

## Sermon Outline

# “The Enticement of False Teachers” 2 Peter series, part 7 – 2 Peter 2:9–22 Joshua Harris – November 27, 2011

## Introduction

1. 2 Peter 2:9-22 is a blistering and angry attack on the false teachers. With righteous anger, Peter doesn't hold back in his words of condemnation. He loves God, he loves the truth and he loves the people of God. And he sees false teachers ruining peoples' souls. He sees their deception and their lies destroying and harming. Heaven and hell is in the balance and Peter *cares*. He's using the full force of words to warn against the evil of these teachers.

## Don't Follow or Be Like the False Teachers

The false teachers are:

1. Irrational - Verse 12 compares them to irrational, dangerous animals. Just as wild beasts are hunted and destroyed, so the Lord will bring judgment on them for their wrongdoing.
2. Sexually immoral – Verse 14 says they have “eyes full of adultery.” Every woman they look at, they look at with adulterous, lustful intent. They lived and they taught that purity didn't matter because there would be no judgment.
3. Spiritually cocky (arrogant) – Verse 10 says they're bold and willful. Verse 18 says they speak “loud boasts of folly.” These men were boisterous. They put on a great show of knowledge and authority. They come across as incredibly confident and “in the know.”
  - a. Verse 10 gives a specific example of this spiritual pride. It says, “they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones.” The “glorious ones” referenced here are fallen angels or demonic powers. These false teachers were either denying the existence of demonic powers or boasting that they had authority over them.
4. Motivated by greed – Verse 14 says, “They have hearts trained in greed.” The motive behind all their teaching and activity was selfish gain. Peter reinforces his point by using the story of Balaam (Numbers 22-24) to illustrate that their hearts are motivated by greed.

## Don' Be Ignorant of the False Teacher's Tactics

1. Who they target – Verse 14 says, “They entice unsteady souls.” They specifically prey on those whose faith is unsteady and faltering. They go after the weak. Verse 18 says, “For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error.” The words, “those who are barely escaping,” could also be translated, “those who have recently escaped.” What Peter is

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saying is that the false teachers target new Christians who have only recently “escaped” or come out of the world.

2. How they entice – Verse 18 says, “they entice by sensual passions of the flesh.” Verse 19 explains this more clearly when it says, “They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption.” In other words, they are telling people they can be free from the demands of godliness and self-control, free of God’s commands for sexual purity. But the end result is only enslavement and bondage to the lusts of the flesh.

## **Don’t Stop Reminding Yourself and Others of the Truth**

1. There’s an urgent warning here against growing familiar with the essentials of our faith. We can’t stop reminding each other of the truth of God’s Word. The message isn’t just avoid false teachers. It’s cling to the truth. Remind yourself of the truth. Remind each other of the truth.
2. Peter sets an example for us in this letter. Writing to everyday members of the church, Peter reminds them that they need to be grounded in the truth—they need to remember all that Jesus provided through his death and resurrection. They need to remember that the gospel leads to a transformed life. Peter keeps saying, “I’m writing to remind you of what you already know” (see 2 Peter 1:12-14).

## **Conclusion**

1. The closing verses of chapter 2 are sobering reminders of the deceitfulness of sin. At one time, these false teachers seemed like genuine Christians. But they proved by their actions that they had never truly been regenerated. Like a dog returning to its vomit or a pig going back to the mud, their nature was never actually changed. They were never a “new creature in Christ.”
  - a. But these verses shouldn’t cause any of us to feel smug. They should sober us. They should provoke us to examine ourselves and all the more diligently “work out our salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil. 2:12-13).
2. If we love God’s people, this passage should motivate us to look out for one another.
  - a. Is there a brother or sister in Christ that you can reach out to and encourage this week? Do you know someone who is going through a trial or a difficult test? They may feel unsteady and shaken. They may feel more vulnerable to doubt and the temptations of sin. How can you reach out to them in friendship, encourage them in their faith and remind of them of what they already know.
  - b. And for those who have been Christians for many years, how can you take an interest in discipling and mentoring newer and younger believers?

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### **Fellowship Starters**

1. Take time as a Care Group to read 2 Peter 2:1-22.
2. What makes you righteously angry? Do you get angry over the damaging effects of sin in people's lives? Do you so value the beauty of God's truth that it grieves you when that truth is twisted and maligned?
3. What steps can you take to avoid being like the false teachers? Where do tend to rationalize giving into the first steps of lust, pride or greed?
4. What practical steps can you take to remind yourself and others of the truths of the gospel and promises of God's Word?
5. Josh exhorted us that "if we love God's people, this passage should motivate us to look out for one another." Is there a weak, hurting or discouraged brother or sister in Christ that you can reach out to, encourage and remind them of God's promises?
6. If you have been a Christian for many years, what practical ways can you reach out, disciple and train newer and younger believers? Why is it so vital to the health of the church for the mature believers to mentor the younger believers?