

Series: 2 Peter

Sermon: Identifying Error

Passage: 2 Peter 2:1-3 (ESV)

Illustration:

Need: The enemy is still actively seeking to deceive and distort through false teachers that we must avoid.

I. Where there is truth, Error will also arise

- From the very beginning in the garden, God's true Word has always been met with lies and error.
- False religions: Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, paganism, mysticism, witchcraft, vudu, etc.
- Modern cults: Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons/LDS, Scientology, Branch Davidians, etc.
- False Teaching: Liberalism, Unitarianism, Prosperity Gospel, Progressive Christianity, Nationalism, etc.
- Matt.24:4-5, 11, 24, Matt. 7:15, Gal. 1:9, 1 Tim. 4:1, 2 Tim. 4:2-4

II. False Teachers hold as true things that are NOT.

- Warren Wiersbe: "False teachers use our vocabulary but they do not use our dictionary."
- John MacArthur: "False teachers arise when the church begins to embrace the worldly culture around it."
- Rethinking, Redefining, Updating, Crusading and Progressing are often buzz words.
- Departure from essential historical Christian doctrinal truths to something more appealing, less intellectually or emotionally difficult.

III. False Teachers turn from Jesus in word or action.

- In Peter's day they were twisting the gospel away from the person and work of Jesus.
- Today this can be a theological drift away from Jesus as well as a practical drift from His Lordship.
- This can also happen when we shift towards a structure based in the authority and power of men.
- Their destruction will be swift though it might not be immediate.

IV. False Teachers live Immoral lives.

- Sensuality carries the idea of not just immorality but immoral excess, debauchery.
- Sexual affairs, porn, abuse, drugs & alcohol outweigh strong theology and disqualify church leaders.
- Immoral scandals in the church bring shame and doubt upon the gospel.

V. False Teachers are motivated by Greed.

- Covetousness, unbridled lust for more - Money, Power, Control.
- These false teachers have no problem manipulating their followers to fulfill their own lusts.
- Like those who turn from Christ, their judgment will not be forgotten.

VI. 3 Steps for avoiding false teachers and the error they're peddling (Chuck Swindoll)

1. STOP - Just because others say a teacher is great, slow down and investigate.
2. LOOK - Apart from the good things that might be said, watch to see what kind of life they live.
3. LISTEN - Listen with appropriately truth critical ears. What exactly is being taught and is it true?