

## PETER'S EPISTLES

### **2 Peter: Spiritually Maturing Opposite Apostasy V. Telltale Ministries Of False Versus True Teachers (2 Peter 2:17-22)**

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. In A. D. 66, the year before his martyrdom, Peter desired that fellow believers might mature in the Christian faith in order to combat the rising opposition of heresies that the Church already faced. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, "Introduction to the Second Letter of Peter," p. 1765; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 862)
- B. Peter thus wrote this epistle to call believers to spiritual growth in preparation for apostasy, and 2 Peter 2:17-22 described telltale ministries of false teachers we need to know for our discernment. We view it for insight:

#### **II. Telltale Ministries Of False Versus True Teachers, 2 Peter 2:17-22**

- A. Peter described the telltale ministries of false teachers in 2 Peter 2:17-22 (as follows):
  - 1. False teachers fail to provide spiritual impact and nourishment as they promise, 2 Peter 2:17:
    - a. They are "springs without water and mists driven by a storm" (NIV), failing to produce what is promised.
    - b. Thus, they hypocritically pretend to give spiritual nourishment in power but they fail to supply it.
  - 2. False teachers teach by using boastful, swelling but nevertheless futile words, 2 Peter 2:18a, Ibid., p. 873.
  - 3. False teachers appeal to the lusts of the sinful nature to entice people to heed them, especially seeking to seduce new, vulnerable believers who have just escaped from the world's wickedness, 2 Peter 2:18b; Ibid.
  - 4. False teachers promise spiritual freedom but they are enslaved to depravity, 2 Peter 2:19.
  - 5. False teachers go from bad to worse in turning from the truth in Jesus Christ: though having known of the truth in Christ, they reject it, returning to their vile evil, 2 Peter 2:20-22; Ibid., p. 873-874.
- B. Scripture also presents the telltale ministries of true teachers that contrast to that of false teachers (as follows):
  - 1. True teachers provide spiritual nourishment in their teaching, Jeremiah 23:28-32:
    - a. God said the words of false prophets were like mere straw when compared to His true words by His true prophets that were like nourishing wheat kernels, Jeremiah 23:28.
    - b. Also, the words of God's prophets are like a fire that consumes or a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces, words that impact the hearers where the words of false prophets are spiritually powerless, Jer. 23:29-32.
  - 2. True teachers use simple words to voice profound spiritual truths, Isaiah 28:9-13:
    - a. When Isaiah preached God's words, Israel's leaders complained that he was lecturing them like children by asserting precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little, Ibid., Ryrie, fn. to Isaiah 28:9-10.
    - b. However, those very words would be fulfilled by God when He made Isaiah's critics fall back, be broken and snared and taken into captivity by an invading Gentile nation in divine judgment, Isaiah 28:11-13.
  - 3. True teachers appeal to the conscience and the heart: opposite errant teachers whose words only administer questions, Timothy was to teach affirmative "Thus saith the Lord" truths that removed all questions, words that produced love from a pure heart, a good conscience and an unhyprocritical faith, 1 Tim. 1:3-5, 18-19.
  - 4. True teachers present spiritual freedom in Jesus Christ, Galatians 5:1-2: opposite the Judaizers who tried to put Paul's readers under a sense of guilt to make them observe the Mosaic Law and be circumcised, Paul urged his readers to stand fast in the liberty they enjoyed in Christ from bondage to keeping the Law.
  - 5. True teachers cleave to the all-sufficiency and supremacy of Jesus Christ, Colossians 2:8-10:
    - a. Believers at Colossae faced false teachers who tried to spoil them through vain secular philosophy, deceit and the religious traditions of men, Colossians 2:8a,b.
    - b. Instead, Paul urged his readers to focus on the all-sufficiency and supremacy of Christ, for in Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and the believer is spiritually complete in Him, Who is the head of all principality and power, Colossians 2:8c-10.

***Lesson:*** False teachers fail to provide spiritual nourishment as promised where true teachers provide nourishment with great power. False teachers mouth great swelling words that say nothing profitable where true teachers voice profound truths in simple words. False teachers appeal to the lusts of the sin nature where true teachers appeal to the conscience and heart. False teachers promise freedom but are enslaved to depravity where true teachers present spiritual freedom in Christ. False teachers go from bad to worse in departing from Christ where true teachers adhere to the all-sufficiency and supremacy of the Person and Work of Jesus Christ.

***Application:*** May we discern between false and true teachers, and resist the false but heed God's true teachers.