

Duplicitous False Teachers – 2 Peter 2:1-3

1. General Considerations

1.1. We are now turning the page on chapter 1 and turning to a new scene found in chapter 2.

1.1.1. In chapter 1 if you remember, it was “be sure of your grounding” found within the overall framework of 2 Peter’s theme “protecting the truth.”

1.1.2. And when you’re set on protecting the truth one needs to “be sure your grounding.”

1.2. How do you be sure of your grounding?

1.2.1. You have to first of all embrace the right path and

1.2.2. Secondly you have to make use of the resources God gives you and

1.2.3. Thirdly you need to promote growth and

1.2.4. Fourthly you need to be diligent in your calling and

1.2.5. Fifthly you need to give yourself proper reminders and

1.2.6. Sixthly you need to embrace the apostolic witness and

1.2.7. Seventhly you need to understand the nature of a more sure prophetic word.

1.3. Once you are sure of your grounding and know the truth and recognize the truth for what it is you will be able to help safeguard the church so that you might be aware of destructive influences.

1.3.1. You need to be aware of something very important here in that destructive influences do not come into your life when you are already living a destructive life (although they may continue to bombard you)

1.3.2. But they initially come into your life when you least expect – when you are living an exemplary life.

1.4. Is there a particular point of attack for destructive influences?

1.4.1. There is indeed. If you have tracked with me since the beginning of this letter you should probably have a good idea by now of what it is that a focus of attack will be upon.

1.4.2. If you remember what we have mentioned before, ever since modernism as entered into the picture it is the word of God that has been attacked.

1.5. The idea of special Revelation from God through prophets and apostles is tossed out as myth or “cleverly devised tales” with perhaps some moral value but no eternal value.

1.5.1. Beloved, if in your mind and heart the word of God is undermined then you will be left without an anchor.

1.5.2. Once the word of God is out-of-the-way just about anything goes.

1.5.3. If there is no standard of truth like the word of God is, then truth truly becomes a relative issue, which ends up on the rubbish heap of history.

1.5.4. You as a consequence are left to flail in the wind.

1.6. How do these destructive influences seek to come into the church in the first place?

1.6.1. It doesn't just happen through something like osmosis

1.6.2. But unfortunately it comes into the church through those who say they represent the truth when in reality they represent the lie.

1.6.3. It is important that we grasp this.

1.6.4. We are not discussing the issue of various views with in what is considered orthodoxy

1.6.5. But rather we are discussing teachings that come into the church that are contrary to the apostolic teaching once for all delivered to the saints.

1.6.6. It is important to distinguish between differences within orthodoxy and differences because of unorthodox views brought in from the outside.

1.6.7. This is why chapter 1 of 2 Peter is so important.

1.6.8. Once you embrace the truth and are grounded properly in the truth you will be equipped to recognize when falsehood is introduced into the church by unorthodox or false teaching.

2. Duplicitous False Teachers Introduce Destructive Heresies

2.1. So as Peter begins to turn his attention to destructive influences he desires of us to safeguard the church.

2.1.1. This has been a hallmark throughout redemptive history for God's people.

2.1.2. It is incumbent upon God's people to be wary of those influences that come into the church to seek to subvert or to corrupt it in some way.

2.1.3. It usually does not take place in a direct confrontation but rather takes place subversively, quietly coming into the church a little at a time.

2.2. So look at how Peter states this in verse one,

2.2.1. "But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you."

2.2.2. Peter says false prophets arose among the people.

2.2.3. Who are the people of which he speaks?

2.2.4. The people, is another way of speaking of the children of Israel in the old covenant days.

2.3. The switch from false prophets to false teachers shouldn't be seen as more than what it is.

2.3.1. The predominant way in which the truth of God came to his people was by the prophets of old.

2.3.2. It is not as though there were not teachers there but the main function of hearing a word from God and understanding it was a function of the prophet.

2.3.3. In the new covenant age, it is not as though there were not prophets for we read of them in the Scriptures however, the primary function of communicating the truth of God was by teaching it.

2.3.4. The old covenant Canon had been closed and the new covenant truth was being spoken by the apostles as the primary vehicles to bring the implications of Jesus and his teachings to light to the church.

2.3.5. So the comparison stands for Peter because the emphasis is upon the falsehood that is brought into the people of God whether by the office of prophet or that of teacher.

2.4. So if we might focus for a moment on the prefix false.

2.4.1. To be able to label someone a false teacher or a false prophet represents the case that it is appropriate and right to say that there is not

just a truth, or one's truth, but that there is the truth of which the false is contrasted.

2.4.2. I am reminded of the second great exchange found in Romans chapter 1:25, which states:

2.4.3. **Romans 1:25** For they exchanged the truth of God for a [the] lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

3. Final Considerations

3.1. How do we stand up to the onslaught of falsehood?

3.1.1. We embrace the truth as set forth by the Lord of glory.

3.1.1.1. Truth is not relative

3.1.1.2. Truth is inherent in who God is in himself

3.1.2. We become grounded in the truth of God

3.1.2.1. Embracing the right path

3.1.2.2. Embrace God's resources

3.1.2.3. Embrace proper growth

3.1.2.4. Embrace diligence in your calling

3.1.2.5. Embrace reminders

3.1.2.6. Embrace the Apostolic witness

3.1.2.7. Embrace the more firm prophetic word

3.2. We need to recognize that destructive influences will come.

3.2.1. Destructive influences are an attack on the truth

3.2.2. Destructive influences embrace the path of the lie

3.2.2.1. It is creaturely oriented

3.2.2.2. It focuses on false worship

3.2.2.3. It focuses on a corruption of God's image bearers