

2 PETER 2

The description of the false teachers is clear enough to help you detect them and vivid enough to make you want to avoid them. It is not enough to reject their false teachings. You must also reject their way of life and the hypocrisy behind it.

Their tool is deception, so you must know God's Word and exercise discernment when you hear their impressive language (v. 18) and alluring promises (v. 19). They fellowship with you only to find out what they can get from you (vv. 12–14), and then they will leave you in worse shape than they found you. They are deceptive and destructive, so beware!

Their purpose is personal pleasure and financial gain, and their destiny is judgment. Like Balaam (Num. 22–24), they cause others to sin by using religion for personal gain. They are not God's sheep; they are pigs and dogs in sheep's clothing (Prov. 26:11; Matt. 7:15) and eventually go back to their natural habits. True sheep keep themselves clean because they follow the Shepherd (John 10:27–28).

2 PETER 3

When false teachers cannot accomplish their devious purposes with lies, they start to scoff and ridicule the Word of God. They want you to forget that the very Word they deride is in control of God's universe. God created everything by His Word, and His Word holds it together (Col. 1:16–17; Heb. 1:1–2). His Word caused the Flood (Gen. 6–9), and His Word will one day bring a judgment of fire to the ungodly world (vv. 7–10).

Whoever robs you of God's Word robs you of your future. People who have no future hope have no motivation for life today. No wonder Peter closes with "Beloved, be diligent!" (v. 14) and "Beloved, beware!" (v. 17). We live in dangerous days, but the opportunities have never been greater. God is patiently waiting for the lost to trust Christ (v. 15), but he needs you to share the gospel with them.

1 JOHN 1

God wants you to have a *living fellowship* (vv. 1–3) with Him and His children. In Jesus Christ, He has revealed what true life really is. Even though you cannot see Him and touch Him as the apostles did centuries ago, He can still be real to you as His Holy Spirit opens the Word to your heart.

He wants you to have a *joyful fellowship* (v. 4). It is not the fellowship of a slave with a master but that of a child with a parent. God delights in His children (Ps. 18:19) and longs to share His love with them (John 14:19–24). When you are happy in the will of God, you are ready to live for Him and serve Him.

He wants you to have an *honest fellowship* (vv. 5–10). This means "walking in the light" and dealing honestly with sin. Salvation is a matter of life or death, but fellowship is a matter of light

1 JOHN 2

In Jesus Christ, you have an *Advocate* (vv. 1–2), representing you before God's throne (Zech. 3). When you sin, confess it to Him, and receive His faithful forgiveness.

In Him, you also have an *example* (vv. 3–6), and you should "walk just as He walked." Ask the indwelling Holy Spirit to make you more like Jesus Christ, and saturate yourself with His life as you read the Gospels.

From Jesus Christ, you have *a commandment* (vv. 7–11) to love God’s people. The Father gave this commandment to Israel (Lev. 19:18) and the Son to His disciples (John 13:34), and the Spirit enables us to obey it (Rom. 5:5).

Because of Jesus Christ, you have *a family* (vv. 12–14). The members are at different stages of spiritual development, but all can receive the Word and grow. How wonderful it is when the “little children” become young men and then fathers!

You also have *some enemies* (vv. 15–27), the world and the false teachers. Christians who love the world lose the enjoyment of the Father’s love and the desire to do His will. We overcome the world with God’s love and the liars with God’s truth (vv. 24–27).

You have *a wonderful hope* (vv. 28–29), the coming of Jesus Christ. Abide in Him so you will not be ashamed when He comes.

1 JOHN 3

Deliberate sin is a serious thing. When you deliberately sin, you grieve the heart of the Father who loves you and has a wonderful future planned for you (vv. 1–3). You grieve the Savior who died for you and delivered you from the power of Satan (vv. 4–8).

Deliberate sin grieves the Holy Spirit who lives in you and gave you new birth (vv. 9–15). You have a new nature and a new Father; therefore, you should live a new life. To John, lack of love is the same as hatred; and hatred is the moral equivalent of murder (Matt. 5:21–26).

Deliberate sin also grieves God’s people (vv. 16–24) because we cannot minister to them as we should if we are not walking in love and in the light. Strive to have a heart that is right before God and men (Acts 24:16). Ask God to use you to be an encouragement and help to others (James 2). Love is more than a matter of words (v. 18).

1 JOHN 4

Love is evidence of salvation. If you are born of God through faith in Jesus Christ, you have His nature within (2 Pet. 1:4). Since “God is love” (vv. 8, 16), His children who have His nature should also manifest His love. The children should be like the Father!

Our love for others makes God’s love real and visible to them (v. 12) so we can better witness to them about Christ. It also makes God real and personal to us. Merely reading in the Bible about God’s love is not enough. Seek to *experience* that love in your heart by sharing it with others.

Just as truth is victorious over lies (vv. 1–6), love is victorious over fear (vv. 17–19). As you mature in your love for God, you realize that you have nothing to fear, for your Father has everything under control. You trust those you love, and faith and love will give victory over fear.

¹Wiersbe, W. W. 1997, c1991. *With the word Bible commentary* . Thomas Nelson: Nashville