

Title: Terrorists in the Church: Description, Danger & Doom of False Teachers (Part2)

Passage: 2 Peter 2:1b

Theme: The deadly danger of false teachers in the church

Number: 08112Pe2.1b(21)

Date: August 14, 2011

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**{{Read Passage}}**

False teachers are like death and taxes. Like taxes they will always be there; but like looming death, they will all come to an end.

Terrorists in the church.

The English writer Daniel Defoe (author of Robinson Crusoe) once quipped in that regard:

Whenever God erects a house of prayer, the Devil always builds a chapel there.

Satan ever lives to counterfeit that which God is building.

That follows the flow of thought from chapter 1 to chapt. 2.

There's what's called a "Chiastic structure" that straddles the 2 chapters. This is something we've talked about before (1 Peter).

A Chiasm is a literary phenomenon whereby you have ideas in a passage that directly parallel each other.

Comes from the Greek letter Chi which looks like an X. If you take away the back side of the X you have what looks like a greater-than sign.

Psalms are filled with this sort of thing, some of them quite elaborate.

For sake of illustration ==>

**God is great**

**Let the angels praise him in heaven**

**Let men praise him on earth**

**God is great**

That's a very simple chiastic pattern. A B B A.

There seems to be a similar chiasm here in 2 Peter.

A NT Apostles (1:16-18)

B OT Prophets (1:19-21)

B OT False Prophets (2:1a)

A NT False Teachers (2:1b)

Literary device or phenomenon that illustrates t/flow of thought. Sometimes it's there to emphasize a central point (not true here).

But it does show how NT Apostles & OT prophets complement ea. another; & how OT false prophets & NT false teachers stand in parallel.

Chapter one is mainly an encouragement to avail ourselves of God's power to lead lives of godliness and love. Chapter two is mainly a warning against the destruction that will befall those who don't avail themselves of this power. If chapter one is the carrot, chapter two is the crack of the whip over our heads. There are no commands, no admonitions, no imperatives in chapter two; just pure, terrifying description of what will happen to those who fall prey to the false teachers in the church. [John Piper]

We've noted that t/entirely of chapter 2 is devoted to false teachers in t/CH. ==>

- I. The Commencement of False Teachers (1-3)
- II. The Condemnation of False Teachers (4-10a)
- III. The Character of False Teachers (10b-22)

Last week we began in v. 1 with ==>

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

A. Be Aware: False teachers in the church parallel the false prophets of Israel (1a) (chiasm)

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

B. Be Alert: False teachers in the church operate covertly (1b)

Note that they ==>

**. . . secretly introduce destructive heresies . . .**

Jude 4 **For certain persons have crept in unnoticed . . .**

We said that false teachers fall into 2 basic categories: Those who are within t/CH and those who are outside of it.

False teachers o/s of t/CH are easy to ID. They make no bones about t/fact they are outsiders. They have their own places of worship. They don't pretend to be Evangelicals (some don't even pretend to be Xn).

What's more sinister are false teachers from within. They are Trojan Horses who make their way into t/CH. They would pretend to be evangelical.

Might be a professor at a supposed Xn school like Francis Beckwith at Baylor University. Francis Beckwith who reverted back to Roman Catholicism a few years ago and wrote a book about it entitled "Return to Rome: Confessions of an Evangelical Catholic."

If that isn't a misnomer I don't know what is. We are those who are evangelical catholics (simply means that we uphold t/Gospel of JC and are part of t/universal church of which Christ is t/Head).

***A. Be Aware: False teachers in the church parallel the false prophets of Israel (1a)***

Don't be surprised when you encounter them. Just as Israel had her false prophets, t/CH will have her false teachers.

***B. Be Alert: False teachers in the church operate covertly (1b)***

These men may be very sincere. They can be very convincing. As we will see in v. 3 they use false words. They're into sophistry. They're slick. Remember, Satan doesn't parade around in a red suit wearing horns carrying a pitch-fork.

I have a small coin collection. Nothing much, really. But I have a few Morgan silver dollars that are worth a little. I also have 2 replicas that would be worth a whole lot of money if they were real. They are amazing reproductions. They weigh the same // look // even look old // patina. But they are basically worthless. I can hold a genuine and t/reproduction side-by-side and I can't hardly tell t/difference.

That's how Satan works. He's a master counterfeiter.

What does Paul tell us in 2 Cor. chap. 11==>

13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.14 And no wonder, for even Satan

disguises himself as an angel of light.<sup>15</sup> Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their deeds.

This is why we need to be Aware and be Alert. This is also why we need to be Discerning (our last point). To be discerning we need to be good students of God's Word. Doctrine matters.

Thirdly . . . .

**C. Be Separate: False teachers in the church deny God (1c)**

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

Change in the o/l from last week. I had "FTITC deny X" I changed it to t/more generic "God" because I'm not at all certain that Peter has JC in mind when he uses t/word "Master." He may be referring to the Father, not the Son.

At any rate ==>

**1. Here we are introduced to 2 huge theological issues that arise out of this statement by Peter**

Peter, speaking of apostates who were destined for destruction / under t/wrath of God / says that they were guilty of ==>

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

**a. Here are t/2 issues:**

- 1) Can genuine believers commit apostasy? (can a true Xn be finally lost and go to hell).
- 2) What does this say, if anything, as to the extent of the atonement? (is this saying that JC really redeemed them?).

"How can someone perish whom Christ has redeemed? How were they redeemed if they could perish?"

(1) First issue is easy to address

Can a genuine believer become an apostate, fall under God's eternal wrath, and be forever lost? No! We talked about that last time.

(2) Second issue isn't so easy {restate}

(a) Part of the problem is that there are several things we have to unwind

- \* Who is the "Master" (The Father or the Son)?
- \* What does it mean that they were "bought"? Does this mean they were redeemed? If so, in what sense were they redeemed?
- \* Is this an issue that relates to the atonement? Is this saying that X atoned for their sins?

2. We noted that there are no less than 6 different viewpoints on the specific interpretation of these 7 words in the middle of v. 1

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

a. Views Chart . . . .

(1) Go over the first 4 views . . . .

You are going to have to put on your thinking caps (what does that mean?). I'm probably going to lose some of you here. I know some like me eat and drink this stuff. There are others who's mantra is "Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so" – that's enough theology for them. If that's you, bear with the rest of us for a few minutes. Also going to be a challenge for me to communicate this.....

## Interpretational Options in 2 Peter 2:1

*even denying the Master who bought them*

<p>The Apostates were once Genuine Christians *</p>	<p>The Apostates were never Genuine Christians</p>				
<p><i>They were atoned for and redeemed by Christ.</i></p>	<p><i>This was their own confession</i></p>	<p><i>This was t h e charitable observation of others in the church</i></p>	<p><i>They were t r u l y redeemed but not justified</i></p>	<p><i>They were atoned for but not redeemed</i></p>	<p><i>God purchased them (owned them) as He did Israel (cf. Gen. 32:6; 2 Sam. 7:23)</i></p>
<p>T h e y forfeited t h e i r salvation by means of their apostasy.</p>	<p>This was their claim even though it w a s n ' t grounded in reality.</p>	<p>This was how others in the church viewed them. Love demands that we give others the "benefit of the doubt" when it comes to t h e i r salvation.</p>	<p>They were redeemed in the sense that Christ died for t h e m , purchasing them out of the slave market of s i n . However, they never appropriated the gift by faith and were saved.</p>	<p>There are general benefits of Christ's death that all men receive while the specific benefit of redemption is limited to the elect.</p>	<p>Just as Israel was bought by God, the false teachers, who paralleled the false prophets of Israel, were His to do with as He wills. They were in rebellion against the Creator who owned them. Cf. 1 Peter 2:8.</p>

<p>The problem with this view is that it reads too much into the meaning of "bought" and violates the clear biblical teaching of other passages such as 1 Peter 1:1-9.</p>	<p>This view seems strained.</p>	<p>This view doesn't fit the context or the rest of Scripture. Apostates are not viewed as Christians, even in the judgement of charity. Cf. 1 John 2:19.</p>	<p>The problem with this view is that redemption in this sense is limited to the elect. Cf. Titus 2 : 1 4 ; Galatians 4:5; Eph. 1:7,14.</p>	<p>This view is a possibility. However, the concept of atonement (and the distinction between atonement and redemption) still has to be read into the text.</p>	<p>This view is consistent with Peter's use of OT imagery (he alludes to Gen. 32:6 here and in 2:13 he alludes to Gen. 32:5). This view is also consistent with the use of the word "despotes" (Master) and the fact that whenever redemption is used in the NT <i>salvifically</i>, there is a corresponding price stated such as the blood of Christ.</p>
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\* Another view (that isn't worth defending) is that the apostates were and are genuine believers who won't forfeit salvation but who will forfeit reward.

**(2) As to view 5 . . .**

John Mayer who was an English Puritan, commenting on this verse: Touching that saying, "Denying the Lord that bought them;" none are properly said to be bought by the Lord, but the elect; yet in a large sense, all to whom the Gospel comes are said to be bought by him, yea all men, because the price he paid is sufficient to ransom all; neither is it by any defect therein that any perish, but through their own wickedness and unbelief. [Commentary upon the New Testament: Representing the Divers Expositions thereof, out of the works of the most learned, both ancient Fathers and modern Writers, and hereby sifting out of the true sense of every passage, for the benefit of all that desire to read with understanding, Third Volume, (London: Printed by Iohn Haviland, for Iohn Gismond, and are to be sold at his shop in Ivie Lane, at the sign of the Gun, 1631), 146.]



John Trapp, another English Puritan:

. . . . [bought them in that He paid] a sufficient price for all sinners, in taking upon him the common nature of all men, and in preaching to them in the Gospel that he died for sinners indefinitely, offering salvation and beseeching them to receive it. [John Trapp, A Commentary or Exposition Upon all the Books of the New Testament, (London: Printed by R.W. and are to be sold by Nath. Ekins, at the Gun in Pauls Church-yard, 1656), 936.]

Almost all Calvinists believe that there are benefits in the atonement of Christ that all men receive.

Richard Baxter: "Christ therefore died for all, but not for all equally, or with the same intent, design or purpose." [cited in Curt Daniel, History and Theology of Calvinism, 361]

Jonathan Edwards wrote: "From these things it will inevitably follow, that however Christ in some sense may be said to die for all, to redeem all visible Christians, yea, the whole world by His death; yet there must be something particular in the design of his death, with respect to such as he intended should actually be saved thereby" [Freedom of the Will, 435]

Charles Hodge: "There is a sense, therefore, in which He died for all, and there is a sense in which He died for the elect alone" [Systematic Theology, vol. II, p. 546]

John Murray who taught at Westminster Seminary spoke of universal benefits that "accrue to the non-elect from the redemptive work of Christ."

Louis Berkhof paralleled Murray in writing, "All that the natural man receives other than curse and death is an indirect result of the redemptive work of Christ." [Systematic Theology, 439]

Berkhof also argued that while t/primary design of the atonement was to secure t/salvation of t/elect, this was not its only design.

R.B. Kuiper wrote: "According to the Reformed faith the divine design of the atonement is in an important respect limited. But the Reformed faith also insists that in other respects it is universal. It can be shown without the slightest difficulty that certain benefits of the atonement, other than the salvation of individuals, are universal. Therefore the statement, so often heard from Reformed pulpits, that Christ died only for the elect must be rated a careless one." [For Whom Did Christ Die?, 78]

There's something to be said for this view as it relates to this verse in Peter.

**(3) The last view I believe fits both the context, grammar, and the rest of Scripture**

**(a) Peter uses the word δεσποτης (despot / Master)**

Not entirely clear whether he has Christ or God the Father in mind. The same word is used in Jude 4 where it's used of Christ. But all other uses in the NT, when it refers to a divine person, are used of the Father.

δεσποτης is a word that implies ownership. Used of a legal authority. Used, for example, of a master's authority over his slaves.

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).

**(b) As I said, there's an OT allusion to Deut. 32:6**

In Deut. 32 we have "The Song of Moses". This is at the end of t/Book of Deut. following Moses statement in 31:29 -

“For I know that after my death you will act corruptly and turn from the way which I have commanded you; and evil will befall you in the latter days, for you will do that which is evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking Him to anger with the work of your hands.”

Then, in his song, he says in v. 5 of chapt. 32 ==>

“They have acted corruptly toward Him, They are not His children, because of their defect; But are a perverse and crooked generation.

The next v. (6) ==>

Do you thus repay the LORD, O foolish and unwise people? Is not He your Father who has bought you? He has made you and established you.

Moses says to the rebellious people of Israel who have turned away from God, "Is not he your Father who has bought you"

He bought them out of the Exodus, but they were not His children. IOW - They were his creationally, but not all of them were his redemptively.

What does Peter say? He draws an analogy between the past false prophets who arose among the Jews and those who will be false teachers within the church.

But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them.

Wayne Grudem writes in this regard ==>

In line with this clear reference to false prophets in the Old Testament, Peter also alludes to the fact that the rebellious Jews turned away from God who "bought" them out of Egypt in the exodus. From the time of the exodus onward, any Jewish person would have considered himself or herself one who was "bought" by God in the exodus and therefore a person of God's own possession. In this sense, the false teachers arising among the people were denying God their Father, to whom they rightfully belonged. So the text means not that Christ had redeemed these false prophets, but simply that they were rebellious Jewish people (or church attenders in the same position as the rebellious Jews) who were rightly owned by God because they had been brought out of the land of Egypt (or their forefathers had), but they were ungrateful to him. Christ's *specific* redemptive work on the cross is not in view in this

verse. [Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 600]

**(c) Peter's entire point is to draw a parallel to OT Israel**

God purchased Israel as a nation even though He didn't purchase all of them for salvation.

Why Paul could say,

Romans 9:6 But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel;

And he could go on to say that

7 neither are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants . . . 8 . . . it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants.

Where does that lead?

14 What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! 15 For He says to Moses, "I WILL HAVE MERCY ON WHOM I HAVE MERCY, AND I WILL HAVE COMPASSION ON WHOM I HAVE COMPASSION." 16 So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. 17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "FOR THIS VERY PURPOSE I RAISED YOU UP, TO DEMONSTRATE MY POWER IN YOU, AND THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH." 18 So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires.

God purchased all men who identify with the visible church, even though He didn't purchase all of them to be part of the universal church. Not all Israel is Israel. Not all the church is the church.

He even bought false teachers for a purpose. He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy; he will raise up for destruction those whom He wills.

1 Peter 2:8 (those who deny Christ, including false teachers) . . . for they stumble [on the stone of stumbling and rock of offense] because

they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed.

Just like t/false prophets of OT Israel, false teachers deny t/very One who owns them. He is t/Master to whom belongs all allegiance.

Jude 4 For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. Cf. 1 Peter 2:8b.

(d) Were they redeemed in a spiritual sense? No!

i. The word ἀγοραζω (bought) is used 30x in the NT

But it's never used in the context of salvation apart from a direct statement as to a price (buy something there has to be a price / the sacrifice of Jesus Christ).

1 Corinthians 6:20 For you have been bought (ἀγοραζω) with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.

Revelation 5:9 And they \*sang a new song, saying, "Worthy art Thou to take the book, and to break its seals; for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase (ἀγοραζω) for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

One scholar observes ==>

"When it is translated with a meaning "to buy," whether in a soteriological or non- soteriological context, a payment price is always stated or made explicit by the context . . . in contexts where no payment price is stated or implied, ἀγοραζω [agorazo] may often be better

translated as "acquire" or "obtain." [Gary D. Long, cited by Robert Reymond, Systematic Theology]

Theologian Robert Reymond ==>

Instead of portraying Christ in his role as Savior, Peter, referring to Christ in his role as their Sovereign Creator, states that these false teachers were denying that Christ was their Creator and Sovereign who owned them. [Robert Reymond, Systematic Theology, 700-01]

Result was disastrous ==>

**. . . .bringing swift destruction upon themselves.**

That's our 4<sup>th</sup> point ==>

**D. Be Patient: False teachers in the church are being judged (1d)**

There will always be a tendency to become impatient // weary or frustrated in t/battle against error.

Struck me ==>

Even though they left their first love, I'm struck by the fact that the Ephesian CH (Rev. 2) had such great endurance in fighting for the truth. They didn't grow weary.

I find contention of any kind very wearying and discouraging. Even good contention.

1 Corinthians 11:19 **For there must also be factions among you, in order that those who are approved may have become evident among you.**

While we want to have t/attitude of Jude ==>

Jude 22–23 **22 And have mercy on some, who are doubting; 23 save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.**

We also need to be patient knowing that in the end God will put all things in their proper place. Those who are His will be rewarded; those who are not will be judged.

### 1. Even now the judgement is happening

Word "bringing" is a present ptcp. Present tense indicating that it's in process.

Cf. v. 3 (also vv. 9,12,17).

### 2. Touch of irony here

What did the false teachers deny? Among other things, look at chapt. 3 (vv. 3-7).

They denied judgement and any sense of imminency.

Yet Peter says that there are ==>

**... bringing swift destruction upon themselves.**

#### a. In what sense is the judgement swift?

Not to be measured in our modern, western terms of right away. They were sowing seeds of destruction and were already reaping the beginning of their harvest. Much like false teachers today; they may appear to prosper in that they have followers, they are living a lives of ease, etc. But they are sowing seeds that sprout poisonous plants with deadly results.

The judgement will be swift, or "sudden."



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

A. Be Aware: False teachers in the church parallel the false prophets of Israel (1a)

B. Be Alert: False teachers in the church operate covertly (1b)

C. Be Separate: False teachers in the church deny Christ (1c)

D. Be Patient: False teachers in the church are being judged (1d)

3 more points ==>

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

F. Be Grieved: False teachers in the church dishonor Christ (2b)

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

As for us, I'm going to encourage you to make your calling and election sure.

{Cf. 1:10 with 1:8 and 5-7}

{Gospel}