

“False Teachers Among God’s People”

Read **2Peter 2:1-3...**

God’s Word is Sovereign, Inerrant, Infallible, and Eternal. It is Truth!

1Peter 1:25, “The word of the Lord endures forever. And this is the word which was preached to you.”

We are to read it, study it, know it, obey it, and use it (**2Timothy 2:15**), “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth,” (**2Timothy 3:16**), “All Scripture is [God-breathed] and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

God’s Word provides all we need to know God, love God, serve God, and trust God for eternal life.

Read **2Peter 2:1...** God speaks through His prophets, while Satan speaks through false prophets, false teachers, unbelievers who falsify God’s Word, leading people away from God’s Truth and toward heresies and the doctrine of demons.

When you see that phrase “the people” in the New Testament, it usually means the people of Israel (cf. **Matthew 2:4; Luke 22:66; Acts 7:17; 13:17**).

In **2Peter 2:1** Peter is saying that false prophets arose from within Israel (See **Jeremiah 5:30-31; 23:14; Ezekiel 13:1-7**). God brings punishment to those who speak falsely and to those who listen to them.

Peter is also saying that there are false prophets among those in the church. Jesus warned His own disciples about this (**Matthew 24:11**), “Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many.”

God’s Word must be proclaimed and taught, as Paul told Timothy (**2Timothy 4:2-4**), “preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.”

When the Church stops holding up God's Word as Sovereign Truth, stops rebuking false teachings, stops warning the people of God about false teachers (even naming their names), the Church will become weak, apathetic, disabled, and easily lead astray and influenced to follow the godless culture around it.

No wonder one of the God ordained qualifications given for the men who lead the Church of God is to be (**Titus 1:9**), "holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict."

False teaching and unrepentant sin must be confronted (**1Timothy 5:20**), "Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning." See **1Corinthians 5:1-2, 9-13; 6:9-11**.

False teachers will always lead people away from the truth of God and Holy living, toward self-pleasure. There were false teachers during Peter's time, just as there are false teachers today, for example: Joel Osteen, Beth Moore, Kenneth and Gloria Copeland, Benny Hinn, Joyce Meyer, T.D. Jakes, Paula White, Pope Francis, Marilyn Hickey, Frederick Price, Sarah Young, Rob Bell, and many many more.

Notice again (**2Peter 2:1**), the false teachers "will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves."

When false teachers exchange God's truth for their own opinions, pet peeves, agendas, and false teachings [destructive heresies], they deny the sovereign God and Master of all, who alone is able to save us through faith (**1Peter 1:1**), "by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ."

See **John 3:14-18, 36; 6:28-29, 40; 8:24-29; 10:30; 14:6-7, 18-21, 23; 17:20-23, 26**

Hebrews 9:26b-28 , "Now once at the consummation of the ages He [Christ] has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him."

Hebrews 10:14-18, "For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified. And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us; for after saying, 'This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws upon their heart, and on their mind I will write them,' He then says, 'And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.' Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin."

False teachers deny the divinity and the Lordship of Jesus Christ (**2Peter 2:1**), "bringing swift destruction upon themselves."

Jude 4, "For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ."

13, "for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever."

Read **2Peter 2:2...** Peter goes on to say that because of the heresies and the immoral lives of these false teachers, many people will be influenced to follow the broad road that leads to destruction.

See **Matthew 7:13-14...** Many enter through the wide gate onto the broad road; but only a few find the small gate and enter onto the narrow road. Jesus' command is imperative: "Enter through the narrow gate" "enter now!"

Man has created many religions and belief systems in order to offer many paths to God and eternal life; but God has provided only one way to be saved, only one way to enter heaven.

Every person on this planet is on one of these roads. Jesus commands us to enter the only way that leads to salvation and eternal life (**John 10:9**), "I am the gate; whoever enters through Me will be saved" (cf. John 14:6; Acts 4:12).

The Jews believe they are in God's kingdom because they are descendants of Abraham (to whom was given the covenant of circumcision), and Moses (to whom was given the Law). The claim relationship with God through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, believing they are sons of God and they will therefore enter into heaven.

Boy did they get that wrong. The narrow gate doesn't allow you to bring any baggage, nor can you enter as a group. Entrance into heaven has nothing to do with human ancestry, religion, or strict adherence to the laws of God. Eternal life has everything to do with your heart attitude toward God's Son.

Entering through the narrow gate demonstrates heartfelt repentance, that is why Jesus commands us to "enter!" (cf. **Romans 10:9-10, 13**)

God loves us and wants for us to be in fellowship with Him forever (**1Timothy 2:3-4**), "God our Savior wants everyone to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth," He doesn't want (**2Peter 3:9**), "anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."

The two gates in **Matthew 7** lead to two totally different roads, one going to heaven, the other going to hell, and everyone ends up at one of those destinations.

The broad road is easy, carnal, self-pleasing, with very few requirements and commitments, where sin is tolerated and truth is undergoing continual modification. The sign over the road doesn't say "this road goes to hell," but this road (**Proverbs 14:12**) "which seems right to a man," "is the way of death."

The narrow [*stenos*] road is one that requires "groaning" under pressure caused by restriction or constriction, for we must give up everything in exchange for Christ, and only a few are willing to do this.

God's way of salvation is simple, but it is not easy; those who follow the Lord will find trouble in this world (cf. **2Timothy 3:12**), just as Jesus said (**John 15:20**), "they persecuted Me, and they will also persecute you."

The broad road leads to destruction, the narrow road leads to life. Every religious belief system in the world (apart from Christianity) leads to condemnation and hell, because they are built upon false teachings.

Islam rejects the idea of redemption, for Muslims believe and teach that salvation depends solely upon man's actions and attitudes, not on the work of God.

Hinduism seeks escape from the endless cycle of birth, death, and rebirth through many incarnations (reincarnations) to final salvation. The path to salvation is dependent upon and expedited by acquired knowledge, expressed by devotion through works or meditation.

Buddhism sees ignorance rather than sin as the roadblock to salvation. The way of salvation, the end to continual birth-death-rebirth (reincarnations), is through levels of meditation, allowing one to lose self.

Mormonism teaches that Jesus was a spirit-child of Elohim (the God of planet earth), and through obedience and devotion Jesus was able to attain Godhood. There are many gods, all of whom were once mortals like ourselves, until they attained Godhood, like Jesus.

Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus is not God; that he is Michael the archangel, a creation of God, and not the Creator Himself.

Christian Science teaches that Jesus is the human man, and Christ is the divine idea? It teaches that Jesus is not eternal, sovereign, or one with the Father.

Christianity teaches that Jesus Christ is God the Son, Lord and Savior: crucified, resurrected and coming again.

Those who enter the wide gate onto the broad road that ends in death are many (most of the world's people). Those who travel on this road include humanists, secularists, atheists, religionists, agnostics, theists, pagans, Jews and Gentiles. All who reject Christ are on this road. Most Americans are on this road. Recent studies show 70% of churches in America don't teach the Bible. Members of the fastest growing belief system (concerning God) are called Nones.

Those who enter the small gate and travel on the narrow road are true believers and followers of Christ; although we are few in number compared to the billions who live on this earth, it is not because the gate is small and the road is narrow, nor are the accommodations in heaven too limited; it is because the majority of people are unwilling to acknowledge their sin and accept the free gift of forgiveness and eternal life through Jesus Christ.

The thing is, the world looks upon these false teachers as if they are part of the true Christian church, holding them up as examples in order to prove that Christianity is full of hypocrisy, lies, deceit, greed, and corruption.

When this happens, the message of Christ is maligned [slandered, repudiated]. Those who don't really belong to God are accepted by the world as examples of Christianity, bringing reproach, suspicion, dislike and distrust upon the true Church.

We must not only expose false teachings/teachers, but we must make sure that we are studying, obeying, proclaiming, and living out the Truth of God's Word, so the people of the world will be exposed to it.

So how do we combat false teachings and false teachers?

Philippians 2:14-16, "Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain."

Matthew 5:16, "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

Ephesians 2:8-10, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."

1Peter 2:12, "Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation."

Pastor Mike
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