

2 Peter

Lesson #6, Chapter 2:1-22

Read through Chapter 2 before beginning this lesson. This lesson contains valuable truths we'll all need to apply at some point in our lives. May we gain wisdom and discernment as we study!

1. Chapter 2 verse 1 begins with the contrasting word *but*. What contrast is Peter making with his statements at the end of Chapter 1?
2. From verses 1-3, what are the characteristics of false teachers? What are the consequences of the false teachers' views?
3. In verse 1 Peter refers to the false prophets that plagued the Israelites. How were the Israelites to deal with false prophets? See Deut. 13 and 18:18-22.
4. Why do false teachers introduce their destructive heresies *secretly*? See also Jn. 3:20-21 and 1 Jn. 1:5-7. Who do false teachers want to keep their teachings a secret from?
5. Peter says that the false teachers will introduce destructive heresies in which they will even deny Christ. What do the Scriptures say about someone who denies Christ? See Matt. 10:33; 2 Tim. 2:11-13; Titus 1:16; 1 Jn. 2:19, 22; Jude 4.

6. Based on what you have discovered in questions 3-6, what is the false teacher's spiritual state Peter described in these verses?

7. Look back at verse 1. Where will you *find* false teachers? Why is it so important to understand the false teacher's true spiritual state though they may *claim* to know Christ as their Savior? See also 1 Cor. 2:14; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Titus 1:16.

8. What examples of *punishment* are given in verses 4-9? What examples of *preservation* are given in verses 4-9?

9. Why does Peter take the time to give examples of punishment and preservation in verses 4-9? What point is he trying to make to his readers? How is that encouraging for *you*?

10. What further characteristics of a false teacher are introduced in verses 10-11? How does Peter's example about the angels show the false teachers' rebellion?

11. List the characteristics of a false teacher from verses 12-22.

12. Peter compares false teachers to unreasoning animals in verses 12-13. Please explain the comparison between the two. Jude 10 and Phil. 3:18-19 will help you with your answer.

13. In verse 15 Peter refers to *Balaam* to give added insight into the motives of the false teachers. Who was Balaam and what role did he play in Israel's history? See Num. 22-24; 25:1-3 and 31:8, 16.

14. How are false teachers like Balaam?

15. Verses 17-19 provide another insightful look at the false teachers. What succinct statement in verse 19 does Peter make that sums up their lives? How would remembering that truth help you avoid being deceived by a false teacher?

16. Verses 20-21 provide an accurate picture of an *apostate*. "Apostates," John MacArthur explains in his commentary, "are those who move toward Christ, hear and understand His gospel, and are on the verge of saving belief, but then rebel and turn away." Why is the last state worse than the first for an apostate? Why would it have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness? See verses 20-21 and Heb. 6:4-8; 10:26-27; 1 Jn. 2:19.

17. How do the proverbs of the dog and sow in verse 22 illustrate the false teachers' lives?

18. Why does Peter spend 22 verses in Chapter 2 teaching on false teachers and their threat to the church? See also 1:14.

19. Read the book of Jude and list any similarities it has with 2 Peter 2. Also list any new information you may glean about false teachers from Jude in a separate list.

20. If a leader begins to be *characterized* by one or more of these qualities what should you do? See Matt. 18:15-20; Gal. 2:11-14; Eph. 5:11-12; 1 Tim. 5:19-21; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 Jn. 4:1-3.

21. It is clear from this chapter that true believers can be led astray by a false teacher. With so much at stake, what principles from this chapter have you learned that will help guard you against a false teacher?

There is difference betwixt error, schism, and heresy. Error is when one holds a strong opinion alone; schism, when many consent in their opinion; heresy runs further, and contends to root out the truth. Error offends, but separates not; schism offends and separates; heresy offends, separates, and rageth. Error is weak, schism is strong, heresy obstinate. Error goes out, and often comes in again; schism comes not in, but makes a new church; heresy makes not a new church, but no church. Error is reprov'd and pitied, schism is reprov'd and punished,

heresy is reproved and excommunicated. Schism is in the same faith, heresy makes another faith. Though they be thus distinguished, yet without God's preventing grace, one will run into another. ~Thomas Adams

O soul, if you are longing for Christ you will know when He is near you, even as the thirsting harts [deer] of the desert scent the waters from afar. If you have an intense hunger after the Lord Jesus you will not need to be told which is bread; you will not be deceived by a stone, for your hunger will instruct you. In this case an instinct springs out of an appetite, discernment grows out of desire: if you long for Christ you will not readily be deceived by false teachers, for you will know what your soul craves after, and will not be content with anything else. ~Charles Spurgeon