



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V26 N34 August 25, 2024

PEOPLE GET READY

“A Recipe for Disaster”

2 Peter 2:10b-19

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Authority of the Bible

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and practice.

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

2 Timothy 3:16-17



What do all false teachers have in common?

There are those who *practically speaking* either deny or simply ignore the right of the Bible, the Word of God *written*, to command their belief and practice. By refusing to respect the authority of what God has said – i.e., by wandering off the straight way (cf. v. 15) – they refuse to respect his authority over them. Sadly, at least some of them claim to be Christian. Peter describes and delivers a scathing rebuke of such “false teachers” in his day (2Pe 2:1-22). He gives a general description of them in verses 1-4. “But there were also false prophets in Israel, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will cleverly teach destructive heresies and even deny the Master who bought them. In this way, they will bring sudden destruction on themselves. Many will follow their evil teaching and shameful immorality. And because of these teachers, the way of truth will be slandered. In their greed they will make up clever lies to get hold of your money. But God condemned them long ago, and their destruction will not be delayed” (NLT). The *very same* false teachers teaching the *very same* “destructive heresies” may not be around today. Nevertheless, false teachers of the same *type* teaching “destructive heresies” of the same *type* are!

Jude, the brother of James, the brother of the Lord Jesus, warns his readers against false teachers of the same *type* as did Peter (vv. 4-18) in his day. However, it should not be assumed that, since 2Pe 2 and Jude 4-18 appear to describe similar situations, they were both written *at* the same time *to* the very same people *about* the very same false teachers. According to *The NIV Study Bible*, “The kind of heresy depicted in these two passages was widespread” (2140). Jude refers to his *type* of false teachers as “ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord” (v. 4). The parallels between 2 Peter and Jude are obvious: 1) Both refer to the condemnation of false teachers (Jude 4; cf. 2Pe 2:3); 2) Both refer to their denial of Jesus Christ (Jude 4; cf. 2Pe 2:3); 3) Both refer to

angels confined for judgment (Jude 6; cf. 2Pe 2:4); 4) Both refer to judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah (Jude 9; cf. 2Pe 2:6); 5) Both refer to the false teachers’ denial of authority (Jude 8; cf. 2Pe 2:10); 6) Both mention that angels do not condemn but false teachers heap abuse on what they do not understand (Jude 9; cf. 2Pe 2:11); 7) Both refer to false teachers as “blemishes” (Jude 12; cf. 2Pe 2:13); 8) Both refer to them *ironically*, namely “clouds without rain” and “springs without water” (Jude 12; cf. 2Pe 2:17); and finally, both refer to their “ungodly,” “evil” desires (Jude 18; cf. 2Pe 3:3).

Jude’s purpose for writing can be described this way: “Although Jude was very eager to write to his readers about salvation, he felt that the must instead warn them about certain immoral men circulating among them who were perverting the grace of God. Apparently, these false teachers were trying to convince believers that being saved by grace gave them license to sin since their sins would no longer be held against them. Jude thought it imperative that his readers be on guard against such men and be prepared to oppose their perverted teaching with the truth about God’s saving grace” (*The NIV Study Bible*, 2140). Note the similarity to what Peter says about his *type* of false teachers. The apostle writes: “Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight” – broad daylight mind you (2:13). “With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning,” or as another translation renders verse 14, “They have eyes for nothing but loose women, eyes never ceasing from sin” (REB). What’s more, “they seduce the unstable.”

The risk posed by false teachers in any age is great – especially given the fact that they infiltrate the community of believers. Jude calls them “blemishes at your love feast.” Peter refers to them “reveling in their pleasures while they feast with you” (2Pe 2:13) – referring in both cases to “the early Christian ‘love feast’ held in conjunction with the celebration of the Lord’s Supper” (Douglas J. Moo, *The NIV Application Commentary: 2 Peter and Jude*, 125-26). They will reap what they sow.

Read 2 Peter 2:10b-19

10b *Bold and arrogant, they are not afraid to heap abuse on celestial beings; 11 yet even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not heap abuse on such beings when bringing judgment on them from the Lord. 12 But these people blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like unreasoning animals, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like animals they too will perish.*

13 *They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their pleasures while they feast with you. 14 With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed – an accursed brood! 15 They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Bezer, who loved the wages of wickedness. 16 But he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey – an animal without speech – who spoke with a human voice and restrained the prophet's madness.*

17 *These people are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them. 18 For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of the flesh, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error. 19 They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity – for “people are slaves to whatever has mastered them.”*

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Underline “Bold and arrogant” in v. 10b.
- Circle “celestial beings” in v. 10b, “angels” and “such beings” in v. 11.
- Box “yet” in v. 11 and “but” in vv. 12, 16 indicating *contrast*.
- Circle “blaspheme” in v. 12.
- Box “like” (2x) indicating *comparison* in v. 12.
- Circle “pleasure/s” in v. 13.
- Underline “blots and blemishes” in v. 13.
- Circle “feast” v. 13.
- Bracket “eyes full of adultery” in v. 14.
- Circle “seduce” in v. 14.
- Circle “accursed brood” in v. 14.
- Bracket “way of Balaam son of Bezer” in v. 15.
- Underline “springs without water and mists driven by a storm” in v. 17
- Circle “blackest darkness” in v. 17.
- Bracket “just escaping from those who live in error” in v. 18.
- Circle “freedom” in v. 19.

What one word would you use to describe the **TONE** of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the **THEME** of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, “This text is about _____.”



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. The false teachers about whom Peter writes “despise authority” (v. 10a). *Whose* authority?
2. Explain what the false teachers do that even angels refuse to do (v. 10b).
3. Explain the *comparisons* in verse 12. In what ways are they “like” animals?
4. Their punishment will fit their crime. How so?
5. The “carouse in broad daylight.” What does that suggest to you?
6. They are the *opposite* of what Christians ought to be. How so? (See notes.)
7. The expression “eyes full of adultery” – explain what it *means* and what it *implies*.
8. Peter claims they follow the “way of Balaam.” Which “way” is that?
9. What do the two metaphors used to describe the false teachers (v. 17), indicate about them?
10. Peter uses *irony* to describe the hypocritical false teachers (v. 19). How so?
11. **Discussion:** False teaching has its roots in a denial of the authority of God’s word. Talk about how that is illustrated in the situation Peter addresses.

Commentary On The Text

2 Peter 2:10a is transitional. “It rounds off Peter’s general discussion of God’s judgment with a particular application and it introduced the subject of the next verses. Indeed, this half verse captures the two characteristics of the false teachers that Peter elaborates and condemns in verses 10b-16: their *sensuality* (they follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature’) and their *arrogance* (they ‘despise authority’). In typical manner, Peter takes these up in reverse order, exposing the false teachers’ *arrogance* in verses 10b-13a and their *sensuality* in verses 13b-16” (Douglas J. Moo, *The NIV Application Commentary: 2 Peter and Jude*, 120, italics added). In verses 17-19, he continues his description of false teachers – which runs from verse 10a to verse 22 – by delivering a scathing rebuke.

In verses 10b-13a, Peter describes the *arrogance* of false teachers. These audacious, obstinately self-seeking men (presumably) dare to do what even angels refuse to do. “They heap abuse on celestial beings,” namely, fallen angels, which is something unfallen angels do not do “even when bringing judgment on them from the Lord” (v. 11). Apparently, Peter is alluding to the same incident described by Jude in his epistle. He writes: “But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not himself dare to condemn him for slander but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you’” (Jude 9). These false teachers “blaspheme” spirit beings. One commentator explains: “Since the false teachers seemed to be materialistic and thus skeptical about things like the return of Christ and the judgment to come, this ‘blasphemy’ may have taken a very basic form and involved a general denial of the existence of such beings” (Moo, 123). In doing so, they reveal themselves to be “like” unspiritual animals in that they are governed by libertine instincts rather than reason, and in that they are destined to die, for they will receive just recompense for the harm they have done.

In verses 13b-16, Peter describes the *sensuality* of false teachers. They are hedonists devoted to the gratification of their sinful desires – especially their sinful sexual desires. To make it worse, they gratify themselves “in broad daylight,” a long recognized indication of degeneracy even in Roman society (Richard J. Bauckham, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 50, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 265). They’re always on the lookout for an adulterous woman to lure

into an affair. Even though they revel in their pleasures, they “feast” with the community of believers, but morally are the exact opposite of what believers should be. They prey on the spiritually immature, victimizing them for greedy purposes (cf. Eph 4:19). One commentator writes: “‘greed’ need not relate only to money; it can also denote the desire for more sexual pleasure, power, food, and so forth. Since Peter has already used this word to depict the false teachers’ love of money (2:3), the ‘greed’ here is also probably mainly directed to financial gain. But we should probably not restrict the word to this sphere” (Moo, 127). Greedy for money, the false teachers have “left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam,” who was ironically rebuked by a dumb donkey wiser than him (cf. Nu 22:21-34).

In verses 17-19, Peter shifts his focus from the *character* of the false teachers to the *destructive impact* of their teaching. The metaphors he uses suggest that their teaching is nothing but empty words that promise much but deliver little – if anything at all. New converts are the ones most susceptible to their high-sounding words – primarily because their teaching appeals to the “lustful desires of the flesh,” desires that new converts have only begun to leave behind. Another commentator describes the impact of their false teaching this way: “New converts from paganism, **people who are just escaping from those who live in error**, are a soft target for the false teachers. Not yet strong in the Lord or able to exercise his mighty power (Eph. 6:10), and not firmly grounded in the faith, they are an easy prey to the impressive but worthless talk of the false teachers. As yet, the converts lack Christian understanding for resisting their specious arguments, when **they mouth empty, boastful words**, full of high-sounding verbosity without substance” (Norman Hillyer, *1 and 2 Peter, Jude, NIBC*, 204).

While the false teachers about whom Peter writes have died long ago. Their contemporary descendants are alive and well – and walk among us. Beware of them!

Word Studies/Notes

v. 10b **bold and arrogant** “The former word, *tolmētēs*, smacks of the reckless daring that defies God and man. The latter word, *authadēs*, is used for an obstinate fellow who is determined to please himself at all costs” (Michael Green, *The Second Epistle of Peter and the Epistle of Jude*, TNTC, 115-16).

vv. 10b, 11 **celestial beings, angels** . . . The referents of these terms have been understood in various ways (see Green, 116-18; Douglas J. Moo, *The NIV Application Commentary: 2 Peter and Jude*, 121-22; Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on 2 Peter,” 2024 ed., 51-52, planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/2peter.pdf). The NIV interprets “*doxai*” (lit., “glories” or “glorious beings”) as a reference to “celestial beings,” i.e., angels (whether good or bad), and “angels” as a reference to good angels, given that Peter commends their activity, and to “*kat’ auton*” (lit., “against them”) as a reference to “such beings,” i.e., presumably bad angels. In a nutshell, the false teachers were making light of the unseen spiritual realm even though angels themselves, the unfallen ones, “although they are stronger and more powerful” (than *the fallen angels*), refuse to heap abuse on “such beings,” i.e., the fallen angels (cf. Jude 8-10). One commentator summarizes the interpretation behind the NIV this way: “False teachers were doing things **even angels** would not do, namely, **slander such beings**. One might expect stronger and more powerful beings (good angels) to criticize less powerful beings (fallen angels), but that is simply not allowed **in the presence of the Lord** (cf. Jude 8-9)” (Kenneth O. Gangel, “2 Peter,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 872).

v. 12 **blaspheme** Here the word “denotes words or actions that defame God or people and ideas associated with him. Peter has already accused these false teachers of causing the ‘way of truth’ to be ‘blasphemed’ (2:2, NIV ‘bring . . . into disrepute’). Now he suggests that they are also making light of evil angels” (Moo, 122-23) – or perhaps the angelic realm, more generally.

v. 13 **pleasure/s** “The Greek word here for ‘pleasure,’ *hedone*, is the word from which we derive ‘hedonist,’ one who lives for only pleasure . . . Practicing such hedonistic activities ‘in broad daylight’ is therefore a sign that the false teachers are completely shameless about their indulgence” (Moo, 125). “Reveling in their *pleasures*” (*agapais*) or the variant reading “reveling in their *deceptions*” (*apatais*) (Edwin A. Blum, “2 Peter,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 12, 280). The following punning translation assumes the reading *aratais*: “reveling in *deceits* while sharing *eats* with you” (Norman Hillyer, *1 and 2 Peter, Jude*, NIBC, 199).

v. 13 **blots and blemishes** “They are blots (*spiloi*) and blemishes (*mōmoi*), precisely the opposite of what believers are called to be in Christ, ‘spotless’ (*aspiloi*) and ‘blameless’ (*amōmoi*), as Peter so describes them in 3:14

(cf. 1 Pet. 1:19)” (Hillyer, 199).

v. 13 **feast** I.e., “the early Christian ‘love feast’ held in conjunction with the celebration of the Lord’s Supper” (Moo, 125-26); cf. 1Co 11:20-22.

v. 14 **eyes full of adultery** “Literally eyes ‘of an adulteress,’ and so can be loosely rendered: ‘they all have lustful eyes for a madam’” (Hillyer, 199); cf. “They’re always looking for an adulterous woman” (GW).

v. 14 **seduce** “‘Seduce’ translates a Greek word that has its roots in the world of hunting and fishing; it suggests the bait used to lure a fish to the hook or an animal to the trap. But the word had become used generally for any kind of (especially) moral temptation (see also James 1:14). So we should probably not think that Peter intends a sporting metaphor” (Moo, 126). They target the “unstable,” i.e., those who are not solidly grounded in Christian truth.

v. 14 **accursed brood** Lit., “children of a curse,” namely, people destined for condemnation.

v. 15 **way of Balaam** . . . “The false teachers resemble Balaam, the son of Beor (Bosor in most MSS), in that Balaam loved money and was willing to pursue it instead of obeying God (Num 22:5-24:25). Balaam also taught immorality (Num 31:16; Rev 2:14). So the false teachers have left the biblical way and have gone into Balaam’s error – mercenary greed and sexual impurity” (Blum, 281). The best textual evidence suggests that Peter wrote, ‘Balaam, the son of Bosor,’ Bosor being a play on the Hebrew word *basar*, ‘flesh.’ Thus Peter indicated Balaam’s immoral character by calling him the son of flesh. The Moabite worship included cultic prostitution (prostitution being a part of the worship of their god; cf. Num. 25:1-3). Balaam is ‘the classic example of the false teacher who leads people astray for his own personal gain’” (Constable, 54).

v. 17 **springs without water and** . . . Peter’s two colorful metaphors suggest the false teachers promise much, only to deceive and disappoint, delivering little or nothing. The *ironic* meaning of the first is self-evident, while the meaning of the second is not. Mists driven by a storm are “gone before any useful amount of moisture can fall to revitalize the earth, serving merely to make the sky depressingly overcast” (Hillyer, 204).

v. 17 **blackest darkness** “Their destiny is hell” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on 2Pe 2:17). At least some of the false teachers are unsaved.

v. 18 **just escaping** . . . The present tense of the participle suggests that these are still in the process of escaping the entanglements of their past lives. “It makes excellent sense to think that the heretics would go after new converts” (Moo, 143).

4

APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Beware of false teachers – bold and arrogant types, who preach worthless words and pursue ministry for personal gain – for they will be recompensed for the harm they do.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

When I was young my family took a vacation to Colorado. We were roasting marshmallows around a campfire, and though our parents told us not to mess with the fire, my brother just had to reach in and grab a smoldering stick. Guess who went to the emergency room and missed most of their vacation? Discernment isn't an innate character trait but one that we have the privilege to cultivate in our kids. As parents we must begin to lead our kids toward discernment at a very young age. While you're reading board books with your preschooler, talk about right and wrong choices of the characters. As they get older and you watch episodes or movies together, discuss what might have happened if the characters made different choices. When they become preteens, let them be part of the decision-making process as you work with them to create appropriate boundaries. Also, give them a voice for establishing the ensuing consequences for crossing the boundary lines. Natural consequences are painful but create beautiful lessons that lead our children toward growth and maturity. A word of caution for every parent - don't protect your child from making mistakes. Allowing them to crash and burn occasionally helps them understand good and bad choices. Don't consistently distribute inappropriately soft or light consequences for poor behavior choices. You're not doing your child any favors and their cuteness won't stop them from getting fired from their job later in life. The sooner they begin to understand right from wrong, the sooner discernment does the good work of leading them in the ways of wisdom. We're praying for you!

What Does The Bible Say?

Read 2 Peter 2:10b-19

1. Who are "they" (vs 10b) and how does Peter describe them throughout the passage?
2. What do "they" promise?
3. What are people slaves to?

What Do You Think?

What type of harm can a false teacher do or lead another person to do?

What Do You Do?

With a family member, set up an obstacle course and turn on lots of loud music or noise. Have one person wear a blindfold and try to follow whispered directions of the other to navigate through the obstacle course.

CORE COMPETENCY: Authority of the Bible

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and practice.

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Peter 5:7

"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- I completed my Bible Study
- I memorized this week's verse
- I brought my Bible to church
- I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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Stephanie Thomas (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have five children: Elijah, Levi, Bo, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

The Scrolls Bible Study is a spiritual growth resource of Central Bible Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

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OUR MISSION
Making God known by making disciples who are changed by God to change their world.