

2 Peter 1-3 “But false prophets arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. These false teachers will infiltrate your midst with destructive heresies, even to the point of denying the Master who bought them. As a result, they will bring swift destruction on themselves. ² And many will follow their debauched lifestyles. Because of these false teachers, the way of truth will be slandered. ³ And in their greed they will exploit you with deceptive words. Their condemnation pronounced long ago is not sitting idly by; their destruction is not asleep.”

Who is at the core of deception? The devil.

John 8:44 “You people are from your father **the devil**, and you want to do what your father desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not uphold the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies.”

The danger of deception

2 Corinthians 11:14-15 “And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. ¹⁵ Therefore it is not surprising his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will correspond to their actions.

2 Corinthians 11:3 “But I am afraid that just as the serpent deceived Eve by his treachery, your minds may be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.”

False prophets:

- Deceitfully present heresy
- Openly deny truth
- Unashamedly model sensuality
- Selfishly represent greed

1. They secretly introduce destructive heresies

Greek: haireisis which means “making a choice”

- They will, with cleverness offer alluring alternatives to the truth.
- They urge a decision to be made.
- They will reject aspects of the faith that are intellectually or emotionally difficult to accept.

Warren Wiersbe puts it well:

“The false teachers use our vocabulary but they do not use our dictionary.” They talk about sin, salvation, inspiration, God Jesus Christ and resurrection but they don’t mean what the bible means by these terms.”

Sin is portrayed as simply failing to reach our full human potential. Salvation would mean self actualized well being. False teachers today view inspired scripture to be on the same level as great poetry or inspired literature.

2. They openly deny the truth

They reject orthodoxy as presented as truth from the bible and equate it as antiquated and backward thinking – including the following:

- The inspiration and inerrancy of the bible.
- The triune God
- The full deity and full humanity of Jesus
- The life of Christ
- Creation and fall of man
- Salvation by grace
- Eternal life and eternal condemnation

3. They model sensuality

Aselgeia: blatant immorality.

- Usually will involve a distortion of Grace and interpret it as a license to sin.
- True grace : Freedom from the punishment of sin and power from the Holy Spirit to serve from love apart from legalistic dos and don'ts.

4. They model greed

- Heresy meters should sound loudly when there is an overwhelming emphasis on money.
- Virtually every message communicates sowing and reaping a financial harvest.
- A minister of the gospel has a right to make a living from the gospel but not a killing (Read 1 Timothy 6).

How to spot the false teacher?

The threat for Peter was real and present but in our society today with the internet, radio and TV the threat increases exponentially!

Four practical tips to protect us from deception:

- 1.** Be familiar with the TRUTH.
- 2. STOP** – Refuse to plunge into a persons teaching no matter how harmless it appears. It's not enough that others have been blessed, entertained, inspired or persuaded by a charming person. Slow down and evaluate the teaching with a trusted believer and private time with the Holy Spirit. If after time and evaluation it proves false, RUN!
- 3. LOOK** – Observe their life.
 - A. Do they point to Christ or themselves?
 - B. Do you see transparency?
 - C. Are they humble?

D. Do they appear submitted to the word of God?

4. LISTEN.

A. Are the words they use biblical but also do they carry true biblical definitions?

B. Do what they say appear to give license to sin?

Matthew 24:3-5 “As he was sitting on the Mount of Olives, his disciples came to him privately and said, “Tell us, when will these things happen? And what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” ⁴ Jesus answered them, “Watch out that no one misleads you. ⁵ For many will come in my name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and they will mislead many.”