

MOST WANTED
2 PETER 2:1-3 / 3-4-20 / WED

I. WHO ARE THESE FALSE TEACHERS?

A. Peter appears to say they are coming, but not yet there—2:1 **“There will be false teachers.”**

1. Later, though, he says they are already there—2:13a (2:15, 2:17, 3:5).

2 Peter 2:13a

They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done...

2. Peter says they come from within the church rather than from outside it—2:1 **“among you”**.
3. Paul gave a similar warning to the church at Ephesus—Acts 20:29-30.

B. Peter doesn't identify specifically who these false teachers are.

1. Some think they were the **“Arians”** so named after a Christian leader in Alexandria Egypt (A.D. 256-336).
 - a. They denied the Trinity believing that Jesus was created by God the Father and therefore subordinate to Him.
 - b. They were condemned at the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325.
2. Some think they were the **“Gnostics”**.
 - a. Gnosis is the Greek word for knowledge.
 - b. Gnostics claimed that salvation didn't come by knowledge found in Scripture but by a special knowledge coming from a mystical experience with Jesus.
 - c. They believed the body was evil while the spirit or soul was holy. They also believed that whatever was done in the body, even sin, did not impact or effect the spirit or soul.
 - d. Peter may be referring to this gnostic belief in verse 2 **“Many will follow their depraved conduct.”**
3. We really can't be sure which heretical sect or group Peter may have been referring to.

II. WHAT DO THESE FALSE TEACHERS TEACH?

- A. They teach “**destructive heresies**”—**2:1**. Their teaching seeks to destroy Christian orthodox beliefs rooted in the Bible.
- B. Peter gives an example of their heresy as denying that Jesus is Lord—**2:1** “**Even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them**”.
- C. The result of their false teaching is immoral conduct **2:2**--“**Many will follow their depraved conduct.**”
- D. Another result is to cast a bad reputation on Christianity—**2:2** “**and will bring the way of truth into disrepute.**”
- E. One method they use is to spread untrue stories—**2:2** “**These teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories.**”
- F. They spread these stories “secretly”—**2:2**.
- G. Their motive is self-serving—**2:3** “**In their greed.**”.

III. WHAT AWAITS THESE FALSE TEACHERS?

- A. They will be judged by God—**2:1** “**bringing swift destruction on themselves.**”
- B. They will also be condemned by God—**2:3** “**Their condemnation has long been hanging over them.**”
- C. Their destruction or judgment is coming—**2:3** “**Their destruction has not been sleeping.**”