



## “False Teaching & Future Judgment” (II Peter 2)

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The verses we are about to read follow behind the very important truth that God used men who were “carried along by the Holy Spirit” and thereby penned the contents of this wonderful book I hold in my hand – the Word of God. The Holy Spirit is very careful to remind us that none of these men had their own private interpretation. If they had, what they penned, and what they proclaimed, would not be God’s truth, but rather things they themselves made up (see Jeremiah 14:14). This is one of the ways we recognize false teaching. If one person comes up with a teaching, and that teaching does not agree with the whole of Scripture, it is a false teaching.

Read Lloyd-Jones, pp.134-135.

### THE TEXT

v.1 Secretly doesn’t mean they hide their teaching, but they bring it alongside the truth. They are subtle and crafty, which is the remainder of the meaning behind this word.

The swift destruction does not mean that it comes soon, but that when it does come, it will be sudden.

Christian Science teaches that Jesus is the human man and Christ the divine idea; Jehovah’s Witnesses teach that Jesus is the first son Jehovah brought forth; Mormons teach that Jesus is the firstborn spirit child of Elohim, and that by obedience and devotion attained rank as a god; Eastern Mysticism teaches Jesus was one of a long line of masters who realized divinity; the Unification Church says that Jesus was the same as us except that he was without original sin.

Methodist bishop Gerald Kennedy said “I am frank to confess that the statement that Christ is God does not please me...I believe that the testimony of the New Testament taken as a whole is against the doctrine of the deity of Jesus...”

My next booklet that will be completed soon is entitled “Jesus is GOD.”

v.2 Why would so many follow these false teachers? As we continue to read we’ll learn that one of the reasons is that their teaching is very appealing to human nature.

vv.4-9 This section pictures a stark contrast between those who have accepted falsehood and those who cling to truth. Those who cling to truth will usually be the minority (Noah, Lot, etc.) but ultimately will be rescued from the certain judgment that will one day fall upon all the ungodly.

v.10 This is not meant to be an itemized list of characteristics but rather a sweeping overview of all false teachers.

v.11 See Jude 8-9; we'd better have respect for our enemy Lucifer!

v.13 The word translated "carouse" actually means "luxurious living." See Luke 7:25...what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear expensive clothes and indulge in luxury are in palaces.

v.14 This sounds similar to what Jesus said about the Pharisees and Sadducees. Remember that he also said they looked on the outside to be righteous, yet on the inside they were full of dead men's bones, and were full of greed and self-indulgence.

v.17 You won't be refreshed spiritually by what these people have to offer. They bring no rain that causes refreshing or growth, even though they make a lot of noise and draw a lot of attention.

v.18 They say what people want to hear, and they end up drawing away people who are "just escaping from those who live in error." That's an unfortunate translation in my opinion, because the word literally means "unstable souls." These are people who do not have a firm foundation of truth.

See II Tim.4:3-4.

Anglican Bishop John A.T. Robinson: "...nothing can of itself be labeled as 'wrong.' One cannot, for instance, start from the position 'sex relations before marriage' or 'divorce' are wrong or sinful in themselves. They may be in 99 cases or even 100 cases, but they are not intrinsically so, for the only intrinsic evil is lack of love."

In the book *Called To Responsible Freedom*, published by The National Council of Churches, young people are counseled: "In the personal, individual sense then, what justifies and sanctifies sexuality is not the external marital status of the people before the law but rather what they feel toward each other in their hearts. Measured in such a way, holding hands can be very wrong indeed while intimate sex-play can be right and good."

vv.21-22 It is interesting that a dog and a sow are unclean animals. The idea is that both the dog and the sow had a reformation, but never a real change in their natures.

Matt.12: 43 "When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. 44 Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. 45 Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first. That is how it will be with this wicked generation."

## THE ISSUES

- Where You Find Heresy
  - It is found “among you.” This of course could mean the actual local church you are a part of, but it more refers to Christianity at large.
  - See Luke 13: 18-21.
  - Acts 20: 30 Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. 31 So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.
  - Matt.7: 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'
- Can Someone Lose Their Salvation?
  - They deny the sovereign Lord who **bought them**.
  - They had escaped the corruption in the world by **knowing** our Lord and Savior, then they became entangled with the world again (v.20); Verse 22 seems to suggest they were not really saved, but simply had a reformation. This passage is very challenging; Note II Peter 3:15-16; Peter does a pretty good job himself!
  - John Calvin was born July 10, 1509, and died May 27, 1564. He was a French theologian and pastor during the Protestant Reformation. He taught the doctrine of predestination and the absolute sovereignty of God in salvation. His writing and preaching messages were the seeds for the branch of theology that bears his name (Calvinism). Calvinism is the basis for the doctrine of many Baptist, Presbyterian, and Reformed churches. There are five points of Calvinism: 1. Total depravity 2. Unconditional election 3. Limited atonement 4. Irresistible grace 5. Perseverance of the saints (can't lose your salvation).
  - Jacobus (James) Arminius was a Dutch theologian who lived from 1560-1609. He taught that man is not guilty for Adam's sin, but only when he chooses to sin voluntarily. Believe it or not, he started out as a strict Calvinist, but later changed his views. He expressed those views in a document called The Remonstrance. A remonstrance is an expression of opposition or protest. The Remonstrance was a protest against the Calvinist doctrine of predestination. The document was condemned as heresy by the reformed churches at the Synod of Dort (1618-1619). There were five articles in The Remonstrance. I had never read them until this past Friday. The main thing that stuck out to me was in Article 2: “That agreeably thereunto, Jesus Christ the Savior of the world, died for all men and for every man, so that he has obtained for them all, by his death on the cross, redemption and the forgiveness of sins; yet that no one actually enjoys this forgiveness of sins except the believer.” Two other main points in this document are election based on God's foreknowledge (that did not predestine anyone to hell), and conditional perseverance (man can choose to reject God and therefore lose his salvation). Arminianism is the basis for doctrine in most Methodist, Wesleyan, Nazarene, Pentecostal, Free Will Baptist, Holiness, and charismatic churches.

- The Calvinist/Arminianist debate will probably continue until Jesus comes. Note that Calvary Chapel's doctrinal position is neither Calvinist nor Arminianist. Read from "Calvinism vs. Arminianism," p.4, then p.11.
  - The emphasis in the Bible is not "Can you lose it?" Nor is it "I have it unconditionally."
  - II Cor.13: 5 Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you -- unless, of course, you fail the test?
  - I Cor.15: 2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.
  - John 15: 4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. 5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.
  - I Tim.1: 18...fight the good fight, 19 holding on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith. 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.
  - Hebrews 6: 4 It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, 5 who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, 6 if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.
  - James 5: 19 My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back, 20 remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.
  - Parable of Seed and Sower.
  - See I John 2:18-28.
- Evidences of Genuineness
    - Lifestyle
    - Perseverance in sound doctrine (II John 1:9)
    - Both of the above must go together; someone may have a lifestyle that appears righteous, yet they are not teaching sound doctrine (Pharisees, etc.).
  - Perseverance in Godliness in a Very Ungodly Culture
    - Hosea 9: 7...Because your sins are so many and your hostility so great, the prophet is considered a fool, the inspired man a maniac. 8 The prophet, along with my God, is the watchman over Ephraim, yet snares await him on all his paths, and hostility in the house of his God.

- You will be in the minority (Noah, Lot); Other examples: Daniel, Shadrach..., Elijah on Mt. Carmel, Jesus and the apostles...
- Certainty of Future Judgment
  - The great irony of this point is that one of the false teachings that has gained a pretty large following today is that there really is no need to fear future judgment.
  - There will be a future judgment and punishment for all who have not been made righteous by faith.
  - II Peter 2:5a; 3:5-7; II Peter 2:6; Jude 1:7.
  - Even 30, 40 and 50-years ago years ago, sermons that addressed the consequences of dying apart from Christ were commonly heard. Most Americans don't believe in Hell. The latest research from Barna Associates shows that only 31 percent of adults see Hell as "a place of physical torment where people may be sent." Even among Christians, there appears to be some confusion about Hell and who goes there when they die. But why is that? Some say it is because the church has been ominously silent about the subject. Dr. Paige Patterson said, "You can traverse the entire United States on any given Sunday morning, and you very probably will not hear a sermon on the judgment of God or eternal punishment." Patterson added, "Evangelicals have voted by the silence of their voices that they either do not believe in [the doctrine of Hell] or else no longer have the courage and conviction to stand and say anything about it." Author and theologian R.C. Sproul is even more direct. "I think what we face in the church today is a virtual eclipse of the character of God," he said. The irony is that evangelicals consider one sermon about God's judgment to be among the greatest evangelistic messages ever preached. It was delivered by Jonathan Edwards in 1741 during the height of the Great Awakening. The title: "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." Edwards proclaimed, "O sinner! Consider the fearful danger you are in: 'tis a great furnace of wrath, a wide and bottomless pit, full of the fire of wrath, that you are held over in the hand of that God, whose wrath is provoked and incensed as much against you as against many of the damned in Hell." Why don't preachers preach like this today? Sproul said, "I can't think of anything more politically incorrect to preach in 21st century America than the wrath of God, or the justice of God, or the doctrine of Hell."

"I don't think fear, as a tactic, really moves people toward faith these days. So, tactically, I think there are better ways to interest the uninterested in the claims of Jesus Christ," said Pastor Bill Hybels who is considered to be the leader of the "seeker friendly" church movement. Hybels' Willow Creek Community Church outside Chicago has drawn thousands over the years and generated hundreds of similar churches. One of them is Spring Branch Community Church in Virginia Beach, Virginia. The church's website declares that one of the reasons people don't like church is that "pastors make people feel ignorant and guilty." Spring Branch Pastor Michael Simone said, "How do they make people feel guilty? I think pastors can sometimes do that very inadvertently by saying, 'You don't do this,' or 'You're doing this and this behavior is against everything that is in the Bible.'" Simone believes the people who come to his church want to know how improve their lives and their marriages. He says preaching a sermon like "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" wouldn't work today, when most Americans seemingly have it all. "Today, I think the title of that sermon would be, 'I Went on Vacation and Felt Empty Inside.'"

R.C. Sproul said, "The power of the Gospel is the Word of God. It's not these methods and techniques whereby we hide the Gospel. But there's no need of a Gospel...nobody needs a Gospel if there's no judgment, if there's no law, if God is not a God of judgment. If there's no such thing as Hell, what good is the Gospel? The Gospel tells us that we're saved from the wrath that is to come...I mean, we're not supposed to add offense to the Gospel. But if we try to take out the offense that is already there, then we're offending God, and we're offending Christ, and we're not proclaiming the whole counsel of God."

- I found this on the web: "So my theology has gone through a multitude of changes over the years, mostly because the experiences of my life have led me to a single conclusion which many standard notions of God don't actually allow for: God is love. It says this in the Bible, sure, but it also says lots of things about Hell in the Bible, too. Does an all-loving God and Hell mix? Sure, say theologians, God is a just God, he punishes the unjust for eternity and all who go to Hell deserve it. But here's the thing: No one deserves to go to Hell. Nobody. Not mass murderers, not rapists, not child abusers, not anyone. There is no crime which deserves an eternity of punishment, and no human being so totally devoid of all worth that their time in eternity would be best spent in ceaseless agony/fire/loneliness/separation/darkness/whatever Hell is supposed to be. Exactly why would a crime within a relative nanosecond of the universe's lifespan warrant horrific punishment for longer than the life of the universe itself? And even, somehow, if there was a crime that warranted such a punishment, love would forgive it. Love forgives everything. If harm is done lazily, because it knows it will be forgiven, love waits patiently for the harmer to come around. But wait, say the theologians – you need to accept the forgiveness for it to be valid. If you choose not to accept the forgiveness, it will be your own choice to be thrown into Hell. Not so. Love doesn't care whether its forgiveness is acknowledged – and it doesn't punish people for not accepting forgiveness – what kind of forgiveness, accepted or not, involves punishment? Not the kind of sincere forgiveness which I describe. Not accepting forgiveness, and choosing to live on in guilt or shame or ignorance or power-hunger, is its own punishment, for it brings only unhappiness to its perpetrator. Harm attracts its own consequences. No additional punishment is necessary. The results of declining to accept forgiveness last only as long as the refusal itself. No longer. Keeping in mind that I've come to this as a result of experiences in my own life, I'll use the premise that God is Love to make one more point: A god who forgives all and loves all and condemns no one to Hell is infinitely more loving than any god who would condemn someone to Hell. And seeing as I believe that I could become, with decades of practice, the type of person who, given the choice, would condemn no person to eternal punishment, that pretty much means that I could become more loving than any supposed god who would abandon and torment anyone. And if I, a human, full of many negative unloving things, could achieve this (and I do believe it is possible), than how much more love and forgiveness could a being of pure goodwill and compassion be capable of producing? A hell of a lot more. Or should I say a heaven?"
- Carlton Pearson, Church of God in Christ, Oral Roberts; book The Gospel of Inclusion.
- Rob Bell, Love Wins; 2011 Time Magazine listed him in its 100 Most Influential People in the World. Studied under Ed Dobson at Calvary Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Founded Mars Hill Bible Church in Michigan, left after a falling out with the congregation over his book Love Wins.

- God did rain down burning sulfur on the people of Sodom and Gomorrah; II Peter 2:6 says God “made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly.” Jude 7 says “They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.”
- Matthew 10:28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.
- Matthew 3:10, 12; 5:22; 7:19; 8:12; 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-50; 18:8-9; 22:13; 24:45-51; 25:30, 41; Luke 16:19-31; II Thess.1:5-10; Rev.14:9-11a; 20:11-15.
- Hell and eternal punishment are real, but God has provided a way of escape. It is by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

## CONCLUSION

- See II Peter 3:8-10.
- Ezekiel 18:32; 33:11
- John 3:16