

## Everything We Need – 2 Peter – Week 4 – 2 Peter 2:1-3

**2 Peter 2:1-3:** *But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves. <sup>2</sup> Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. <sup>3</sup> In their greed these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.*

### INTRO to Series – “Everything We Need: 2 Peter”:

-As we approach the midpoint of this year, the challenges around us are too many to count. It's sometimes hard to know who to trust, how to think, and how to keep our hearts from growing cold. In the Apostle Peter's second letter to the Church, God assures us that through His divine power, we have EVERYTHING WE NEED to live a faithful life in godliness and goodness. As we study this letter together, we will be encouraged further that when our lives are built upon God's firm foundation, we can stand firm no matter our circumstances and no matter what others do around us.

INTRO to **2 Peter 2:1-3:** In Chapter 2, Peter begins dealing with one of the main issues that prompted the writing of this letter—the false teachers who had infiltrated the church.

-At the end of Chapter 1, Peter talked about the true Hebrew Prophets – like Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Micah, Amos. At the beginning of vs. 1 here, Peter reminds the Church: *But there were also false prophets among the people* (in the days of the Old Testament), *just as there will be false teachers among you.*

### • WHAT FALSE TEACHERS SAY

#### vs. 1:

-*They will secretly introduce destructive heresies:* they introduce false teaching with malicious intent that brings harm on those who receive it.

-*even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them:* they deny or distort the Gospel of Jesus Christ as if the blood of Christ is not enough to save (see also **1 John 4** below).

### • WHAT FALSE TEACHERS DO

**vs. 2:** *Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute.*

-These false teachers were not only teaching falsehoods but were also demonstrating evil and immoral conduct. Just like the false prophets of old, false teachers often led God's people towards idolatry, sexual sin, and vain pursuits that do not fulfill and do not last.

-Because of their influence, many would be led astray by following the false teachers and the reputation of Christ and the Church (*the way of truth*) would be damaged.

**vs. 3a:** *In their greed these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories*

-the word for "*greed*" means "covetousness" – the false teachers only use others their own advantage and selfish desires.

-How do we recognize false teachers? The Bible gives us two main ways:

1.) They deny biblical truths about God's nature and the Gospel of Jesus Christ (see **1 John 4** and the other Scriptures below).

2.) By the fruit produced in and through their lives (see **Matthew 7:15-20** and the other Scriptures below.)

#### • **WHAT FALSE TEACHERS WILL RECEIVE**

**-vs. 1:** *bringing swift destruction on themselves:* the word "swift" means their destruction is coming soon...it doesn't mean their destruction will be short in duration.

**-vs. 3:** *Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping.*

#### **Other Scriptures Referenced:**

**1 John 4:1-6:** *Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. <sup>2</sup> This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, <sup>3</sup> but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.*

*<sup>4</sup> You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. <sup>5</sup> They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. <sup>6</sup> We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.*

**Matthew 7:15-20:** *"Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. <sup>16</sup> By their fruit you will recognize them. Do*

people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup> Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup> A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. <sup>19</sup> Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup> Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.”

-Biblical teaching about the common content and lifestyles of false prophets and false teachers:

- *“Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!” declares the Lord...  
The prophets follow an evil course  
and use their power unjustly...  
“Both prophet and priest are godless;  
even in my temple I find their wickedness,”  
declares the Lord...  
They strengthen the hands of evildoers,  
so that not one of them turns from their wickedness...  
they fill you with false hopes...  
They speak visions from their own minds,  
not from the mouth of the Lord.  
They keep saying to those who despise me,  
‘The Lord says: You will have peace.’  
And to all who follow the stubbornness of their hearts  
they say, ‘No harm will come to you.’...  
I did not send these prophets,  
yet they have run with their message;  
I did not speak to them,  
yet they have prophesied. (Jeremiah 23)*
- *people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. <sup>4</sup> They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. (2 Timothy 4)*
- *they are conceited and understand nothing. They have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions <sup>5</sup> and constant friction between people of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain. (1 Timothy 6)*
- *They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord. (Jude 1)*
- *those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. <sup>18</sup> For such people are not serving*

*our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people. (Romans 16)*

- *See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ. (Colossians 2:8)*
- *Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. <sup>15</sup> It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve. (2 Corinthians 11)*

**Other Quotes/Resources:**

-“An iron pillar in essentials and a reed in nonessentials.” – John Newton (author of Amazing Grace)