

A WARNING TO BE HEEDED 2 Peter 2:1-3

Intro: Chapter one verses 19-21 tell us about the divine inspiration of the scriptures; how that *“holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”*

The men who penned the Old Testament were true prophets of God. They wrote and spake as God gave them the Word.

In chapter two, Peter warns the early church and those of us living today of false prophets. He makes a vehement denunciation of liars “who are undermining the Church’s faith and practice.” (Kelly 326) Jude tells us that the errorists are already at work in the churches (*Jude 4,7,11,16*).

I. Vs. 1, SUBTLE DECEPTION AND DENIAL

A. *“But there were false prophets among the people”*- Just as there were false prophets in Israel in the days of the prophets, Peter warns that false prophets would arise in the New Testament church. In our day when we do not want to condemn anything with the name of Jesus attached to it, the danger of false doctrine entering the church is ever at the door waiting to get in. Some churches are even allowing false religions, religions that hate our Savior, to use their building for Muslim prayer.

1. *“Among the people”* -- False prophets rise up within the congregation and presume to speak for God and in His name; but speak their own theology, not the Bible’s (*Deuteronomy 18:20*).

2. The word *“privily”* is very important; it speaks of the subtlety of the false prophets; it says that they will smuggle in their lies. They teach a lot of truth and *“cleverly include false teaching with it.”* (Wuest 46)

a. We are not to expect the false teacher to stand up and say: “I am a false teacher. I am going to teach and preach things today that are opposed to that old Bible of yours.” Instead, the false prophet will say: “I am a preacher of the Gospel. I believe what you believe and teach what you teach.” These false teachers will use the right words; yet, give different meanings to them.

b. Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones (1919-1981) said: “That has been happening during the last century [1900's]. Men have called Christ Saviour, but they have meant by Saviour ‘a great Example’. They have used the very terminology of the New Testament, but they have evacuated the meaning of the New Testament terms. That is where their danger comes in. The terms are still used and employed, but they confuse the

meaning in this insinuating and subtle manner.” (141)

B. “*Damnable heresies*” means “heresies that damn people to hell.”

1. Some of these false teachers deny that there is a hell. One day they and their followers will awake in the flames of eternal torment. Hell is real. Jesus spoke on the subject of hell twenty-two times in the New Testament.

a. *Psalm 9:17* “*The wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God.*”

b. *Luke 16:22b-23a* “*The rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes being in torments...*”

2. False teachers do not all deny the same things, but they deny enough to destroy the truth. Remember that the popular Rat Poison “D-Con” is 90% corn and only 10% poison, but that’s enough to kill the Rat.

a. They deny the inspiration of the scriptures as did Robert Green Ingersoll.

b. They deny that man is a sinner. There are churches doing this today.

c. They deny salvation by grace through faith in the crucified, buried and risen Lord, Jesus Christ. This means a denial of the sufficiency of Christ to save the Lost.

C. “*Even denying the Lord that bought them*” Among these heretics are those who deny the power of God. Interestingly, the Greek word for “*Lord*” is not *Kurios*, which speaks of the Lord Jesus; but instead, *despotes* which in context speaks of God the Father, the Master over all mankind.

1. John Gill says: “The word *bought* regards temporal mercies and deliverance, which these men enjoyed and is used as an aggravation of their sin in *denying* the Lord...” (vol. 6, 860)

2. Truly, we can agree with the writer of the Hebrews: “*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*”

II. Vs.2, SHAMEFUL ACTIONS

A. “*And many shall follow...*” The Greek word for follow means “To follow out to the end, to pursue to its termination, to comply with and yield to.” Many will follow false preachers and teachers all the way to the pit of hell. Many of the teachers have done great things, but they do not know Jesus Christ as the all sufficient Savior (*Matt. 7:22-23*).

1. The road to hell is broad and crowded. The way to heaven is strait and narrow; it is as narrow as Jesus only. *Acts 4:12* says:

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

2. It is Jesus Himself who says: *“I am the way, the truth, and the life and no man cometh to the Father but by me.”* (John 14:6)

B. *“Pernicious ways”* -- This speaks of ways that are “Damnable, destructive, ruinous.”

1. *“Pernicious ways”* leads to licentious, shameless, evil living. Those spoken of here must have been antinomian in their theology (2:19).

2. These are the kind of folks spoken of by Jude in *Jude 4*.

C. *“By reason of whom, the way of truth shall be evil spoken of”* Because of the teachings and lifestyles of the false prophets, “the truth was evil spoken of.”

1. “The Way” was terminology that characterized the early church. This way is the way of truth and the only way of salvation. Let us never bring disgrace to the Holy name of Jesus.

2. When “the way” is evil spoken of, it hurts the whole cause of Christ. This is why you and I need to be sure that *“whether therefore ye eat or drink, whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”* (1 Cor. 10:31)

III. Vs. 3, SHYSTERS

A. *“And through covetousness”* This speaks of cupidity- greed- especially for money or possessions.

B. *“Who through feigned words make merchandise of you”* These false teachers exploit the people. They use people for their own gain; they build empires unto themselves.

1. They used *“feigned words”* to accomplish their goal. They have a feel good so called ministry. The Greek word for *“feigned”* is *“plastos”* meaning “molded, formed.” We get our English word plastic from *“plastos”*. As plastic can be twisted and molded, the false teachers twist words to make them mean anything they want them to. Many false teachers use our words, but do not use our dictionary.

2. False teachers use the same tactics that Satan used in the Garden of Eden.

a. FIRST, Satan questioned God’s Word: *“Yea, hath God said.”*

b. SECONDLY, Satan denied God’s Word: *“thou shalt not surely die.”*

c. THIRDLY, Satan added to God’s Word by saying: *“Ye shall be as God’s.”*

C. *“Make merchandise of you”* This means to use a person or a thing for gain. *Luke 10:7* says: *“the laborer is worthy of his hire,”* but this does not give the shepherd a right to fleece the flock.

D. *“Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.”* Judgment is not asleep, and it is not idle. Their destruction is as good as accomplished. They are of old marked for condemnation (*Jude 4*).

Conclusion: We live in the post Christian era when the marks of true Fundamentalism have all but been erased. We must do as our Baptist forefathers of old and trust God’s inerrant Word as our only guide.