

Seeking My King & His Kingdom

#30 A Call To Arms

Question: Luke 18:8 "But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

The beginning of the Church: Acts of the Apostles

The end of the Church Age: Acts of the Apostates

Peter's last letter was to warn Christians about false teachers and an internal attack of complacency and heresy. He exhorted them to reject all who would distort the truth.

A. II Pet. 2:1 But False Prophets Also Arose Among The People,...

Israel was constantly led away by false prophets.

Deut. 13:1-5 If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, ² and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, 'Let us go after other gods,' which you have not known, 'and let us serve them,' ³ you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. For the LORD your God is testing you, to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. ⁴ You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice, and you shall serve him and hold fast to him. ⁵ But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has taught rebellion against the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you out of the house of slavery, to make you leave the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. God exposed the sins of the false prophets. Jer. 14:14 The prophets prophesy lies in My name. I have not sent them, commanded them, not spoken to them; they prophesy to you a false vision, divination, a worthless thing, and the deceit of their heart."

Jer. 23 Jeremiah focused on 3 areas in lives of false prophets that were especially abhorrent.

1. Their Disgraceful Conduct [9-15] - committing adultery [includes worship of idols, turning from the true God to whom Israel was "married] and thronging the houses of prostitution.

Then they would go to the temple and pretend to worship Jehovah. [23:11], turning God's house into a den of thieves. [7:9-11].

2. Their Dishonest Message [16-32] - Jer. 23:16 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, Harken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the LORD.

a. They offered the people a false hope which they contrived in their own hearts.

"The Lord says: You will have peace...no harm will come to you." The frightened people grabbed onto the popular message. In reality, a storm was brewing.

b. They ministered under a false authority. [23:21-24] God had not spoken to them; yet they prophesied and ran with their message. They taught a popular "theology" that made it convenient to be religious and still live in sin. The people believed the lies about God.

What we believe about God determines how we live.

c. They spoke under a false inspiration. [25-32] Depended on dreams and delusions of the mind. Compared to the nourishing wheat of the Word, their messages were only straw.

Elijah had to contend with the prophets of Baal, because they promoted a pagan religion. The Jewish false prophets did the most damage because they claimed to speak for Jehovah God. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel exposed this counterfeit ministry, but the people followed the false prophets just the same. Why?

The religion of the false prophets was easy, comfortable and popular.

The fact the false prophets preached a false peace did not worry the people. [Jer. 6:14]

The message "tickled their ears."

The message of the true prophet: Jer. 23:29 Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?

3. Their Disrespectful Attitude: [33-40] The false prophets distorted the truth, yet called their messages the "oracles of the Lord." When one of the people or "prophets" asked Jeremiah, what is the sad news from the Lord today," he was told to reply, "What sad news? You are the sad news, for the Lord has cast you away!"

B. Parables of Matt. 13 teach about apostasy and false teachers in the interim Kingdom.

1. Tares have been planted by the enemy among the wheat while men slept. Matt. 13:24-30

2. Birds [Satan's emissaries] are nesting in the perverted mustard plant which grew into a terrible thing. Matt. 13:31-32

3. False brethren have stolen into the Church. - Leaven Gal. 2:4-5

Yet because of false brothers secretly brought in—who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might bring us into slavery—⁵ to them we did not yield in submission even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you.

4. The grace of God is being perverted into license to live an immoral life.

a. Lust is the motivation and agenda.

Titus 2:11-13 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, ¹² teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live temperately, righteously, and godly in this present world;¹³ waiting for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

5. Latter times; doctrines of demons - I Tim. 4:1

Note: Rejection of the Word of God occurs whenever it is displaced by tradition, custom, creed, loyalty to an organization

6. The Lordship of God and Jesus Christ is being denied.

C. Expect False Teachers To Arise From Within the Church as well as from Without

Acts 20:28-32 Paul's warning to the Ephesian Church: "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. I know that after my departure *savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.*

And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build [you] up and to give [you] the inheritance among all those who are sanctified"

D. II Peter 2:1 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

Peter strongly infers we should regard anyone who claims to be a "prophet" as a false prophet.

1. We should expect false TEACHERS to arise in our day. In II Peter 1:16-21, Peter teaches that apostles were raised up as God's instruments to record God's full and final revelation in Christ. They saw the power and glory of the resurrected Lord. Their writings were inspired by the Holy Spirit who caused them to remember all the Lord had taught while He was with them. Their prophecies, like OT prophets, are a "more sure word of prophecy."

2. Paul was the last of the prophets whose writings are inspired and authoritative. [3:14-16]

3. No further prophets are required.

Peter had prophesied they would come and described "The Teachers Hall of Shame."

Peter advised them to beware of heresies and to grow in their faith.

II Peter 2:1-22 - False Teachers & Destructive Doctrines - Dangers To Growing Christians

22 Attributes of False Teachers - v. 1-19

1. 2:1 They infiltrate the church. Secretly bring in alongside
2. 2:1 They come in secret.
3. 2:1 They deny the work of Jesus.
4. 2:2 They blaspheme the truth.
5. 2:3, 14 They are greedy and selfish.
6. 2:3 They use our words but not our dictionary. They use salvation, inspiration, etc.
7. 2:10 They follow the flesh.
8. 2:10 They are presumptuous and self-willed.
9. 2:10-11 They do not want to be under anyone's authority.
10. 2:12 They exhibit peace on the outside but are like untamed beasts on the inside.
11. 2:12 They speak more evil than good.
12. 2:12 They are ignorant.
13. 2:13 They love to deceive others.
14. 2:14 They are full of adultery. Seductive & Immoral
15. 2:14 They cannot cease from sinning.
16. 2:14 They prey on unstable new believers.
17. 2:15 They intentionally speak lies.
18. 2:15 They are out for monetary gain. Devise clever lies to obtain your money
19. 2:16, 18 They talk a lot but say nothing.
20. 2:17 They make grandiose promises but never deliver.
21. 2:18 They use alluring thoughts to provoke attention from their audience.
22. 2:19 They make promises they cannot deliver.

Peter's Concerns: 1. False teachers were promoting immoral ungodly living by denying that Christ was really going to return to judge sin.

2. They sought to lure the churches into their carnal ways.

Apostate teachers lure people away from the Word of God and into "deeper experiences" that are contrary to the Word of God.

Feigned words = plastic = words that can be twisted to mean what you want - They use our vocabulary, but do not use our dictionary. Salvation does not mean the same thing to them.

Satan and his ministers are liars. They use the Bible, not to enlighten, but to deceive. Gen. 3:1-6

- Question God's Word Yea, hath God said?
- Deny God's Word You shall not surely die.
- Substitute You shall be as gods.

Consider: Apostate teachers are not innocently ignorant of the Word. They know the truth but deliberately reject it.

3. Focus on Scriptures given by God rather than listening to the "private interpretation" of false teachers who refuse to believe that God will judge wickedness.

4. Grow and become strong in your faith so you can detect and combat the spreading apostasy.

5. He strongly stressed the authenticity of the Word of God and the sure return of the Lord Jesus.

Denial Of The 2nd Coming > II Pet. 3:3-4 knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, ⁴ and saying, "Where is the promise of His Coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of creation."

Note: Peter assures us any delay in Christ's return does not show a failure regarding His promises. God is giving man time so that all who will should come to repentance. (II Pet. 3:9)

II Pet. 2:2 And Many Shall Follow their Pernicious Ways, by reason of whom The Way Of Truth Shall Be Blasphemed;

Pernicious Ways: Way to Destruction

- a. False teachers are driven by their own lusts rather than led by the Holy Spirit.
- b. Greed motivates their ministry - not grace.
- c. They do not seek to give sacrificially to others. They seek to gain.
- d. They do not seek to edify others but to exploit them.
- e. They are self-centered, self-serving and self-indulgent. They are LOST.

The Way Of Truth Shall Be Blasphemed:

- a. He is sovereign; preexistent Creator of ALL things;
- b. He is the Lord of all true believers [Acts 10:36; Rom. 14:9]
- c. "Christ": Messiah, the Anointed One of OT Prophecy

Peter's Key word: Knowledge. It occurs at least 13 times in the Book of II Peter.

Key Verses: II Pet. 1:3-4 By His divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know Him, the One who called us to Himself by means of His marvelous glory and excellence. ⁴ And because of His glory and excellence,

He has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share His divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires.

II Peter 3:18: But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever! Amen."

Consider: False teaching does not always announce its presence. It often comes cleverly disguised, containing just enough of the truth to captivate the unwary Christian.

Every New Testament book except Philemon contains warnings about false teaching.

Jude is the only book given entirely to the great apostasy.

Jude sounds the trumpet and issues a "call to arms" - Apostates are on the scene!

Our Christian life is a battlefield. The watchmen dare not go to sleep.

Jude 1:3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. [This faith embodies the complete body of Christian doctrine taught by Christ, later passed on to the apostles.]

Jude's desire was to write of the marvelous salvation God gives us in Jesus Christ, but he was led to write about the battle against the forces of evil. The enemy is in the field.

A. Contend Earnestly = struggle for, to contend with an adversary; struggle will be continuous

To 'contend earnestly for' (*epagonizesthai*) appears only here in the New Testament.

Involved is the thought of the expenditure of all one's energy in order to prevail.

Piper: The worst enemies of Christian doctrine are professing Christians who do not hold to the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

"The final argument for faith in the world is not the argument of words, but the argument of life."

Phil. 1:27 Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.

I Cor. 16:13 Be watchful, stand firm in the faith,

Acts 14:22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith,

Spurgeon: "Let us be banded together as one man; let us contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; let us pray with fervor, live in holiness, let us preach constantly, and preach with fire, and let us so live that we may impress our age and leave our footprints on the sands of time."

B. The Threat Is Real!

I Pet. 5:8-9a Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour: Resist him, steadfast in your faith,

Jude 1:4 For certain people have crept in unnoticed [settled alongside of] who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ..

1. They are ungodly = destitute of reverential awe toward God

a. II Tim. 3:5 having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power.

2. They were deceitful = crept in unawares [only used in Jude]

slip in sideways; come in stealthily; sneak in; hard to detect

a. They do not throw out the truth immediately. They lay their false teaching alongside the truth and give the impression they believe in the fundamentals of the faith.

Ultimately, they remove the true doctrine and leave their false doctrine in place.

b. They do not proclaim: I made a false profession of faith. They rise up as those who are one with us in Christ, yet they come as "wolves in sheep's clothing." [Matt. 7:15]

c. Do not attempt to distinguish false teachers from true on the basis of their ability to perform mighty works. A true prophet need not perform great works. John the Baptist was a prophet without mighty works, but he had mighty words. [John 10:41]

d. His doctrine must conform to the Word of God.

A. W. Tozer "So skilled is error at imitating truth, that the two are constantly being mistaken for each another. It takes a sharp eye these days to know which brother is Cain and which is Abel."

3. They were enemies of God's grace.

a. Attempt to change the doctrine and "turn the grace of God into lasciviousness"

b. Defiled God's people by teaching them that God's grace permitted them to practice their sin.

R. C. Lensky "The worst forms of wickedness consist in perversions of the truth."

Apostates, like the cultists, use the Word of God to promote and defend their false doctrines.

They seduce young, immature Christians who have not yet been grounded in the Scriptures.

Every soldier of the cross needs to go through "basic training" so he knows how to use the weapons of spiritual warfare. [II Cor. 10:4-5; II Tim. 2:3-4]

4. They DENIED God's truth that Jesus Christ is eternal God come in the flesh.

a. Denial of the Trinity > I John 2:22-23 Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. ²³ Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

b. Denial of the Incarnation > I John 4:2-3 By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, ³ and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the *spirit* of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

II John 1:7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

c. Deny the Gospel of Christ

Rom. 1:16

d. Deny the transforming power and new life

Phil. 3:10

e. Deny God's wrath against sin

f. They deny the inspiration of the Bible, the sinfulness of man, the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ on the cross, salvation by grace through faith alone and the reality of eternal judgment.

g. They teach damnable heresies which deny the Person of Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross. This is a matter of life and death! Difference between salvation and condemnation

If they can do away with His deity they can destroy all Christian truth; Christianity is Christ.

h. Teach the universal brotherhood of man vs.

John 8:44 You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name,

Gal. 3:26 For ye are all sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Paul, in a circular, low-ceilinged, underground room of rock where prisoners were lowered in on a rope, wrote his last words.

II Tim. 1:14 Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.

The early Christians were under tremendous attack in AD 64. A fire broke out in Rome that raged for 6 days and 7 nights, totally destroying a great part of the city. Emperor Nero falsely charged the Christians and punished them with "the most exquisite tortures."

They were covered with the hides of wild beasts and worried to death by dogs, or nailed to crosses, or set fire to. When the day ended, they were burned to serve for nocturnal lights. In the midst of this extreme physical persecution, Paul warned of a pervasive godlessness coming.

II Tim. 3:1-4 But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God

II Tim. 4:3-4 The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.

Paul does not tell Timothy to look forward to any new movements of the Spirit, any fresh word from God, or any insider's spiritual fad. He points not to the future, but rather to the past.

Paul's answer: II Tim. 3:14-17 You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the *sacred writings* which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. *All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.*

II Tim. 4:1-2, 5 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His Kingdom: *Preach the Word.* Be ready in season and out of season. Reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with great patience and instruction. Be sober in all things. Endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry"

Pass The Baton: II Tim. 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

Continue In The Truth Already Revealed & Hand It Down

Will I Be Able To Say With Paul: I Have Fought The Good Fight, I Have Kept The Faith