

# ***Watch Out for Wolves***

Text: 2 Peter 2 Date: August 21, 2022

## **Beware of False Teachers (vs. 1a)**

*But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you.*

## **Characteristics of False Teachers (1b-3, 10b-19)**

### **They teach destructive heresies (1b)**

*They will secretly introduce destructive heresies...*

### **They deny Christ (1b)**

*...even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves.*

### **They have a following (2)**

<sup>2</sup> *Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute.*

### **They are greedy for financial gain (3a, 14b-16)**

<sup>3</sup> *In their greed these teachers will exploit you...*

*...they are experts in greed—an accursed brood! <sup>15</sup> They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Bezer, who loved the wages of wickedness. <sup>16</sup> But he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey—an animal without speech—who spoke with a human voice and restrained the prophet's madness.*

### **They brag, exaggerate, and outright lie to look good (3a)**

*...with fabricated stories.*

### **They deal foolishly with the demonic (10b-12)**

*Bold and arrogant, they are not afraid to heap abuse on celestial beings; <sup>11</sup> yet even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not heap abuse on such beings when bringing judgment on them from the Lord. <sup>12</sup> But these people blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like unreasoning animals, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like animals they too will perish.*

### **They are shameless in their indulgence (13)**

<sup>13</sup> *They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their pleasures while they feast with you.*

### **They are sexually immoral and abusive (14a)**

<sup>14</sup> *With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable...*

### **They preach freedom but are themselves enslaved (17-19)**

<sup>17</sup> *These people are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them. <sup>18</sup> For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of the flesh, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error. <sup>19</sup> They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity—for “people are slaves to whatever has mastered them.”*

## **God Will Surely Punish the Wicked and Rescue the Righteous (3b-10a, 20-22)**

### **Their condemnation has already been determined and is imminent (3b)**

*Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.*

### **Examples of God’s Judgment and Deliverance (4-10a)**

<sup>4</sup> *For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them in chains of darkness to be held for judgment; <sup>5</sup> if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; <sup>6</sup> if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; <sup>7</sup> and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the depraved conduct of the lawless <sup>8</sup> (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)—<sup>9</sup> if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment. <sup>10</sup> This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the flesh<sup>10</sup> and despise authority.*

### **The Final State of the False Teacher (vs. 20-22)**

<sup>20</sup> *If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and are overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. <sup>21</sup> It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. <sup>22</sup> Of them the proverbs are true: “A dog returns to its vomit,” and, “A sow that is washed returns to her wallowing in the mud.”*

## **Questions for Personal Reflection/Group Discussion**

- Are you “planted” deeply in God’s Word right now? (see Psalm 1; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- What are you tempted to go back to, like a dog to its vomit? What voices in your life may be encouraging you in that direction?
- Who are you listening to on a regular basis that holds influence over you? (e.g. blogger, musician, preacher, etc.)
- Evaluate them against the characteristics outlined by Peter in 2 Peter 2.
- If you are not sure, who may you talk to that may help you discern?