

"What do the False Teachers Believe?"

Part 1

2 Peter 3

Introduction: Tonight in our study of 2 Peter we have come to chapter 3 where Peter is now going to share with us the doctrine of the false teachers. He has written about the need for spiritual growth in chapter 1 and about the characteristics of false teachers in chapter 2. Now we are going to see two doctrines of the Word of God which they want to cast doubt upon. What we are going to see as we step into this chapter and we look at their doctrine is, that what they taught in Peter and Jude's day is the very false teaching that has been adopted by most of society and, sad to say, has also been adopted by many professing believers today.

I. Another Reminder

Notice 2 Peter 3:1

This is the second time that Peter pauses to tell his readers his purpose for writing. His desire was to remind his readers of that which they already knew. He was stirring up their minds to help them remember. This is something that all of us need from time to time. We can learn many Truths from the Word of God but if we are not in situations where we are applying them constantly then we all have the tendency to forget over time. It is great to study the Bible and learn things that we have not known before, but the study of the Bible is often reviewing what we already know so that we might be reminded. This is what gives spiritual strength and discernment to each of us.

Notice 2 Peter 3:2

Here is a very important verse. We are told here in this verse where we go for spiritual strength. There are many ideas which people have. Some will say that it is best to read the writings of others, and some say that we need to find some good seminars to attend. Both of these can be helpful but if we look closely at the verse neither of these are mentioned.

Notice 2 Peter 3:2 again.

"Words which were spoken before by the holy prophets" - This is the Old Testament.

"The commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour": - This is the New Testament.

This verse does something that is very important. It confirms the Old Testament writings as Scripture, and it confirms the New Testament writings as Scripture. This is where we

are to gather our knowledge and Truth. The Gnostics would come in and teach that the churches need secret knowledge, the knowledge which they possessed. But the truth is that as believers we need the knowledge from the Word of God.

I know we have looked at this many times, but I am going to follow Peter's lead and remind all of us that the means which God has provided for us to be equipped is the Word of God.

Ephesians 5:25-27

²⁵ *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;*

²⁶ *That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.*

²⁷ *That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

The way in which God cleanses the church/body of Jesus Christ is by the SPOKEN Word. The meaning of "WORD" here is "SPOKEN WORD." The church has been ordained by God as a training ground of the saints where the Word of God is to be given top priority so that the saints will be cleansed and equipped.

Ephesians 4:11-14

¹¹ *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;*

¹² *For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:*

¹³ *Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:*

¹⁴ *That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;*

Now there are believers who see themselves as strong and have no need to have the Word poured over them. For those individuals I point to several verses.

1 Corinthians 10:12

¹² *Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.*

Remember Paul's words to the elders at Ephesus?

Acts 20:28-30

²⁸ *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*

²⁹ *For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.*

³⁰ **Also of your own selves shall men arise**, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

The elders taught by Paul were in danger of deception. How much more are we in danger and how much more do we need the Word of God?

II. Their Attack on True Doctrine

Notice 2 Peter 3:3-6

There is one doctrine which the false teachers will attack. Surprisingly they are not going after the Doctrine of the Resurrection or the Doctrine of The Deity of Jesus Christ. The doctrine which they will attack is the Doctrine of the Return of Jesus Christ. They raise the question, "Where is the promise of His coming?" We will get to this doctrine and why they attack it in a moment but first I want to see what they do because this is important to understand.

Notice 2 Peter 3:3 again.

They will scoff or mock those who believe in the second coming of Jesus Christ. The Gnostics especially will go after this doctrine because they believe everything physical is bad and therefore, they do not believe in a bodily return of Jesus, nor do they believe in a physical earthly kingdom. Let us get to the ridicule and the scoffing. We can read over this very quickly and miss just how terrible this is if we are not careful.

If you have ever been mocked or ridiculed, you know how it makes you feel. This is an effective tool used by Satan to hinder believers from serving the Lord. When we are mocked or ridiculed there is the tendency to pull back from taking a stand especially if we are the only person standing in that circle. Let us notice some examples of the enemy using ridicule.

Ezra 4:2-5

² Then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither.

³ But Zerubbabel, and Jeshua, and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the LORD God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us.

⁴ Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building,

⁵ And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.

Nehemiah 4:1-3

But it came to pass, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews.

² And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? will they fortify themselves? will they sacrifice? will they make an end in a day? will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?

³ Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall.

Two times the enemy tried to frustrate the Jews with ridicule. Once when they were building the temple and when they were building the wall. These were difficult times to work through.

Notice the words of Nehemiah.

Nehemiah 6:9

⁹ For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.

If you are not grounded in the Word and you face ridicule, you will be set back and most likely you are going to pull back because no one likes to be ridiculed or mocked and it can be very difficult to deal with and work through.

Now let us get to the false teachers attack on the Doctrine of the Second coming.

Notice 2 Peter 3:4a

We will get to their reasoning in a few minutes but let us first look at what they are saying. They will deny the second coming of Jesus Christ which is something that the Bible is very clear about.

Zechariah 14:1-4

Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.

² *For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.*

³ *Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.*

⁴ *And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.*

Job 19:25-26

²⁵ *For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:*

²⁶ *And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God:*

Matthew 24:27-31

²⁷ *For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*

²⁸ *For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.*

²⁹ *Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:*

³⁰ *And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*

³¹ *And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

Revelation 19:11-15

¹¹ *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.*

¹² *His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.*

¹³ *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.*

¹⁴ *And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*

¹⁵ *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.*

These are just some of the passages that speak of the second coming of Jesus Christ. There are even professing believers who will ridicule us for even being concerned about the second coming of Jesus Christ.

Rick Warren in his book, "The Purpose Driven Life" says that if we are interested in prophecy then we have been distracted by Satan.

Notice the words of Mark Devor who is a theologian and the senior pastor of the Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., :

*"I think that millennial views need not be among those doctrines that divide us. . . I am suggesting that what you believe about the millennium—how you interpret these thousand years—is not something that it is necessary for us to agree upon in order to have a congregation together. Therefore for us to conclude that we must agree upon a certain view of alcohol, or a certain view of schooling, or a certain view of meat sacrificed to idols, or a certain view of the millennium in order to have fellowship together is, I think, not only unnecessary for the body of Christ, but it is therefore both unwarranted and **therefore condemned by scripture.** **So if you're a pastor and you're listening to me, you understand me correctly if you think I'm saying you are in sin if you lead your congregation to have a statement of faith that requires a particular millennial view.** I*

do not understand why that has to be a matter of uniformity in order to have Christian unity in a local congregation."

According to Mark Devor we would be in sin because we are pre-millennialists, meaning that we believe Jesus will return to the earth before the Millennial Kingdom.

Conclusion:

There is so much more for us to gather here in 2 Peter 3:4 which we shall get to next week. Let us never forget that in order to stay true to God we must be in His Word.

Psalm 119:105

¹⁰⁵ *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*