Trap of Alluring Temptation that false teachers pose. It’s very real and very dangerous.**

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*19 They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved.*

“Freedom” - Gr. ἐλευθερία (eleutheria) - liberty, to be at one’s own disposal

- There is great freedom in Christ

2 Corinthians 3:17

<sup>17</sup> Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is **freedom**.

Romans 6:22

<sup>22</sup> But now that you have been set **free from sin** and have become **slaves of God**, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.

However, False Teachers pervert that promise of freedom

- Maybe freedom from their problems, freedom to do what they want, freedom from “oppression”, even the freedom to sin because we’re under grace
- Freedom is always a popular rallying cry when it addresses our felt wants and needs

*“But they themselves are slaves of corruption”*

“Doulos” - Gr. δοῦλος (doulos) - pertaining to a state of being completely controlled or owned by someone else

“Corruption” - Gr. φθορά (phthora) - ruin, disintegration

- “Destroyed in their **destruction**” vs 12

*“For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved”*

“Overcomes” - Gr. ἡττάομαι (hēttaomai) - be defeated, be mastered, to succumb, be inferior, be controlled by

John 8:34

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone **who practices sin is a slave to sin**.

Romans 6:16

<sup>16</sup> Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, **you are slaves of the one whom you obey**, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?

Joshua to the people of Israel prior to his death (Joshua 24:15): *“Choose you this day whom you will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord”*

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*<sup>20</sup> For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. <sup>21</sup> For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them.*

John 6:37 - all that the Father gives, me I will never cast out

Hebrews 13:5 - I will never leave you, nor forsake you

Romans 8:38-39 - I AM SURE that *nothing* will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus

**What about non-believers who come to church genuinely wanting to “turn things around”, “get myself into a better spot”, “make things right”, “get right with God”?**

- There will be a time (varying lengths) of improvement, trying hard, wrestling with the previous life and relationships, making some better decisions...
- Then comes the “bad church experience” that turns them away
- We’ve all been there, we’ve all experienced that, we’ve all been involved and even caused them
- Or these non-believers “did their best”, didn’t get the results they wanted or were promised, and returned to what their flesh wanted

Hebrews 6:4-6

<sup>4</sup> For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, <sup>5</sup> and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, <sup>6</sup> and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance, since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm and holding him up to contempt

Hebrews 10:26-29

<sup>26</sup> For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, <sup>27</sup> but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. <sup>28</sup> Anyone who has set aside the law of Moses dies without mercy on the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>29</sup> How much worse punishment, do you think, will be deserved by the one who has trampled underfoot the Son of God, and has profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has outraged the Spirit of grace?

Matthew 12:43-45 (*Return of an Unclean Spirit*)

<sup>43</sup> “When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, but finds none. <sup>44</sup> Then it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when it comes, it finds the house empty, swept, and put in order. <sup>45</sup> Then it goes and brings with it seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there, and the last state of that person is worse than the first. So also will it be with this evil generation.”

Matthew 26:24 (*Jesus’ word on Judas*)

<sup>24</sup> The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born.”

2 Corinthians 7:10

<sup>10</sup> For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

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*<sup>22</sup> What the true proverb says has happened to them: "The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire."*

Dogs and swine were considered the dirtiest and foulest of creatures to Jews

Proverbs 26:11

- <sup>11</sup> Like a dog that returns to his vomit  
is a fool who repeats his folly.

Matthew 7:6

- <sup>6</sup> "Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

Revelation 22:15

- <sup>15</sup> Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

Are you in Christ? Have you repented of your sin and thrown yourself upon the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ? By faith, do you trust Him to forgive your countless sins against His holiness. Believe in Him, put on the righteousness of Jesus and be saved. Flee from the corruption of the world and its promises, they are empty. Run to Jesus where there is life and life everlasting.

1 John 5:4-5

- <sup>4</sup> For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. <sup>5</sup> Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

## Additional Resources:

### 2 Peter 2:17

Proverbs 13:14 (life in water)

14 The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life,  
that one may turn away from the snares of death.

Justin Peters - *Clouds Without Water* presentation

- History of charismatic movement and modern false teaching of sign & wonders



### 2 Peter 2:18

We will look at each of the phrases in more detail. Their speech apparently was full of confidence (*hyperonka*), which Peter considered to be nothing other than arrogant vanity. Those who are weak are often susceptible to the assertive confidence of others, even if such confidence flows from arrogance and sin. Ultimately their arrogant speech is futile (*mataiotēs*) since anything that deviates from the truth is destined to fail. The words of the teachers breathe confidence, but in the end they will rue their own prescriptions.

Schreiner, T. R. (2003). [1, 2 Peter, Jude](#) (Vol. 37, p. 358). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.



## 2 Peter 2:19

The participial clause in this verse gives the third means by which the teachers seduced those who had recently joined the church. Again the NIV uses a main clause, “they promise them freedom,” for what is a participle in Greek, “promising them freedom.” Certainly this participial clause is related to the previous one. They promised freedom, particularly by removing moral restraints—especially, it seems, in the realm of sexuality. Such teaching may have arisen through a distortion of Paul’s gospel of freedom, since we know from 3:15–16 that some were perverting his teaching. Freedom from any moral constraints also fits nicely with the notion that there was no future judgment.<sup>109</sup> Their promise of freedom is highly ironic since the teachers were “slaves of depravity.” Peter, by way of contrast, was a “slave of Jesus Christ” (1:1, lit. translation). The word “depravity” is more literally rendered “corruption,” and some commentators maintain that the word should not be restricted to moral corruption since it also includes the notion of destruction, as we saw with the term in 2:12. Moral depravity and eschatological destruction, of course, are logically related. And yet it seems doubtful to me that the latter idea is included here. The collocation of the word “slaves” (*douloi*) with “corruption” suggests that Peter indicted the teachers for their moral corruption. Seeing a reference to destruction introduces more complexity in the phrase than is warranted. The teachers were hardly free when they could not liberate themselves from sin. Those who cannot look at a woman without contemplating adultery and have hearts exercised and trained in greed are truly slaves (2:14). The freedom they promised others was an illusion.

Schreiner, T. R. (2003). [1, 2 Peter, Jude](#) (Vol. 37, p. 359). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

## 2 Peter 2:20-21

Matthew 7:21-23

<sup>21</sup> “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. <sup>22</sup> On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ <sup>23</sup> And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”

Luke 12:46-48

<sup>47</sup> And that servant who knew his master’s will but did not get ready or act according to his will, will receive a severe beating. <sup>48</sup> But the one who did not know, and did what deserved a beating, will receive a light beating. Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more.

It is evident that false teachers are not really in Christ because **they are again entangled in the world’s defilements and are overcome**. They are not the “overcomers” the apostle John wrote about in his first epistle (1 John 5:4–5) or the book of Revelation (2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21). Since there is no real salvation for them—no grace received to overcome the power of sin (Eph. 1:7), walk by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:12–13; Eph. 2:8–10), and persevere in the faith (Phil. 2:12–13; 2 Thess. 1:11–12)—they sink back into the pollution of the world and completely reject the gospel of salvation. **This last state is much worse for them than the first**. After all, those who understand the truth and still turn away will face far greater judgment than those who have never heard (cf. Matt. 10:14–15; 11:22–24; Mark 6:11; Luke 12:47–48).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2005). [2 Peter and Jude](#) (pp. 106–107). Chicago: Moody Publishers.

## 2 Peter 2:17-22

Verse 21 explains why (*gar*, “for”—but omitted by the NIV) the last state is worse than the first. Peter used a proverbial statement, with the “better than” formula (cf. e.g., Matt 5:29–30; 18:6, 8–9; 1 Cor 7:9; 1 Pet 3:17). The verb “known” (*epiginōskō*) links back to the noun of the previous verse (*epignōsei*, “knowing,” NIV). Again it refers to one’s entrance into the Christian church. Such entrance here is described as knowing “the way of righteousness” (*tēn hodon tēs dikaiosynēs*). The way of righteousness is the moral life demanded of those who belong to God (cf. Prov 8:20; 12:28; 16:31; Matt 21:32). We saw in the first verse of the letter that righteousness denoted God’s saving power, but for Peter this saving power leads to a transformed life. The emphasis here is on the new kind of life lived by one who is a member of God’s people. Noah was a preacher of this righteousness (2:5), and righteousness will characterize the new heaven and new earth (3:13). The “sacred command” is another way of describing “the way of righteousness.” The Christian life can be viewed in singular terms as a command to live a new quality of life. This commandment “was passed on to them” (*paradotheisēs*), the same term Jude used for the faith handed down once and for all to the saints (Jude 3). Peter emphasized thereby the reliability and faithfulness of the tradition, as he did in the word “sacred,” where we see that the commandment came from God himself. Nonetheless, these people had turned away from it and repudiated what they once embraced. We can say again that it would have been better for them not to have known because it is so difficult to reclaim apostates.

Schreiner, T. R. (2003). [1, 2 Peter, Jude](#) (Vol. 37, p. 362). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.