

## PETER'S EPISTLES: PREPARING FOR ETERNITY

### XXIV. Peter's Exposure Of False Teachers

#### (2 Peter 2:1-3)

#### I. Introduction

- A. Before the Apostle Peter began to minister for the Lord in the Church, his outlook was impacted by Christ's prophecy in John 21:18-19 that he would be crucified for Christ. Eternity was thus often on Peter's mind.
- B. In accord with this theme, 2 Peter 2:1-3 presents Peter's exposure of false teachers that his readers might discern for their benefit whom they were to avoid to keep them from falling into great and wicked error.
- C. We view this passage for our insight, application and edification (as follows):

#### II. Peter's Exposure Of False Teachers, 2 Peter 2:1-3.

- A. After writing in 2 Peter 1:19-21 about the godly Old Testament prophets who were carried along by the Holy Spirit to write the Word of God, Peter continued to add in 2 Peter 2:1a that there were false prophets among Israel's people who countered the ministry of God's Old Testament prophets.
- B. Similarly, Peter warned that there would be false teachers among believers in the Church, 2 Peter 2:1b.
- C. Peter then described these teachers for the edifying discernment of his readers, 2 Peter 2:1c-3b:
  1. The false teachers would "secretly introduce" (*pareisago*), that is, "bring in secretly or maliciously" (Arndt & Gingrich, *A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T.*, 1967, p. 630) destructive "heresies" (KJV), the Greek term for heresies being *haireisis*, what New Testament writers used to describe religious sects such as the Sadducees or Pharisees (2 Peter 2:1c,d; *Ibid.*, p. 23; *Bible Know. Com., N. T.*, p. 869-870).
  2. The focus of these errors would be a denial of the Lord Jesus Christ Who "redeemed" them, the Greek verb for "redeem" here being *agorazo*, meaning "buy, purchase" (Arndt & Gingrich, *op. cit.*, p. 12). The false teachers would thus bring upon themselves swift destruction (2 Peter 2:1e).
  3. This verse produces the question of how the false teachers could both be redeemed by the blood of Christ but also be eternally condemned in denying Him, so we explain (as follows):
    - a. Some hold that these false teachers were saved as redeemed believers but then lost their salvation, but that view is contradicted by passages like John 5:24; 10:28-29 et al. (*Bible Know. Com., N. T.*, p. 870)
    - b. Some teach that "bought" here in 2 Peter 2:1 means God created the false teachers, not that He saved them, but this stretches the meaning of the Greek verb *agorazo* beyond its lexical meaning and usage, *Ibid.*
    - c. Some claim that the false teachers would only assert that they were "bought" by Christ, but that reads a statement into 2 Peter 2:1 that does not appear in that verse.
    - d. The solution is found by viewing the unsaved, false teachers as "redeemed" in that Christ paid the redemption price for their salvation, but that "they did not apply it to themselves and so were not saved. Christ's death is 'sufficient' for all (1 Tim. 2:6; Heb. 2:9; 1 John 2:2) but is 'efficient' only for those who believe. This is a strong argument for unlimited atonement (the view that Christ died for everyone) and against limited atonement (the view that Christ died only for those whom He would later save)." (*Ibid.*)
  4. Sadly, many will follow such false teachers and their "pernicious ways" (KJV), better, "licentiousness" (*Ryrie Study Bible, KJV*, 1978, *ftn.* to 2 Peter 2:2a). The Greek term for "licentiousness" here is *aselgeia*, what refers "to debased sexually immoral practices" (*Bible Know. Com., N. T. loc. cit.*).
  5. As a result of their evil behavior and false teaching, the way of truth would be blasphemed, 2 Peter 2:2b.
  6. To take financial advantage of unsuspecting listeners, these false teachers would use *platois logois*, "fabricated words" that are artificial, not genuine, giving stories they invented, 1 Peter 2:3a NIV; *Ibid.*
  7. These false teachers would greedily use other unsuspecting people in the Church for their own covetous ends, turning the Church into "a dirty marketplace," 2 Peter 2:3b.
- D. Consequently, their "condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep," for God has long been planning to condemn and judge these apostates, 2 Peter 2:3c ESV.

***Lesson:*** False, unsaved teachers will infiltrate the Church, secretly and maliciously introducing destructive errors that focus on denying the Lord Jesus Christ Who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. Many people in the Church will follow their immoral ways, causing the truth to be blasphemed as they greedily use false words to take financial advantage of others and turn the Church into a dirty marketplace.

***Application:*** (1) May we discern apostate teachers and their teachings from Peter's 2 Peter 2:1-3 description of them, and (2) may we refuse to heed their errant teachings or to follow them.