

CONQUERING  
**K+NG**  
FELLOWSHIP

January 1, 2012

Destruction of False Teachers

2 Peter 2:1-10a

Nick Coldagelli

One of the famous sayings in our culture, is those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it, which reminds us that we can and must learn from the lessons of history.

In our text this week, Peter commands a similar sentiment to his readers as he condemns the false teachers who are among them. These teachers denied Christ future return and judgment and were leading many astray. And Peter appeals to history to show that like all who have rebelled against God in the past, these two will not be spared but utterly destroyed.

So with this in mind, please open your Bibles now to Second Peter. Now the last time we studied this Epistle, we looked at the last half of Chapter 1 where Peter used Christ's transfiguration and the prophetic word to establish the truth of His return. And by way of review, let's look briefly now at a few of those verses. 2 Peter 1:19-21, "And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

Now when Peter says that the prophetic word is "more sure" here, he means that it is made more sure by the transfiguration which confirms the Scriptures claim that Christ will return in power. Since the transfiguration proves the Word, we ought to pay more careful attention to it, because it illuminates the Truth.

We are to heed the prophetic word until the day dawns and the morning star rises in our heart. And the “day” here is likely a reference to the Day of the Lord. A day when those who love God will be saved and those who hate Him will be destroyed. Now, the morning star rising is likely a reference to the coming of Christ. For when Jesus, the morning star comes, we will no longer need the prophetic word, for that to which it pointed will have arrived. Now Peter says that “no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation”, which is probably an attack on the false teachers who twisted prophecy to support their own views.

Verse 21 says that “prophecy is not produced by man”, but comes from God who communicates through men by the Holy Spirit. And since both the origin and interpretation of prophecy come from God, we must submit to God’s Word as the final authority. As we’ll see that those who deny the Word of God will be destroyed just as their predecessors were.

2 Peter 2:1-3, “But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.” (2 Peter 2:1-3 ESV)

Now Peter likens the false teachers here within the church to the false prophets which arose in ancient Israel and the seriousness of false prophets is seen throughout the Old Testament. Such as in Deuteronomy 13 which commands that they be put to death. Similarly, Peter saw false teachers as a great threat within the church that would lead many astray. Now these are called false teachers here and not false prophets, because they did not error in prophetic revelation, but rather on how they taught what had been prophesied. Additionally it’s possible they are called false teachers and not false prophets, because they denied prophetic inspiration entirely.

Now these false teachers denied the Master who bought them and their bound for destruction. And some have used this verse to teach that true believers can lose their salvation. However this verse can not teach that, as other texts in Scripture explicitly teach the opposite. Such as John 6:37-39 which says, “All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from Heaven, not to do my own will but the will

of Him who sent me. And this is the will of Him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that He has given me, but raise it up on the last day.” (John 6:37-39 ESV)

Additionally, Romans 8:38-39 states, “For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:37-39 ESV) And lastly, Jesus declared in John 10:27-30, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.” (John 10:27-30 ESV)

Now since Jesus declares that those have given to Him by the Father, meaning believers, can not be snatched out of His hand meaning eternally lost, we know that believers can not lose their salvation. Now if Peter is not teaching that we can lose our salvation, what is he teaching here?

Now there are various views on this passage, but I would like to present two this morning for your consideration. The first view which is held by many scholars, is that Peter describes these false teachers here as “bought” not in a literal but rather in a figurative sense. Though they truly never believed, Peter speaks of them as “bought” because they had professed Christ as Lord and initially appeared to be converted. However over time their profession proved to be invalid as they taught destructive heresies and thus proved that Christ was never their Master.

They are like the ones who in the Parable of the Sower found in Matthew 13 where the Word of God represented by the seed falls on thorny ground. Though the seed initially appeared to sprout, it is ultimately unfruitful because it is been drawn away by the riches and cares of this world. Now interestingly the false teachers here in 2 Peter were promoting worldly living and thus they greatly resembled the people depicted by the thorny ground. And though this interpretation is certainly possible, I don't find it ultimately compelling. And this is because the Greek word translated here as “bought” is used 29 other times in the New Testament and in every one of those instances it's used in a literal sense to buy or to purchase something. Consequently it seems best to understand it in a literal sense here as well.

Now the second view, which is admittedly a minority view and the one I hold, is that these false teachers here have literally, literally been bought by the Master that they ultimately deny. And significantly the Greek word translated here as “Master” is “despotes”, and it is not the usual Greek word for “Lord” which is “kurios”. “Kurios” is used to denote as a confession of Christ as Lord unto salvation, such as which Thomas says to Jesus in John 20:28 “My Lord (kurios) and my God”.

Now in contrast, “despotes” is a title that indicates authority and ownership and is often used as a reference to earthly masters of slaves. Such as in Titus 2:9 which says “Bondservants are to be submissive to their own masters (despotes) in everything”. And the use of “despotes” indicates that the master of these false teachers did buy them but did not necessarily save them as the term “Kurios” would indicate.

Now an example of this type of buying without saving is seen in the Parable of the Talents found in Matthew 25. Now in that parable a master gives money to three of his slaves before leaving on a journey. When he returns the first two slaves had taken their money had made more money for their master, while the third who was afraid of his master, buried his money. When the master returns he commended the first two slaves but condemned the third saying he should be “cast out into outer darkness”. Now as slaves, all three would have been bought by their master. And this example is helpful as the same master both commends and condemns those he purchased.

Another example of this is the nation of Israel who God purchased according to Exodus 15:16 which says “Terror and dread fall upon them; because of the greatness of your arm, they are still as a stone, till your people, O LORD, pass by, till the people pass by who you have purchased.” While God purchased Israel, we see that he also destroyed some of those He purchased for their unbelief according to Jude 5 which says, “Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.” Now interestingly it is Jesus who is seen here as the one who both saves and destroys those God has purchased.

Similarly, this view suggests that Christ through His death and resurrection purchased all things to ultimately judge all things. Evidence for this may be seen in Colossians 1:18 which says, “He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be preeminent.” Additionally, it is in Matthew 28:18 that Jesus, after

His death and resurrection, declares, "All authority in Heaven and on earth has been given to me." Now this view attributes cosmic significance to the transaction which took place on the cross, for through it Christ purchased all, though He did not purchase all to save all.

Now whether you hold one of these positions or another one all together, what we can agree on is that Jesus will certainly judge all things. According to Acts 17:30-31 which says, "The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent, because He has fixed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom He has appointed; and of this He has given assurance to all by raising Him from the dead." (Acts 17:30-31 ESV) This passage is a call to repent and believe the Gospel.

That means unlike the false teachers in Peter's day, you submit to God and put your faith in His son Jesus Christ who is the promised Seed which will crush the serpent's head. He is the son of Abraham who blesses the nations and the greater son of David, whose Kingdom shall never end. He existed eternally as God and with God, who was born of a virgin and lived a sinless life, and He went to the Cross to take on the penalty of our sin and to take on God's wrath against it. He was raised on the third day, He ascended into Heaven, and He is coming again to judge all men, the living and the dead. He is sovereign over all creation and only those who repent and believe on Him as Lord shall inherit eternal life.

This is the Gospel and there is no other way to be saved. And if you refuse to submit to Christ, you shall be eternally condemned and damned by Him. Therefore, if you have not done so, today, repent and believe the Gospel and you too will inherit eternal life and avoid the judgment which is coming upon the world.

Now verse 2 says that many will follow after the false teacher's sensuality, and this temptation to immoral living would have been great in Peter's day as adultery and prostitution were common and promoted. Many of the churches that Peter was writing to had been saved from such things, and their rejection of adultery and prostitution would of led to social ostracism. A watered down version of Christianity that allowed for cultural compromise and accepted immoral practices would have been very appealing. This is the case even in our day as many inside the church approve of such things as abortion, homosexuality, and fornication. Peter reminds us that when we practice or condone immorality of any kind, we blaspheme the way of the Truth, and we blaspheme the name of our Holy God.

Verse 3 says the false teachers will exploit those who follow them, thus we see two characteristic traits of false teachers. They are sexually permissive and they are greedy. Additionally, they are bound for eternal destruction and to demonstrate this and now Peter uses several historical examples of God's judgment in the past.

2 Peter 2:4-10a, "For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment; if He did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes He condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if He rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard); then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority." (2 Peter 2:4-10a ESV)

Now Peter's appeal to history is designed to show his readers a pattern. He wants them to remember that throughout history God has consistently judged the wicked and preserved the righteous and He will do so once again in the future. His first example is that of the angels who sinned and are kept for judgment, and commentators differ here on which group of angels are in view. Some believe this as a reference to the prehistoric fall of the angels who join Satan in the rebellion against God. While others understand this to be talking about a group of specific angels who's unique sin led to their being chained and be kept for judgment. Jude 6 tells us "And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, He has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day".

Now the similar language in Jude 6 and here in 2 Peter 2 has led virtually all scholars to conclude that these passages are talking about the same group of angels. And if that is correct, these angels sinned by leaving their position of authority and proper dwelling. Some understand this as to describe what is recorded in Genesis 6 which says, "When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be

120 years.” The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.” (Genesis 6:1-4 ESV)

Now in this passage the sons of God left their proper dwelling and came into the daughters of man, meaning they had sexual union with human women. Now because of this, God bound these angels to chains, in chains, to await final judgment. Now if even one rejects the idea of angels procreating with human women, the fact remains that these angels rebelled against God and were judged just as the false teachers will be, which is Peter’s point.

Peter’s second example is found in verse 5 which says that God did not spare the ancient world but preserved Noah when He destroyed the ungodly. Now this example highlights God’s preservation of the righteous, Noah and his family. And Peter says only eight were saved, possibly to indicate that the righteous who are saved are usually few in number compared to the wicked who are judged. Noah is called a herald or “preacher of righteousness”, which means he declared the word of God to those who were around him, which is a hallmark of God’s people. Those who truly love God will love and proclaim His word.

Peter’s third example is that of Sodom and Gomorrah. And these cities are likely the most famous examples of judgment in all of Scriptures. And they were destroyed by fire for their rampant sexual immorality. More specifically, they were judged because of their homosexuality as seen in Jude 7 which says, “Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.” (Jude 1:7 ESV) Peter says these cities were left in ashes to emphasize their complete and utter destruction. Yet even amidst the great devastation of Sodom and Gomorrah, Peter reminds us that God did not judge the righteous along with the wicked, but spared Lot who was greatly distressed by the lawless deeds around him.

This is another trait of the righteous, they hate sin as Romans 12:9 commands saying, “Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.” Like Lot, our souls should be increasingly tormented by the lawlessness around us. Some who call themselves Christians refuse to acknowledge sin as sin and condone abominations such as homosexuality. A few denominations even confirm openly homosexual clergy and celebrate this as an alternative lifestyle. The righteous do not

condone or celebrate sin of any kind and as we grow in Christ we will be increasingly vexed by the sin in our own life as well as that of the lives of those around us.

Now after giving examples of judgment and preservation, Peter comes to his conclusion in verse 9 saying that God knows how to rescue the godly from trials and hold the unrighteous for judgment. Now the Greek word translated here “trials” could also be translated temptations and is likely an allusion to Matthew 6:13 where Jesus tells His disciples to pray to the Father, that they would be kept from temptation. Peter is not saying that God keeps Christians from trials, but rather that He preserves us through trials and keeps us ultimately from apostasy as He did for Noah and Lot.

The idea that God keeps the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, does not mean that God was presently punishing these false teachers. Rather it’s likely that they were experiencing great prosperity which made their teachings all the more enticing. Peter wants to remind his readers that despite present appearances, these false teachers would certainly be judged.

Verse 10 says that judgment will be poured out especially on those who indulge on the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Defiling passion is a reference to sexual immorality that characterized these false teachers. Additionally the examples Sodom and Gomorrah involved sexual sin and it is possible that the example of the angels did as well. The false teachers also despised authority, the authority of the apostles, and ultimately the authority of Jesus Christ. And all those who do not submit to Christ’s authority, will be destroyed.

Well this morning, I have two applications for us and the first is to test everything against the truth of God’s word. Acts 17:10-11, “The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.” (Acts 17:10-11 ESV)

Now throughout the history of the church, the Bereans have been seen in a positive light because they tested everything they heard against the Scriptures. And like manner we too should test everything against the word of God, regardless of where we hear it or who says it. Just because one’s church or family teaches something does not make it true, rather the Bible is the final arbiter of truth, thus we must be diligent to study and learn what it says.



1 John 4:1 commands us saying “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.” (1 John 4:1 ESV)

It is no secret today that there are many false teachers both inside and outside the church. And we know our greatest enemy Satan is the father of lies. Thus we should take this command seriously and test all things as Paul declares in 1 Thessalonians 5:21 saying “but test everything; hold fast what is good.”

And in addition to testing the teaching of others, we must also test our own beliefs to make sure they are in accord with the Word. Holding any belief because of tradition or personal preference is both lazy and foolish and can lead to great error. Whatever doctrines we believe, we must believe because we are persuaded that they are most in accord to what the Scriptures actually teach. Additionally we must be willing to abandon any doctrine or belief if we are persuaded from God’s word that it is not true. As we continually test all things against the Scriptures the more biblical our thinking and ultimately our living will become.

My second application is live in the light of our coming judgment. 2 Corinthians 5:10, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.” (2 Corinthians 5:10 ESV)

While our text this week focuses on the judgment of the wicked, it’s beneficial to remember that we, the children of God, will face a judgment as well. Now this judgment is not in regard to our salvation for we know that we are eternally secure in Christ. Rather this will be a judgment of the works we have done while on earth in our bodies. This is significant for if every work will be judged, every day is filled with numerous opportunities to reap eternal reward or suffer eternal loss. Since this judgment is future and we don’t see its effects in our daily life, we tend to forget about it almost entirely at times. It can become easy for us to drift through life chasing after temporal things such as riches, pleasure, possessions, and the like. However, we need to remember that this life is a fleeting and limited opportunity to store up treasures in heaven that will glorify God and benefit us for all eternity.

Our goal should be to serve Christ with all we are and all we have. For every gift we’ve been given, is given to glorify God. We should look at our time, money, careers, families, abilities,

and everything else we possess to consider how we can most magnify God, magnify His glory, and benefit His people.

Therefore let us be ones who run the race with endurance, spurred on by 1 Corinthians 9:24 which says, “Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it.” (1 Corinthians 9:24 ESV)

So this week we have seen that though false teachers will deceive many, their destruction is assured as God has demonstrated throughout all of history and will again demonstrate again in the future. He preserves the righteous and judges the wicked. Because of this let us hold fast to His word and live for His glory as we await the consummation of our salvation.

As we do, may we find hope, joy, and comfort in the glorious words of 1 Corinthians 15:58 which says, “Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.” (1 Corinthians 15:58 ESV) Amen? Amen!

Let’s pray. Heavenly Father we come before you this morning and we do confess that we do not prize as greatly the things of eternity as we should. Lord we confess that we are sinners and that we are in the flesh and that we seek after our own glory instead of yours, and Lord we ask that you would forgive us. And Lord we ask that you would use your means of grace, your Word, prayer, and fellowship to conform us to the image of Christ. Lord we ask that you would grow us in our desire for service, that you would fill us with gratitude, and that we would love you Lord above all things and that we would love our neighbor as ourselves. Lord we pray that your Spirit would in-fill us and conform us and change us to that end until that wonderful day when we see you finally in glory and we are with you forever. Oh Lord we long for that day and we pray that it would come quickly and that we would walk in righteousness every day until then. We ask this Lord in the name of our Great and Mighty Conquering King Jesus Christ, Amen.

**Sermon By**

Nick Coldagelli

**Delivered On**

January 1, 2012

**Delivered At**

Conquering King Fellowship  
Black Hawk Middle School  
1540 Deerwood Drive  
Eagan, MN 55122

**Service**

Sundays, 10:00am CST

**Contact**

ckfellowship.org  
651.797.8427