

Title: Terrorists in the Church: Description, Danger & Doom of False Teachers (Part7)

Passage: 2 Peter 2:10-11

Theme: The deadly danger of false teachers in the church

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{Read Passage}

3 major sections / brush strokes ==>

I. The Commencement of False Teachers (1-3)

II. The Condemnation of False Teachers (4-10a)

III. The Character of False Teachers (10b-22).

I. The Commencement of False Teachers (1-3)

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

. . . secretly introduce destructive heresies . . .

A related word is used in Gal. 2:4 where Paul speaks of ==>

. . . . false brethren who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty . . . in order to bring us into bondage.

The parallel passage in Jude's epistle ==> **For certain persons have crept in unnoticed . . .** (v. 4)

2. That's why we said that false teachers fall into 2 basic categories:

Those who are within t/CH and those who are outside of it.

Those w/i are t/most dangerous in that they are Trojan Horses Preach from Evang. pulpits // Teach in Evang. schools.

Stealth bombers; Fly under the radar.

But what they promote as truth claims are really ==>

... destructive heresies ...

Destructive because they twist and pervert t/truth of t/Gospel.

Destructive They destroy . . . souls.

These are men who turn t/doctrine of justification by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone into something else. They introduce works; they mock grace; they deny eternal punishment

... even denying the Master who bought them ...

Not a statement as to t/extent of t/atonement (theological issue).

1. Peter uses the word δεσποτης (despot)

a. δεσποτης is a word that implies ownership

Used of a legal authority. Used, for example, of a master's authority over his slaves.

b. Here it seems to be related to creation

It's used in contexts that emphasize God's role as Creator and Ruler of the world (Acts 4:24; Rev. 6:10).

... bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

1. God's judgment on those who misrepresent him will be sure

In fact, it's happening already. Word "bringing" is a present ptcp. Present tense indicating that it's in process.

E. Be Diligent: False teachers in the church will have a following (2a)

And many will follow their sensuality . . .

1. Never have false teachers lacked either a hearing or a following

I'm always struck by the hordes of people who will follow lies.

2. Note what is says here

. . . many will follow their SENSUALITY . . .

IOW - there's a sensualness about them. A lewdness.

. . . and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed;

G. Be Discerning: False teachers in the church are identifiable (3)

They can be IDd by those who know t/truth.

We see here in t/third verse ==>

A. Three basic traits

3 charact. that are true of them. These are further developed in t/rest of t/chapter.

First thing we see is ==>

1. They are greedy (3a)

. . . and in their greed they will exploit you

2. They are shrewd (opportunistic) (3b)

. . . they will exploit you . . .

ROM 16:18 For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

Lastly ==>

3. They are misleading (3c)

and in their greed they will exploit you with false words;

b. The picture you get here is one of deception

I am concerned about how easily even Xns can be led astray by t/slick words of those who in reality have no part in the Gospel of JC.

I. The Commencement of False Teachers (1-3)

II. The Condemnation of False Teachers (3b-9)

A. Their Judgment Declared (3b)

... their judgment from long ago is not idle and their destruction is not asleep.

1. We know that those of whom Peter writes denied judgment
{3:3-4}

a. This was a distinctive of Epicurean philosophy

Epicureanism had a strong influence t/o the West. Among t/Epicurean distinctives was that a delay in judgment = no judgment.

Idea that men do terrible things and get away with it all the time. Lightening doesn't come down from heaven. In fact, many of them seem to be blessed.

We look at false teachers today who fleece the sheep for millions. They drive around in fancy cars, eat at t/best restaurants, fly in private planes, live in luxurious homes.

b. Where's the judgment?

... their judgment from long ago is not idle and their destruction is not asleep.

Their judgment is from long ago, that is it's in t/Plan of God. Their destruction is not asleep, that is God's not dozing off. He's not forgotten.

Much like dominoes, a string of which ending at their destruction. The first has been "tipped" by God and it's only a matter of time.

A. Their Judgment Declared (3b)

B. Their Judgment Described (4-9)

in vv. 4-9 in terms of 3 vivid historic accounts—all from Genesis—of God's certain judgment of t/wicked.

a. Three Examples of God's Certain Judgment of the Unrighteous:

- 1) The fallen angels of Genesis 6
- 2) The Flood of Genesis 7
- 3) The destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19

(1) All given by Peter as evidence that t/false teachers cannot escape that which they deny: Judgment

We noted that this passage is framed by way of an extended "if" / "then" form of argument — "if this is true, then this is true" or "if this is true then this will happen."

Terms == "protasis" // "apodosis"

The protasis is the "if" & the apodosis is the "then".

To put it another way ==> v. 4 intro. a protasis that doesn't have an apodosis until v. 9.

4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned . . .

5 and [if He] did not spare the ancient world but protected Noah...

6 and if by reducing the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes He condemned them to ruin, making them an example . . .

7 and if He rescued righteous Lot . . .

**THEN the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation...
. . . and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment.**

III. The Character of False Teachers (10-22)

vv. 10-22 are filled w/vivid descriptions/characteristics of these 1st c. FTers. I would hasten to say there isn't a more gripping indictment against those who pervert God's Word in all of Scripture.

All kinds of false teachers & errorists on t/subject of religion. Theology can be as wide a field as philosophy or politics.

But Peter has in mind a certain type of heretic.

He's specifically targeting apostates — A. = someone who gave evidence of following X & believing t/Gospel of grace and subsequently departed from that.

An A. appeared to be converted. Like Judas they never belonged to t/company of t/redeemed & they prove that by means of their departure. (v. 22).

But not every A. continues in t/form of religion. Some leave t/faith and become atheists or agnostics; they exchange t/truth for t/lie of indifference & doubt.

Peter's referring to those who exchanged t/truth of God for a corrupt religious system. IOW - they have turned away from true doctrine in order to embrace false doctrine (v. 2 - destr. heresies").

You can be an apostate w/o being a heretic (someone who once professed X who no longer makes any effort to follow Him).

& you can be a heretic w/o being an apostate (someone who perverts t/truth of t/Gospel who never embraced true doctrine).

Those whom Peter describes here are both. They once claimed to know truth & now promote error).

Not just any error. Denied t/2nd Coming & future judgment.

They were specifically what we would call antinomian. Lawless. Licentious. Cheap-gracers. Let sin abound crowd.

Slaves of sin rather than slaves of righteousness.

That heads up our list in verse 10 ==>

A. They drink deeply at the well of sin (10a)

And especially those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires...

And especially ...

Brings us back to t/end of v. 9 {cite}

1st part of v. 10 is a hinge that connects these 2 sections (vv. 4-9 /10-22).

This describes men who are gluttons at the table of sin.

Nuance seems to be toward sexual sin (see that later in v. 14).

This is a lusting for perversion; a lusting after lust. It's a pursuit of t/depraved pleasures of sin. Desire to be defiled – there's no other area of sin & temp. where this has a greater grip than in t/arena of sexual sin. Those who pursue t/labyrinth of sexual deviancy find themselves in a sick, ever-widening maze of depravity.

A. They drink deeply at the well of sin (10a)

Secondly (also in v. 10) ==>

B. They despise authority (10b)

indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires AND DESPISE AUTHORITY...

1. What authority do they despise?

No doubt they despise all authority, after all, to be antinomian or lawless is to reject any and all constraint.

But t/word is singular which would lead me to believe that Peter has God in mind.

Remember 1 - They denied t/Master (despotes) who bought them.

While they professed to serve God they actually detested Him.

καταφρονεω = to look down on, despise, scorn).

2. Lesson here is that actions speak louder than words

"They may be energetic worshipers, but their actions betray them in that they have thrown off all authority from their lives." [Davids, 233-34]

Just because someone professes to "love Jesus" doesn't mean that they belong to Him. They may be sincere // put forth great effort in their cause. But if they pervert t/Gospel by what they believe & how they act, they fall into t/terrible category of Matthew 7:21-23 ==>

21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. 22 "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

a. Today we have those who promote what I call "lordless salvation"

This is the fatal error of believing that one can trust X as Savior while denying him as Lord. Corrupt fruit of "decisional regeneration"

"walked the aisle" or "said t/prayer" mentality that bifurcates X's role as Priest from who He is as King.

ISW it attempts to divide Xns into 2 classes: spiritual and carnal.

One of my fav. quotes - J. Boice ==>

"It is a tragic error. It is the idea--where did it ever come from?--that one can be a Christian without being a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. It reduces the gospel to the mere fact of Christ's having died for sinners, requires of sinners only that they acknowledge this by the barest intellectual assent, and then assures them of their eternal security when they may very well not be born again. This view bends faith beyond recognition--at least for those who know what the Bible says about faith--and promises a false peace to thousands who have given verbal assent to this reductionist Christianity but are not truly in God's family."

[James Montgomery Boice, from the Foreword to The Gospel According to Jesus, by John MacArthur]

We agree w/Spurgeon ==>

"Every true Christian pronounces this phrase, 'Jesus our Lord,' with the emphasis of unreservedness. We desire that Christ Jesus should be our Lord in everything, and Lord over every part of our being. . . . He who truly loves Jesus, and who knows that he is one of those who are redeemed by him, says with all his heart that Jesus is his Lord, his absolute Sovereign, his Despot, if that word be used in the sense of his having unlimited monarchy and supreme sway over the soul."

C. They are both arrogant and ignorant (10c-13a)

Again, that follows from t/fact that they despise t/Lordship of JC. Anyone who does that has to be both arrogant and ignorant.

Look at the way Peter describes them in the middle of v. 10 ==>

Bold [and] arrogant . . .

NAS "daring and self-willed"

ESV "bold and willful"

KJV "presumptuous and self-willed"

NIV translates it as I have [^]

1. The first word **τολμητης** is only found here in the NT

Describes a bold, audacious man. Someone who is brazen, headstrong, shameless.

One lexical source defined the word as that which ==>

". . . smacks of reckless daring that defies God and man." [NLK]

It's to boast a position of authority or ability that one has no right to claim.

We've all known people like that. They walk around acting like they're t/authority on everything. They can out-perform anyone; they're afraid of nothing.

They're presumptuous like t/rich man of Luke 12 who thinks he has it all not knowing that his life hangs by a delicate thread held by God's sov. hand.

Like those of whom Paul writes in Romans 3:18 – "There is no fear of God in their eyes."

2. The second word - **αυθαδης** comes from two words that mean to "delight in oneself"

Describes someone who is stubbornly self-serving and selfish. Arrogant. Perfect description found in t/godless man of Psalm 12.

2 They speak falsehood to one another; With flattering lips and with a double heart they speak. 4 Who have said, "With our tongue we will prevail; Our lips are our own; who is lord over us?"

3 May the LORD cut off all flattering lips, The tongue that speaks great things;

C. They are both arrogant and ignorant (10c-13a)

3. What does that look like?

How does this boldness & arrogance evidence itself?

...they do not tremble when they speak out against the glorious ones.

a. What does that mean?

I have probably spent 20 hours on this phrase alone.

"No completely satisfactory interpretation of this enigmatic sentence has so far been proposed." [JND Kelly]

What does Peter mean when he says [^] ??

b. Here's the million dollar question

Who are the "glorious ones" that the false teachers were speaking out against?

Angels? Men? Church leaders? Demons?

c. Phrase "glorious ones" (NAS "angelic majesties") comes from a single word in the original Greek text: Plural form of the noun $\delta\omicron\xi\alpha$

The key is how one interprets this noun. Gen. when someone conversant w/Koine sees it he thinks "glory" or "praise."

At t/end of every service we sing the "doxology" A song of glory or praise to God. "Doxology" comes from 2 Gk. nouns: $\delta\omicron\xi\alpha$ + $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$.

It's in the plural and rather than interpret it "glories" ==> "glorious ones."

NAS - angelic majesties; ESV & HCSB - the glorious ones; NIV - celestial beings; RSV - authority; KJV - government.

d. Options funnel down to 2 categories: Angelic Beings or Men

(1) Both of those categories can further be divided:

Angels: Fallen or Elect; Men: Political or Religious leaders?

1) The false teachers slander fallen angels (because they believe they won't share their fate or fall under their influence), but good angels, who are greater than fallen angels, aren't so brazen as to bring a judgment against the evil angels (in God's presence) as they know such judgment belongs to God.

2) The false teachers slander holy angels—perhaps those that, according to Jewish tradition, mediated the Law. Yet the holy angels, greater in power and might than the false teachers, are not so brazen as to bring a judgment against the false teachers (in God's presence) knowing that such judgment belongs to God.

3) The false teachers despise governmental authority and slander political leaders who are trying to rightfully lead as God intended. Yet the holy angels, greater in power and might, are not so brazen as to bring a judgment against these magistrates knowing that such judgment belongs only to God.

I don't think this is the right time and place to go into the strengths & weaknesses of all the views (probably lose most of you if I haven't already).

e. Suffice to say that I would go with the first option:

The glorious ones of v. 10 = fallen angels, or demons.

Largely because it fits in with the parallel in Jude. Look at that in a moment.

But if you're following me you're probably asking t/? I've wrestled w/the past few weeks: *"How can demons be called 'glorious ones'?"*

This is a word $\delta\omicron\xi\alpha$ that's used of God's glory. It doesn't seem right that Peter would use this word to refer to fallen angels.

(1) The word $\delta\omicron\xi\alpha$ was one that had a bit of elasticity to it

If you study t/evol. of t/word (words change thru time) you see that it comes from a group of words that relate to what someone thinks, or an opinion.

Also used in the sense of one's reputation (can see how those two ideas would relate - an opinion of someone = reputation).

Remember t/LXX? Heb. => When t/translators came across t/Heb. noun קְבוֹד they used t/Grk. noun $\delta\omicron\xi\alpha$.

קְבוֹד common word used in 189 vv. When it's used of God it's generally translated "glory" (and that's how the Grk. word $\delta\omicron\xi\alpha$ came to carry that meaning almost exclusively).

Sometimes the word כבוד is used of men. When it is it's gen. transl. "honor". Honor in the sense of 'importance,' 'weightiness.' Something or someone impressive, demanding of recognition.

"Gravitas."

Didn't necessitate that the one of whom it's used be honorable. It's used of a political leader (2 Chron. 17:5; 18:1) and of men in general (Psa. 8:5).

"Respect" that's due someone or something. In that sense, even wicked rulers deserve respect (Whitehouse; governor's mansion).

If I'm right and the Greek word δοξα - when used of men or angels, can carry that sense of respect or gravitas in a more neutral sense, then that would fit Peter's use of it here for fallen angels.

". . . even fallen angels retain the imprint of divine majesty, a show of their pre-Fall glory. In this sense, they are like sinful men—who still retain the divine image (Gen. 1:26; Ps. 8:5)—and post-Fall creation—which still evidences its God-given magnificence (1 Cor. 15:40-41). Thus there remains a transcendent amount of dignity for demons, even though they are fallen." [MacArthur, 98]

(2) Why would the false teachers slander or speak out against demons? I don't know.

Maybe they rejected their existence (fit their skeptical worldview - judgment & X's return).

Maybe they laughed at the idea that their own sin would make them cohorts with them.

Maybe they thought that demons were not to be respected; were to be taken lightly.

That would fit with their arrogance and boldness.

f. Other views start to break down when you look at verse 11

Whereas angels who are greater in might and power . . .

Greater in might and power than the demons.

. . . do not bring a slanderous judgment against them (demons) before the Lord.

(1) Fit best with what Jude writes (turn there - keep finger in 2 Peter)

7 Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example, in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

8 Yet in the same manner these men, also by dreaming, defile the flesh, and reject authority, and revile angelic majesties

9 But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you."

Here we have a holy angel (Michael the archangel) who didn't dare speak out against Satan, but rather left that to the Lord saying, "The Lord rebuke you."

The FTers of whom Peter writes are so bold and arrogant that they will something that even an archangel would not attempt.

...they do not tremble when they speak out against the glorious ones. Whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a slanderous judgment against them before the Lord.

See the connection?

". . . these curses are not returned in kind. Rather, the angels reserve any judgment against them to the Lord, even though they are more powerful than the demons." [Oecumenius, Commentary On 2 Peter]

They ought to tremble when they are faced with angelic beings, good or evil. "tremble" = τρέμω (tremor).

The common reaction of sinful men to the appearance of an angel is fear. Contrary to today's notions of warm and fluffies.

Matt. 28 an angel of t/Lord appeared and rolled away t/stone from X's tomb. Guards shook w/fear and became as dead.

Luke 1 an angel appears before Zacharias and he's terrified.

Luke 2 an angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds and they were terribly frightened.

Angels demand respect.

So do demons.

Stomping on demons mentality within Charismania.

Acts 19 13 But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place, attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches."
14 And seven sons of one Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this.
15 And the evil spirit answered and said to them, "I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?"
16 And the man, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them and subdued all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

If it's enough that Michael t/archangel left all rebuke in t/care of God, it's enough for me.

5 more points that will bring us to v. 16, save that for next time.

- D. They have no conscience (13b)
- E. They poison pure fellowship (13c)
- F. They are seducers (14a)
- G. They are greedy (14b)
- H. They follow in the way of Balaam (15-16)