

## Metro Women's Bible Study **2 Peter 2:12-22**

### **Lesson 5**

*Natural brute beasts, spots and blemishes, accursed children, wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, slaves of corruption...* Just a few phrases Peter used to describe those whose goal is to deceive and entrap those in the church. Could you spot them? Could you identify their teachings for the lies that they are? Peter is severely warning the church that there are those sent to corrupt us. May this lesson cause you to take heed and equip yourself, so as to not be *unstable* or *entangled*.

### **DAY ONE: Read 2 Peter 2:12-22**

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet and another Bible translation or paraphrase.
2. 2 Peter 2:12-22 has been divided into 2 sections. List below the subject(s) covered in each section.

**Verses 12-17**

**Verses 18-22**

**OPTIONAL:** At the right-hand side of the same chart are columns labeled **Key Word** and **Symbol**. They have been provided for you to record the key words and the symbol you have chosen to represent each one. Record the key words listed below and their symbols on the chart.

**Used in previous lessons:** *Jesus*

**New to this lesson:** *they* (as it refers to false teachers)

**OPTIONAL:** Now, using the symbols you have chosen, mark each of the key words each time they are used in 2 Peter 2:12-21. Remember, as you mark the word *Jesus*, to mark any personal pronouns that refer to Him. Also, as you mark the word *they*, mark any personal pronouns that refer to the false teachers such as *them* and *those*.

3. Peter used the contrasting term **but** three times (verses 12, 16, and 22). Choose one of them and record the contrast that Peter made.
4. Make a list of **six** things you have learned about false teachers/prophets from 2 Peter Chapter 1 & Chapter 2.

## **DAY TWO & THREE : Read 2 Peter 2:12-16**

1. Read and write out the vivid description of false teachers in 2 Peter 2:12.

a. The phrase, *natural brute beasts*, has been defined as “natural animals without reason”. Like “natural animals without reason”, what are they *made to be* and what will be their end? See v.12-13.

b. Compare the definition from the above question with that of Jude 1:10. How are these verses similar?

c. What do they *speaking evil of*?

2. Verse 12 reads, “<sup>12</sup>But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand.” Look up the word *speaking evil & do not understand* in your Concordance and write out the English translation.

**Speak evil-**

**Understand-**

3. Someone said their self assurance or presumption is matched only by their ignorance. Their ignorance is never more glaring than when they criticize the Bible. Because they are devoid of divine life, they are utterly unable to understand the words, ways, and works of God. What do you learn from 1 Corinthians 2:14 that back this up?

**1 Corinthians 2:14** “<sup>14</sup>But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.”

**False teachers criticize what they don't understand. They haven't got the faintest idea of what truth is, which makes trying to communicate with them very difficult. False teachers are quick to condemn things that they are spiritually blind to. They can't even understand the things they're condemning.**

a. Verse 12 continues to say, “*and will utterly perish in their own corruption.*” Look up the word *utterly perish* in your Concordance and write out the English translation.

**Utterly perish-**

**Warren Wiersbe says about verse 12, “These “brute beasts” are destined for destruction, a truth Peter mentioned often in 2 Peter 2:3-4, 9, 12, 17 & 20. As they seek to destroy the faith, they themselves shall be destroyed. They will be “corrupted in their own corruption.” Their very nature will drag them down into destruction, like the pig returning to the mire and the dog to its vomit (2Pe 2:22). Unfortunately, before that event takes place, these people can do a great deal of moral and spiritual damage.”**

4. How does the last sentence of the above quote and Verse 12 pose as a warning to you and the Church?

5. Using 2 Peter 2:13, underline or highlight what these false teachers do **in the day time** and **while they feast with you**. <sup>13</sup>*and will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you.*"

a. How does the last sentence of verse 13 affect you?

**MacDonald writes, "These people are so shameless and abandoned that they carry on their sinful activities in full daylight. Most men wait for the cover of darkness to carouse. The false teachers have cast off the restraints that usually hide sin in the shadows."**

**6. Reveling** means to wrongfully enjoy something, to carouse or to openly indulge in. The false prophets habitual lifestyle was living luxuriously and so Peter cannot resist calling them what they are...dirt spots and scabs. They are opposite to the character of Christ who redeemed us with His precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless and what the Bride of Christ should look like. Read Ephesians 5:27 below. Notice the contrast between the bride of Christ and the false prophets described. As you look into the mirror of your heart, do you see yourself as this bride being transformed? Share an area that the Lord is working on in your life.

**Ephesians 5:27** <sup>27</sup>*that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish."*

7. Focus on the opening phrases of 2 Peter 2:14. Imagine how awful it would be to be under the influence of a person like this who *has eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls*. What is an **adulteress**? Look it up in your dictionary and write out the definition.

a. How would you define spiritual Adultery from the following passages?

**James 4:4** *"You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."*

**Ezekiel 6:9-10** *"Then those of you who escape will remember Me among the nations where they are carried captive, because I was crushed by their adulterous heart which has departed from Me, and by their eyes which play the harlot after their idols; they will loathe themselves for the evils which they committed in all their abominations. 10 And they shall know that I am the LORD; I have not said in vain that I would bring this calamity upon them."*

b. Peter is sparing no "punches" to expose these evil men! By the way this pattern of *"never cease from sin"* marks them as those who are not born of God. How could we say this? See 1 John 3:9 to back this up.

**1 John 3:9**

8. Define the words: **enticing & unstable** by looking this up in your Concordance and writing out the English translation.

**Enticing- (Beguiling)**

**Unstable-**

a. This image of enticing and individual is an image that would readily occur to Peter with his background as a fisherman. The picture is of men who are skilled at attracting the unstable souls by artfully or skillfully setting the trap with sensual bait that arouses their desires. James uses this same word **Deleazo** in James 1:14-15. What do you learn from this passage?

**James 1:14-15**

**Remember that the "enticement" always has a bait. And so these false teachers dangle the "baited lure" in front of their unsteady victims causing them to look away from the Lord Jesus and His Word.**

9. Rather than be *unstable victims* falling prey to these false teachers & doctrines, we are called to be stable believers. Read Psalm 1:1-4. What do you learn from this passage that will help you have a stable walk?

**Psalm 1:1-4** *"Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. <sup>3</sup> He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper."*

a. According to this passage what are the promises for those who have a stable walk?

b. What is the contrast between the descriptions of the stable man from Psalm 1:1-4 and the unstable man Paul talks about in Ephesians 4:14?

**Ephesians 4:14**

10. Thoughtfully print the root problem of these false teachers as recorded in 2 Peter 2:15.

11. Whose way did these false teachers follow?

a. Record the sin of Balaam declared in 2 Peter 2:15c.

12. The *madness* of Balaam was restrained when God *rebuked* him *for his iniquity*. In what way did the Lord do this? 2 Peter 2:16

**Challenge:** Read the account of Balaam in Numbers 22:2-34 & 31:16. Jot down any additional interesting information you notice.

**DAY FOUR: Read 2 Peter 2:17-19**

1. Write the phrases of 2 Peter 2:17 Peter uses to depict the terrible emptiness and instability of these deceivers

2. How does Jude 1:12-13 intensify this picture?

b. What do Peter and Jude say will be their end?

3. Write 2 Peter 2:18 phrase by phrase.

a. Underline the method these false teachers use to *allure* the believers.

**As in the propagation of all heresy, human speech is the weapon that false teachers aim at their targets. These teachers are eloquent promoters of their doctrines. They know how to impress people with their vocabulary using “inflated words that say nothing” (literal translation).”**

**\*\*Do not be impressed with religious oratory. Paul the greatest theologian (other than Jesus) preached to express and not to impress. He knew the difference between communication and manipulation.**

b. In your own words briefly describe who these false teachers *allure*.

4. What is the warning of Ephesians 4:14 in regards to false teachers/false

a. What does this passage imply about the one who is deceived?

5. From 2 Peter 2:19, what do the false teachers *promise*?

a. How does this verse reveal their *promise of liberty* to be empty?

**Freedom** isn't found in what Jesus can give us, but only in Jesus Himself. Those who live by God's truth enter into more and more **freedom**, but those who live by the flesh experience more and more **bondage**, until the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. See 2 Peter 2:20

6. What is the promise of liberty in Romans 6:23 & and what is the end for the false teachers?

7. Write the warning of 2 Peter 2:19b in your own words.

**Read the various Bible translations of verse 19.**

**ET:** Although these false teachers promise such people freedom, they themselves are enslaved to immorality. For whatever a person succumbs to, to that he is enslaved. (NET Bible)

**NJB:** They may promise freedom but are themselves slaves to corruption; because if anyone lets himself be dominated by anything, then he is a slave to it; (NJB)

**NLT:** They promise freedom, but they themselves are slaves to sin and corruption. For you are a slave to whatever controls you. (NLT - Tyndale House)

**Phillips:** They promise them liberty. Liberty! - when they themselves are bound hand and foot to utter depravity. For a man is the slave of whatever masters him. (Phillips: Touchstone)

### **DAY FIVE: Read 2 Peter 2:20-22**

1. Some Bible expositors believe that 2 Peter 2:20-22 pertains to those people who have been deceived by false teachers; others believe these verses refer to the false teachers. Either way they are applicable to all. Look at 2 Peter 2:20-21 below.

**2 Peter 2:20-21** <sup>20</sup>For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. <sup>21</sup>For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.”

a. Describe the tragic regression from the above passage.

2. These people, despite their profession of salvation, have become **entangled** and **overcome** by *the pollutions of the world*. Look up the word entangled in your Concordance and write out the English translation.

#### **Entangled-**

**These people who have become entangled have also been overcome by the pollutions of the world. The word overcome means: to be less or inferior; to be vanquished, as in a military battle alluding to the ancient law of war in which those who were defeated were taken captive by the conquerors and became their servants.**

3. The above statement is a powerful picture. The person who is overcome by his lusts is characterized as being the slave of those lusts. How does Romans 6:16 best describe this? Underline what you learn.

**Romans 6:16-18** <sup>16</sup>Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness? <sup>17</sup>But God be thanked that *though* you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. <sup>18</sup>And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”

4. Peter concludes Verse 20 by saying, “*The latter end is worse for them than the beginning.*” What warning can we draw from this?

a. Think for a moment what it means for a believer to turn from *the way of righteousness* and from *the holy commandment*. What dangerous effect could this have on that person?

5. 2 Peter 2:22 concludes this chapter with two repulsive illustrations. What are they?

a. Why do you think Peter used them?

6. How should the truth of 2 Peter 2:22 be a deterrent to all who might be entertaining anything that borders on heresy?

Peter is not teaching that God's elect can lose their salvation. He is definitely teaching that church members can be lost and people who make outward professions of faith and even begin to clean up their lives can turn away from Christ and be lost."

In verse 22 he explains to us in a proverb that we should not be overly surprised at this: dogs characteristically return to their vomit; and no matter how clean you make a pig on the outside, if it is still a pig it will return to the mire. In other words, those who leave the way of righteousness, never to return, simply show that their inner nature had never been changed. This was Peter's way of saying what 1John 2:19 says, ***"They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that it might be plain that they are all not of us."***

Jesus said in Mt 10:22, ***"He who endures to the end will be saved"*** And Hebrews 3:14 puts it, ***"We share in Christ if we hold our first confidence firm to the end"***

Paul says in 1 Cor 15:1,2, ***"I preached to you the gospel which you received, in which you stand, by which you are saved, if you hold it fast"***

**\*\***The whole New Testament is agreed: there is no salvation apart from persevering faith. And persevering faith always works itself out in the way of righteousness. Therefore to abandon the way of righteousness is to exclude oneself from salvation."

### **DAY SIX: Review 2 Peter 2:12-22**

1. What are some false teachings that you have been exposed to in your life?

a. How did you eventually recognize them as false?

b. In what ways has knowing God's Word helped you to identify false teachings?

2. What is the most important truth you have learned from this lesson?

a. In what way has this study strengthened your desire to grow in the *grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*?

3. Record in your Worksheets what you have learned about **"Truths about God, Truths about Jesus, Truths about the Holy Spirit, Truths about the Believer, and Instructions."**

**What is the antidote for the poison of these sinister deceivers?** **Matthew Henry** has some good advice Be therefore always upon your guard, maintain a godly jealousy of yourselves, search the scriptures, pray for the Spirit to instruct and establish you in the truth, walk humbly with God, and watch against every thing that may provoke him to give you up to a reprobate mind, that you may not be taken with the fair and specious pretences of these false teachers, who promise liberty to all who will hearken to them, not true Christian liberty for the service of God, but a licentiousness in sin, to follow the devices and desires of their own hearts