



WARNING: TRUTH HAS ENEMIES

2 PETER 2:1-9

AUGUST 30, 2020 | PASTOR TRAVIS EDGERTON



GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER (USE JUST ONE OR ALL OF THESE QUESTIONS TO CONNECT AS YOU START YOUR CONVERSATION)

- 1 What are some subtle lies we have believed that impact our daily life?
- 2 What are some of the most dangerous lies we might believe about the Christian faith? About our lifestyle choices?

Lies and deceit are prevalent in a fallen world. All of us have either been contributors or victims. Perhaps we have even devoutly believed some things about God or His Word that are simply not true. It's also possible that we have believed some things true about ourselves that are actually false. Second Peter 2 reminds us that false prophets and teachers are always around spreading dangerous lies, and reminds us that we ought to be wary.

QUICK REVIEW (OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE TO SHARE WHAT MOST STOOD OUT FROM SUNDAY'S MESSAGE)

Looking back at your notes from this week's message, was there anything you heard that caught your attention, encouraged, challenged, or confused you?

DIG DEEPER (OBSERVATIONS FROM THE SCRIPTURE OR COMPLEMENTARY SCRIPTURES FROM SUNDAY'S MESSAGE)

- 1 Someone read **2 Peter 2:1-3**.

¹But 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. ²And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. ³And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

Why do you think false teachers would want the Christians Peter was addressing to deny that there is truth?

According to Peter in verse 3, what was the false teachers' real motivation for deceiving Christians with false teachings?

Peter warned that false teachers would take advantage of believers out of greed—either a selfish desire for money or for a large company of followers. The Greek term rendered “exploit” means “make gain of; deceive for (their own) advantage.” With deceptive (carefully crafted, false) words, the misleading merchants of error would use believers for their own gain. Awaiting the false teachers, however, was a day of reckoning. The verdict or sentence had been announced long ago in Old Testament references to false prophets.

Why do you think Peter was so motivated to work urgently to help Christians have confidence in the truth of the Gospel?

2 Someone read **2 Peter 2:4-9**.

⁴For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into Hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; ⁵if 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; ⁶if 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;^[d] ⁷and if He rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked ⁸(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);⁹ then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment,

These verses give three illustrations to prove that God has judged in the past and will judge again in the future. The examples gradually reduce in scale, from the cosmic (angels), through the worldwide (flood), to the local (cities of Sodom and Gomorrah). These illustrations concentrate on the pride and rebellion of the angels, the apathy and disobedience of the people of Noah's day, and the sheer sensuality of the men of Sodom, precisely the characteristics of these false teachers. They are demonstrative proof that there will be a final judgment.

Why do you think false teachers would spread the lie that there is no final judgment?

How does the truth of God's judgment help us as believers to stand firm?

What hope is there in this passage for those who put their trust in God?

LIVE IT OUT (DISCUSS HOW YOU CAN LIVE OUT THE TRUTHS YOU JUST OBSERVED IN SCRIPTURE)

1 What are some examples of absolute truth we see in Scripture? How can these truths help us fight the lies? Practically speaking, how can we avoid being taken in by the lies of false teachers?

2 How can God use our Gospel community to help us vet ideas and opinions we hear that have the potential to deceive us with what we believe?

3 Take an audit of the things that influence your thinking the most in your life (news outlets, podcasts, preachers, YouTube channels, social media accounts you follow, etc.). **What is your mood after listening/watching those sources and does your attitude reflect Jesus?** Contrast that to how often you are in God's Word. **With all of that in mind, what are you primarily allowing to guide and direct you?**

CLOSING PRAYER

Close your time in prayer, thanking God that in His wisdom He gave us the power to fight the lies of false teachers. Thank God for the blood of Christ that saved us and is the only way to fight against the lies of Satan. Pray that your group would be discerning of false voices and lies in their lives.

NEXT WEEK

2 PETER 2:10-22 Read this passage before Sunday and your home group. Remember to take good notes so you are ready to add to the discussion your home group will have!

PRAISE/PRAYER REQUESTS (TRY TO HAVE ONE OR A FEW PEOPLE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME)

Use this space or the back of this paper to write the requests and find a way to share those with the group so you can be praying for each other during the week.

How to Use this Discussion Guide

The guide is meant to serve you and your group as you intentionally create a healthy environment for Gospel community, growing in friendship, and living like Jesus together. Use the guide as a tool to help your unique group.

With that in mind, please review the guide before your group meets to see if some content or questions might resonate more or less with your group. Don't feel pressure to read all the content during your group discussion or to hit on all the questions. The guide is not meant to be something you power through for the sake of completing. Pick the content from the guide you feel will help your group grow in Gospel community.

In addition, spend some time praying for your group each week, preparing your heart, and asking God for wisdom and guidance as you lead. We are praying for you too!

Visit cpmodesto.org/groupleaders to download the sermon discussion guide every week. Not in a Home Group, but want to be in one? Visit cpmodesto.org/homegroups and use the Home Group Finder!

COMMENTARY

2 PETER 2:1-9

2:1. Peter pointed out that throughout Israel's history, false (pseudo) prophets had arisen among the people. He warned that false teachers would arise among believers. These bogus teachers would secretly bring in destructive heresies. The heretical teachers were denying the Master who bought them. They may have denied Jesus' Deity or His return, or they may have denied Him by their conduct (see 2:2). Evidently, they professed to be believers. The word "Master" referred to Jesus as their absolute authority or owner. By His death on the cross, He purchased them to serve Him. They belonged to Him and owed Him their allegiance. Their unchristian lifestyles and erroneous teachings, however, gave evidence they denied His lordship over their lives even though they professed to be His followers. Their practice contradicted their profession. If they persisted in denying Jesus, they would bring swift (or sudden) destruction on themselves. Peter likely had in mind the final judgment, when the false teachers' empty profession, heretical teachings, and impure lifestyles would be revealed as such and judged.

2:2-3. Peter was aware that the false teachers' unrestrained ways would attract many followers. The phrase "unrestrained ways" translates a Greek term that conveys the idea of indecent conduct with no regard for God's judgment, people's opinions, or one's own reputation. It can describe blatant immorality. Such godless, undisciplined behavior would cause unbelievers to blaspheme (discredit) the way of truth. The phrase "the way of truth" referred to sound Christian teaching as opposed to false doctrines. Unbelievers would speak disparagingly or contemptuously of the Christian enterprise because of professing believers' immoral behavior. Peter warned that false teachers would take advantage of believers out of greed—either a selfish desire for money or for a large company of followers. The Greek term rendered "exploit" means "make gain of," "deceive for (their own) advantage." With deceptive (carefully crafted, false) words, the misleading merchants of error would use believers for their own gain. Awaiting the false teachers, however, was a day of reckoning. The verdict or sentence (condemnation) had been announced long ago in Old Testament references to false prophets. The verdict still was operative, and the false teachers' ruin (destruction) awaited them.

2:4-9. In order to warn his readers and urge them to action, Peter recalled three examples of God's judgment and deliverance: (1) God judged the angels who sinned (cp. Gen 6:1-4). "Tartarus" is a Greek name that means a subterranean place of punishment lower than Hades and reserved for the wicked. (2) God also judged the ancient world at the time of the flood (cp. Gen 7:17-23), but protected Noah and seven others (cp. Gen 7:13-16). (3) He judged the immoral cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (cp. Gen 19:23-29), yet rescued righteous Lot, who was distressed and tormented by the immoral behavior of the ungodly (cp. Gen 19:29). Peter then pointed out to his readers that God was capable of delivering them, the godly, from the destructive false teachings of heretics in their midst. Consistently, the New Testament views the second coming of Christ as the final test. At that time, the Lord will rescue His true followers, but the ungodly will face judgment, for the Lord knows how to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment. "To keep" (verse 9) literally means "to guard." It suggests that God is in control of judgment and people; He will have the final say. We can be confident in that truth, dismissing the lie that there is no final judgment.