

FALSE TEACHERS AMONG YOU

II Peter 2:1-3

1

False Teachers Among You

- Peter, in this letter, has been encouraging his audience to grow in their faith and have confidence in the word of God.
- His purpose is to prepare them to beware of false teachers.

2

False Teachers Among You

- False teachers and their teaching can be controversial subjects.
- We have to determine whether or not something is false doctrine.
- Then there are the motives behind those teaching error.
 - What one views as error, another might not.
 - Some advocate that motives supersede the message (e.g, "as long as he is sincere ...")

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False prophets among the people – Verse 1

- The Old Testament gives many examples of false prophets:
 - Balaam – Numbers 22-25
 - Prophets of Baal – 1 Kings 18:17-22
 - Ahab's prophets – 1 Kings 22:5-14
 - Hananiah (chapter 28) – Jeremiah 27:12-15
 - Shemaiah – Nehemiah 6:10-14

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False prophets among the people – Verse 1

- They taught error telling the people what they wanted to hear
 - Greedy – Jeremiah 6:13, cf. 2 Peter 2:15-16 – Balaam
 - Peace when there is no peace – Jeremiah 6:14, Ezekiel 13:8-10a
- Smooth things – Isaiah 30:8-10, Micah 3:9-12

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False prophets among the people – Verse 1

- Warnings against false prophets
 - Deuteronomy 13:1-3, 18:20-22
 - Jeremiah 23:16-17 – "filling you with vain hopes"

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False teachers among you – Verse 1

- True then and still true today
- “Among you” - Acts 20:29-30
- The New Testament lists many false teachers
 - Acts 15:1-5 – Judaizing teachers
 - II Timothy 2:16-18 – Hymenaeus and Philetus
 - I John 2:18-22 – “he who denies the Father and the Son”; 4:1-3; II John 7
 - Revelation 2:20-23 – “Jezebel”

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False teachers among you – Verses 1-3

- Secretly bring in destructive heresies
 - Rarely does one declare, “I’m a false teacher” or “What I am about to teach is false doctrine.”
 - Yet, many of them know that what they are advocating will divide and damage the Lord’s body
 - They also know they will be challenged by godly, knowledgeable Christians – cf. Titus 1:8-14

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False teachers among you – Verses 1-3

- Secretly bring in destructive heresies
 - Matthew 7:15-20 – wolves in sheep’s clothing
 - Jude 3-4 – they creep in unnoticed
 - cf. II Corinthians 2:11, 11:13-15 – as angels of light

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False teachers among you – Verses 1-3

- Bring “destructive **heresies**”
 - A transliterated word (*αἵρεσις*) that describes the party spirit, and those who work to create that division.
 - Acts 5:17; 15:5 – “party of ...”
 - I Corinthians 11:19 – “factions”
 - Galatians 5:20 – “divisions” (a work of the flesh)
 - cf. Acts 24:5, 14; 28:22 – “sect”
- Are destructive – doing great harm to the cause of Christ (cf. II Timothy 4:14)

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False teachers among you – Verses 1-3

- Denying the Lord who bought them
- Bring teachings that are contrary to what Jesus taught, and perhaps even denying His person and character
 - cf. Hebrews 10:26-31 – counted the blood of His covenant a common thing.

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False teachers among you – Verses 1-3

- Bring on themselves swift destruction
- Will be judged
 - cf. Hebrews 10:29 – “of how much sorer punishment” (ASV)
 - 2 Peter 2:20-21 – this clearly includes these false teachers

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False teachers among you – Verses 1-3

- Many will follow their destructive ways
 - A false teacher can be somewhat harmless ... until he gathers a following.
 - Unfortunately, many are willing to follow
- We are continually warned to beware
 - 1 John 4:1 – “do not believe every spirit”
 - Acts 17:10-12 – “to see if these things were so”
 - Ephesians 4:12-15 – “that we may no longer be children”
 - Acts 20:32 – “the word of His grace”

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False teachers among you – Verses 1-3

- Because of these, the way of truth is blasphemed (cf. Romans 2:24)
- False teachers and their teaching damage our ability to teach and they blaspheme the character of God
- Many mock the divisions among us caused by these false teachers
 - “Biting and devouring one another” (Galatians 5:15)
 - “How can we know truth?”
 - Others are convinced that Christians are followers of various false doctrines

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False teachers among you – Verses 1-3

- By covetousness they exploit
 - II Peter 2:17-19 – “slaves of corruption”
 - II Timothy 4:2-4 – “teachers to suit their own passions”
- cf. I Timothy 6:9-10 – “wandered away from the faith.”
 - Those given to materialism may be more easily swayed.
- cf. Jeroboam and his golden calves – I Kings 12:28-30 – “Behold your gods”

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False teachers among you – Verses 1-3

- II Peter 2:3 (ASV) – “whose sentence now from of old lingereth not, and their destruction slumbereth not.”
 - Peter’s message – a day is coming when they will be judged and condemned – both those who teach and those who follow their teachings
 - cf. Matthew 12:36-37 – “people will give account”

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What about today?

- We still deal with false teachers today, sometimes closer than we care to admit.
- A problem we see today is how some false doctrines are being tolerated or even ignored. It is often a matter of fellowship.
- Of particular concern ... some are advocating that as long as one is sincere (not hypocritical, deliberately deceptive, greedy, and they genuinely believe what they teach) they should not be called a false teacher.
 - There are many problems with this view.

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What about today?

- If one is sincere does that mean he is not a false teacher? Consider:
 - By definition, what makes one a false teacher is that he is teaching what is false.
 - Paul
 - Acts 23:1 – “in all good conscience”
 - I Timothy 1:13 – “acted ignorantly”
 - NOTE: Sincerity is a factor, as it will determine how one responds when confronted with the truth
 - cf. Acts 18:24-26 – “explained to him the way of God more accurately”

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What about today?

- If one is sincere does that mean he is not a false teacher? Consider:
- To make this argument calls for us to judge hearts
 - Jesus could – Matthew 9:4 – “knowing their thoughts”
 - But we can not – we can only see the product/effect
 - Matthew 7:15-20 – “You will recognize them by their fruits”

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What about today?

- If one is sincere does that mean he is not a false teacher? Consider:
- This argument declares that we cannot, with absolute certainty, know what is truth
 - I Corinthians 4:6 – “not to go beyond what is written”
 - Ephesians 5:17 – “understand what the will of the Lord is”
 - II Timothy 2:15 – “rightly handling the word of truth”
 - cf. II Corinthians 11:3-4 – “your thoughts will be led astray”

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What about today?

- If one is sincere does that mean he is not a false teacher? Consider:
- How will we be able to close the door on error?
 - There are many teaching error on salvation, worship, the church, morality, Bible inspiration, etc.
 - If we ignore or dismiss such, what will the future of the church be?
 - Ephesians 5:11 – “expose them”
 - Jude 3 – “contend for the faith”

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What IS Required?

- Hear the Word of God
 - Romans 10:8 – “But what does it say? ‘The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart’ (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim)”
- Believe that Jesus is the Savior
 - Romans 10:11 – “For the Scripture says, ‘Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.’”

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What IS Required?

- Repent of your sins
 - Acts 3:19 – “Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out”
- Confess that Jesus is the Son of God
 - Romans 10:10 – “For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”

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What IS Required?

- Be immersed in water (baptized)
 - Acts 2:38 – “And Peter said to them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”
- Remain faithful
 - Hebrews 3:14 – “... leading you to fall away from the living God”

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