

Polluted Teachers

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[0 : 0 0] Now like if you would turn with me this morning to 2 Peter chapter 2 and we're going to read verses 10 to 22 for those of you are visiting with us this morning We've been looking we've been going through this letter that Peter wrote to a young Christian communities young churches In what is modern Turkey now There were young churches and Peter gave them Warnings and advice and help and encouragement pointing them forward to Jesus now This is a difficult passage as it was the first half of it the last time we did it, which was a couple of weeks ago chapter 2 because it's speaking about false teachers and their destruction and It's really pretty pretty severe stuff, but I hope we can take it and Understand why that's the case as we unpack it this morning. So we're going to read from verse 10

We did verses 1 to 9 a couple of weeks ago and today we're going to do from verse 10 This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desires of the sinful nature and despise authority Bold and arrogant these men are not afraid to slander celestial beings Yeah, even angels although they are stronger and more powerful do not bring slanderous accusations against such beings in the presence of the Lord But these men blaspheme in matters. They do not understand They are like brute beasts creatures of instinct born only to be caught and destroyed and like beasts they too will perish They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight their blots and blemishes Revelling in their pleasures while they feast with you with eyes full of adultery. They never stop sinning

They seduce the unstable. They are experts in greed and a cursed brood They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the ways of Balaam son of Bior Who loved the wages of wickedness, but he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey a Beast without speech Who spoke with a man's voice and restrained the Prophet's madness These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm blackest darkness is reserved for them for they mouth empty boastful words and by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature They entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error They promise them freedom while they themselves are slaves of depravity For a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him If they have escaped the corruption of this of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and Are again entangled in it and overcome they are worse off at the beginning at the end than they were at the beginning

It would have been better For them not to have known the way of righteousness than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command That was passed on to them of them the Proverbs are true a dog returns to its vomit and a sow That is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud Amen, may God add his own blessing to that reading nice gentle soft message from the word this morning but it's God's word and we take that and we work forward from that premise So this morning as we unpack this a little bit we know certain things don't we as we come to worship now we've talked about the importance of giving God the glory and Focusing on God and I hope that's what we're able to do today But we know there's certain things very important. It's very important that that clock

Has a battery in it that works. Otherwise. It's a problem, isn't it? It's also very important if you're building a house, isn't it that the foundation is Absolutely right. That is always really important. It's always been important It's very important today that the finding you know a lot of time is taken to much more time Is taken to mark out the foundations of a house to make sure that the ground underneath it is solid that the materials use are right That the measurements you use are right because otherwise everything else is going to be wrong if we get the foundation wrong Then the whole building will be wrong and we know that God Jesus uses that illustration himself When he talks about the foundations that we have in life and the wise man and the foolish man where we build our house the house of our lives and And it's absolutely same because Jesus uses that and he applies it to our Christian lives And he applies it to our understanding of Jesus Christ and he says it's absolutely important in faith That that we recognize that truth matters as well

[5 : 11] That we don't just kind of go off on a Jolly on our own that we don't go off thinking well. It doesn't really matter what we believe We just kind of head off that way ourselves because what Peter through the Holy Spirit here is is really defensive about and is really uses strong languages about is the gospel and The doctrine and the truth of God's word because he says and this is important for us all That true faith when we have true faith in Jesus Christ that will change us At the clock It'll change us from the inside out You know, it's not about what we look like on the outside. It's not particularly good-looking clock really But it's it's what we have in our hearts That is a gift of grace and faith and how that then will when we believe in that it will transform How we live, you know the Bible in different places saying faith without works in other words without an expression of that faith is dead and really that is partly what is being

Spoken about here and what Peter does in this passage as he's done in the one that we look before is he Absolutely nails false teachers. He completely nails them. He doesn't give them a leg to stand for he absolutely hammers them because he knows that They are important that what they are doing is important in a negative way and because it's foundational It'll affect our life as Christians It'll affect the life of the church this young church and it will affect the life of of the gospel right through the centuries if we don't get The gospel right if we haven't got that correct And if we're led astray by false teaching then we're saying that Jesus doesn't matter and it doesn't really matter What we believe about them you can believe anything Just just move forward and take what you want and Peter nails that he nails false teachers Under the power of God in the Holy Spirit as he gives this letter So what I want to do is look at that a little bit I want to look firstly at God's CV for these false teachers God's curriculum VT for these false teachers

He he you know what you're doing in a CV you say all the best things about yourself and you really highlight the good things There's not many negative things you put in your CV She want to give a good impression of yourself. Well, this is God's CV of the false teachers This is how their beliefs work out in their lives. This is what they look like and it's pretty ugly. It has to be said There's a there's a bit of a negative wow factor about what is happening here with what Peter saying and it's very extreme but this is the result of leadership who have come who have come to boast about leading and governing and taking the church and the gospel forward forward But have moved away from the truth of Jesus Christ Now, can I just say something personal here? I Don't think this teaching about false teachers applies to anyone in Our church, okay, and I just say that And I don't think it applies to anyone in leadership or in the ministry of our denomination

I think we have safeguards in place that would allow such False teaching and false thinking to be dealt with a fairly early stage. However, I'm not complacent and This is not preached from a position of pride because the seed of the problem that these leaders Allow to develop is in all of us In other words, the principle is about the danger of losing sight of the truth and of the word of God And music's really off-putting I keep thinking it's someone trying to get in But anyway I've drawn your attention to it now. So you'll all be listening to it. Okay, the CV of false teachers This is what God is saying here. Okay And it's damning. He says their basic natures have not changed in verse 10 He kind of talks about this is especially true follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature and despise authority They and he goes on to speak about them being like like animals, you know

They're like brute beasts creatures of instinct born only to be caught and destroyed like beast to offer us They have come to the position as leaders where they're saying you don't need to listen to the gospel about our hearts and about sin And about the need for salvation and change it to err as human. We all make mistakes That's just what we're like and they were they were learning to treat sin lightly that sin didn't matter that Jesus probably didn't need to go to the cross it was extreme and They're they let they protected their hearts. They said they're you don't need God doesn't need to get into my heart My heart's not that bad their hearts remained untouched. So they didn't get changed. They didn't get the new battery They didn't get transformed by God's grace. They didn't have that new soul given to them that renewed and vibrant life that Jesus offers So they had no spiritual discernment and they were insensitive and they acted instinctively so they just remained with the nature they were born with the sinful nature and they kind of

[10 : 33] Just put that into their position and leadership of the church and God is saying here through Peter that basically that really they're worse than animals Because they're made in God's image They were made to be in relationship with God and they were made to be friends with God and yet They were denying the only way back to God through Jesus Christ They had flirted with the truth that come near the truth. They dipped their toe into the truth, but then they said We will do it our own way and so they in in the name of the gospel they kind of returned With a renewed energy to the life of grime that they'd been engaged in before Even it may be under the umbrella of truth So which is why a very visual and powerful picture at the end of a dog returning to its woman a pig returning a clean pig Returning to wallowing the mud again is used very visual graphic pictures that they've gone back to what they were before

They had any contact with the gospel and with Jesus Christ their life day-to-day was a life of Hedonism and pleasure and self-satisfaction and had no real reference to holiness or to God So they their basic natures remained unchanged. They despised at this their CV They despised authority. These are leaders who despise authority. It's a bit of an oxymoron The they despised verse 18 they despised verse 10 they despised authority They didn't come under the gospel and its power and they didn't come under the gospel of Christ and the church They just were arrogant and judgmental, you know bold and arrogant these men are not afraid to slander Celestial beings but quite sure what that references But they were they were willing not only to say they knew better than everyone around them But they knew better than the angelic powers that be also they were confident and they were dismissive They talked a good game They could talk a good game spiritually and they could influence people as a result

But probably what's what's most staggering about them was their morality is embarrassing Their morality as those who were supposed to be leaders of the gospel in that community They were false teachers We're told at the beginning of verse 2 was shameful versus 13 to 16 You know they're carousing and broad daylight blots and blemishes eyes full of adultery seducing the unstable Experts in greed. It's not a good CV is it?

It's not a pretty picture that has been given to us here of these supposed Spiritual leaders in the church. It was shameful. They were out of control Sex and drink and everything else that goes with it rock and roll if it had been around They were abusive They abused their position of power With the vulnerable they were seductive over those who were weak Maybe who were young in the faith because they were influential and maybe those who were unstable and they used their position to Bend to benefit financially so they were greedy Manipulated the gospel for their own ends. It's a really ugly picture. It's not a pretty picture It's a very Extreme picture of what was it's ugly Now I'm not gonna start making judgment on other leaders or other churches or anything else But if we were to apply that kind of thinking today, it would maybe be along the lines of those who in the name of the gospel or in the name of Jesus are able to finance lavish lifestyle with private jets or who use their position to involve themselves in systematic child abuse or sexual license who

Choose to stand over the Bible and deny its authority and say you can believe that but you can't believe that bit who would argue for a different gospel in the name of the church in the name of Christianity That's the kind of thing that we would maybe apply it to today very extreme But very important foundational so God's verdict he gives it his verdict here in two pictures And their pictures that we can understand two pictures that really bring us to the The conclusion of having a false faith or faith that isn't based on the truth of Jesus Christ or that wonders from that two things emptiness and darkness That's the verdict that we have from God as he gives it through Peter These men are verse 17 springs without water and mists driven by the wood by this by a storm Blackest darkness is reserved for them springs without water that whole picture, you know Water and pictures about water don't mean so much to us because it just comes out the taps for us

[15 : 39] It's very readily available But in the Middle East particularly water was much more precious and to go to a spring Find a spring and you go there and there's no water And that was a disaster that was really Significant and he says that's what they're like. They're like springs without water. They promise lots But they don't deliver anything spiritually to the church to their own understanding and to their own grace and They remain he says slaves to their own desires and appetites and fears and Their image their popularity and their pleasure and in fact, they're still slaves to their sinful nature. They're not free at all and They even to themselves, maybe they promise lots, but they remain absolutely enslaved to their sinful desires And he says also they're just They're unstable always running after new things new ideas new ways of being satisfied and and the Bible speaks about that in a lot of places, you know in Jeremiah 2 it says they have

God says they've forsaken me the spring of living water and have dug Their own cistern broken cisterns that can hold no water So even in the Old Testament you had this picture that God was the one who gave And who gave life and who gave hope and whose promises were fulfilled but these false teachers and others have moved away from that and Promise the world, but don't give anything You know they've moved they've forgotten that the Roman 6 you've been set free from sin and become slaves of righteousness They called themselves free. They said you can be absolutely free if you follow us But they forgot that freedom comes with a price genuine true freedom comes with a price who becomes slaves of Jesus and his righteousness and his goodness and Earlier in Peter in the first epistle Peter says live as free men But don't use your freedom as a cover-up for evil and isn't that you know that's broadening the application to ourselves We live and we live as free people with the promises of Jesus

But don't use that Christian freedom as a cover-up for not allowing Jesus into our hearts and doing and thinking up evil things So they are empty they promise lots this lifestyle promises lots promises many things, but It gives nothing because it's not true and Jesus is truth and therefore when someone promises who is true Then these promises are the basis of our faith because we believe they will be worked out If you don't think that Jesus is worthy It's because you don't think he's true and you don't think he'll fulfill his promises and that's fundamental That's why you'll be struggling. That's why you'll be drifting away That's why we are filled with doubt because we believe the promises of the false teachers And the the words of the world rather than the promises of Jesus Were these were these people here with these false teachers where they were believers?

Who lost their faith? It's implied in verse 20, isn't it? If they have to escape the corruption world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and I've again entangled in it and overcome They are worse off at the end and they were at the beginning Would that suggest that I or you as Christians could lose our faith?

That they were genuine believers who fell away. Well, I think the Bible's pretty clear on that That if you're a genuine believer you will not fall away They knew about the Lord Jesus Christ. They dipped their toes into the gospel. They tasted it But they didn't give their hearts to the Lord Jesus Christ John God Sorry, Jesus very clearly says in John 10 29 my father who has given them to me is greater than all No one can snatch them out of my father's hand The genuine believer will not fall away in this way These were these were people who had dipped their toe in the gospel They talked the talk and Jesus spoke about it a lot in the New Testament and we can't we can We've got to be aware of that. You know, he says many will come to me on that the last day Lord Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?

[20 : 05] Then I will tell you tell them plainly. I never knew you away from me. You what what does he say you evil doers? so in other words that their Pretend their pretense of faith was purely intellectual and they didn't allow that faith to change their hearts They didn't have the new battery in their clock They didn't allow Jesus to come in and they simply had an outward faith and outward religion Where they did lots of things in Jesus name or Luke 6 Why do you call me Lord Lord?

Jesus says and do not do what I say hear my words and Put them into practice Bingo It's very basic that there's this aspect to our Christianity. Isn't it that our faith our heart?

changes our life the CV of the false teachers was that What they professed didn't make any difference to their lives. They remained enslaved to their sinful natures They carried on doing what they wanted to do. So there's an emptiness. It's such a challenge, isn't it?

such a challenge for us To to understand foundationally what it means to know Christ It means that you will go from here and I will go from here and we examine ourselves To see if our life is being transformed To see if his grace is changing us so that we can begin to obey What he wants us to do to love him and to love one another is Grace softening us is grace purifying us. Are we dependent on him?

It's a living relationship Or do we go from church today having done all the church again of things and then just go back to our own lives Unchanged and unmoved so that isn't transforming us and it isn't changing us emptiness and darkness Okay, and that's a terrible picture of final judgment Is deepest darkness?

[22 : 08] Can you can you get degrees of darkness? Well the illustration is hey, yeah, it's the deepest darkness As the furthest away from it's a picture furthest away from the light of Jesus It's a picture of despair and hopelessness and ugliness So, you know, it's strong words, isn't it? But what he's what is why is it so important?

Why is a third of the of this letter devoted to this? Because foundations matter What we believe about Jesus Matters because it will it will influence Our life and indeed our eternity. So what is he teach as we finish? What is he teaching us today?

How does this teaching about? radical and mental False teachers that we don't see in our own situation or we don't maybe think it is in our own lives What is it teaching us? Well remember this was written to a young church Full of ordinary believers. We're a young church full of ordinary believers and It's part of God's words. It still applies obviously to us. Why the warning? He was a warning here So a couple of things and I've mentioned probably them already right foundations in our Christian lives are absolutely crucial That's why Peter as it were Verbally jumps up and down His whole height with a bright orange suit on saying listen to this That's why it's so radical is because he knows that it's going to affect That if they don't get the church right at the beginning Then it's going to affect everything and also it's going to affect individual lives and that is true as a basis for your own Christian

Profession and mine and also for us as a church, you know here in St. Columbus or Christ Church down in Craig and to Or in Cornerstone and on the morning side or Midlothian if we start a church there when we start a church there the foundation spiritual foundations are crucial that we start with the truth that we base what we do on the truth of Jesus Christ that we recognize The foundation of this relationship with Jesus Christ who says I am the way the truth and the life Nobody comes to the Father Except through me See that foundation when does the foundation matter more?

It's an a warm sunny West coast of Scotland day Sun shining and everything's calm No, the foundation matters most when it's a wild Storm hurricane bertha when she comes That's when this that's when the foundation matters. So when the storms of your life come Your understanding and my understanding of who Jesus is and the truth of Jesus will determine how we respond the truth matters Allowing Jesus into our heart Seeing that we are right with him and that he loves us and that he's forgiven us and that he's a purpose for us is Crucial when the storms of life Right foundations are crucial also true freedom sees clearly the Bible gives us teaching that helps us to see Helps us to see our own hearts and helps us to see clearly. That's why it's called light so often gives us light That's why the Bible so important because it sheds light into our hearts and what this is helping us to do is to see the deceptiveness of sin the deceptiveness of our own fallen natures and

[25 : 46] And also to see that the Christian life isn't a walk in the park But is actually an ongoing battle So we need not to be deceived by our own hearts and By your own defensiveness and by your own arguments So you will every day from your own heart from my own heart and from the world around us we will be tempted in Our Christian walk towards easy believism. That's what the false teachers are saying Don't believe what Peter's saying and what the gospel says. It's much easier than that Sure, you can do what you want Jesus has died me and we just carry on but Easy believe is a mouse always a ten shortcuts are always a temptation new thinking you books It's a great insight into the gospel that you don't need to be holy anymore That makes no demands on our self on our time on our purity on our humility on our resources on our love for others or any teaching that that promises that is

Empty and dark Any teaching that elevates pleasure to a position of lordship Is doing that and true freedom enables us to see that clearly the devil knows exactly what buttons to press in our lives and it's usually not It's usually not that obvious but if we don't submit to the truth and I say this With reservation but with with a genuine Meaning all hell will break loose okay Darkness and emptiness breaks loose if you lose sight of the foundation of Jesus Christ all hell will break loose in your life and in mine and That is hugely Significant for us that we take what we know and what we worship and what we speak about and We live it so there's no but can I say there's no place in our lives for dualism?

You know what dualism is where we believe one thing But we live differently so you believe one thing particularly in church and then you go out the door and in your workplace Or in your studies or rivers you live differently And you have a different persona and a different way of thinking and people see you perceive you differently So you might be theologically conservative in church, but you might be socially Liberal so you think it doesn't matter sexually it doesn't matter about your drinking habits doesn't matter your language It doesn't matter what you do ethically and that's exactly the kind of dualism that was being spoken of here by Peter that we can be Theologically conservative within the walls of a church and really stand up for truth in our own understanding, but socially liberal What do what do we take seriously?

Ourselves our pursuit of wealth our popularity our faith Faith in Jesus and the last very last thing in terms of planet to ourselves is I think the power of influence See pure label labours this because He knows that lead these leaders are influential and That's you know, that's the way of the world. That's what it's and he's burdened by that and And but it also speaks generally just of the the social the community power of influence generally speaking You know we each influence each other here in the church and we either have to influence each other in relationship positively as Christians Towards Jesus or we're doing it negatively you know we want to set up The structures of the church are for accountability and for fellowship and for loving and serving Christ together and we can either do that together by raising our standards spiritually and by

Being friends with one another so that we bring each other closer to Jesus or sometimes in terms of influence we can influence ourselves negatively in a negative way, so we're taking people further so groups of Christians can drink together or Gossip together or Ethically do things that are dubious together And judge one another together and that is taking us further. Isn't it?

[30 : 23] Don't fall over further from Jesus, but as Christians we have this great influence and responsibility to bring each other closer to Jesus and To serve him by praying more together by being graceful together by serving together by being holy together power of community for good or for bad That's why this chapter is so significant and Peter labors this point of both community and leadership and Dealing with it. So I think as we close we remember That this isn't about being legalistic it's not about a works religion, but it's about having a heart It's having that battery changed having Jesus in our heart changing us so that That truth is in our heart and the Holy Spirit is Transforming or transforming our thoughts and our actions in our life And that we live so that we live according to that kind of to love God with all our hearts

Home and to love our neighbor as ourselves. That's the that's the that's the core of all false teachers brought division and hatred and immorality and impurity and and destructiveness and we need to be aware of all these things and remember That Christ and grace brings unity and love and joy and salvation and hope in the future That is the Savior in whom we trust whom we worship and whom we serve. Amen Let's bow our heads in prayer before singing Together father God we ask that you would draw us to yourself that you would give us that commitment to positively encouraging one another to self examination so that we find that our lives are not mastered or governed by our own thinking but by your truth and That we would not be false or hypocritical but they would come to you who freely and fully saves us redeems us buys us back and

Who loves us and who will empower us to do the impossible to change to be loving to be? obedient With joy and with pleasure may God have the glory in our lives and our thinking and in our church and In all that we are and in all that we do for Jesus's sake. Amen