

Sent: Wednesday, 02 December 2015 18:41
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study on 2 Peter 2:1-16

In what is commonly referred to as his "last will and testament," Peter used his letter as a warning about the coming of false teachers, who would be "secretly introducing damnable heresies, even denying the Master who bought them..." (obviously speaking of Jesus)! He also said that "many would follow their sensuality, and that because of them the way of truth would be maligned!"

This rising of false teachers really shouldn't have come as a big surprise for the followers of Jesus--for He Himself had foretold this! In Matt. 7:15, He warned: "Beware of the false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves!" And the Apostle Paul used this same language (in Acts 20:29-30) where he noted that "after his departure, savage wolves would come in among you, not sparing the flock, and from among your own selves men would arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them."

How could this possibly happen? We can ask the same question in our own day! The false teachers were apparently insinuating that Peter and Paul and the other apostles were just "inventing stuff" and using their teaching to inhibit the "Christian freedoms" of their followers! For the false teachers, "freedom" meant the right to indulge in sexual immorality, drunkenness, and other hedonistic pleasures that were being practiced in their culture! Sound familiar? Peter answers back in this letter that his teachings, as well as that taught by Paul and the other apostles, were not "cunningly devised fables," and not their own interpretations, or acts of human will, but the "very words of God"--given by divine inspiration!

And so we see, in chapter 2, a marked contrast between the character and teachings of Peter, and Paul, and of James and John and Jude, and those of the false teachers--whose lives were marked by their denial of the person and work of Jesus, by rejection of His authority and Lordship, by enslavement to sin, and by misuse of Scripture! The language in verses 10-16 gets pretty graphic! What was at first being done secretly, was now being "reveled in the daytime!" Sound a little bit like what's happening in the church, and in our so-called "Christian culture," today?

Well, Peter makes it clear that God "knows how to rescue the godly...and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the Day of Judgment" (2:9). That His judgment is swift and sure is illustrated by three specific incidents in Biblical history: (1) how He dealt with the angels who sinned (an intriguing story in itself!); (2) how He "did not spare the ancient world...when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly;" and (3) how He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction..." (2:4-6). And yet, He "preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, along with seven others...and rescued righteous Lot, oppressed by the sensual conduct of unprincipled men (for by what he saw and heard that righteous man, while living among them, felt his righteous soul tormented day after day by their lawless deeds")! Wow, is this the same Lot we thought we knew?

Well, the Bible makes it clear that God is both the Just and the Justifier! "As I live! declares the Lord God, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that the wicked turn from his ways and live..." (Ezekiel 33:11) And, Peter adds (in II Pet. 3:9): "The Lord is not slow about

His promises, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance!" And it's for this very reason that God sent His Son into our world, and this is the reason for Peter's writing, as well as for our gathering together to study and learn to live by His Word!

It seems only fitting to close with Jesus words recorded in John 5:24: "Truly, truly, I say unto you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life!" Whew!

Men, let's "beware" of false teaching--and stand firm in the faith!

Have a great couple of weeks, men! We'll resume our study of 2 Peter 2:17-22 on December 15th!

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