

Belief and Backsliding

Belief determines behavior

- Catullus (d. 54 BC)
- Judgment motivates repentance (Acts 17)

Belief determines behavior

2 Peter 2:1-3 – sad predictions:

- 1: false teachers will come. 1 K.18 ... 22.
- 2: many will follow their error and immorality.
- 3: greedy liars will mislead blind for profit.
 - Deceptive (fabricated) words
 - Destruction is not dozing / slumbering
 - Donations (covetousness) not always free

Belief determines behavior

Sad ending: 2 Peter 2:
teachers or converts?

19-20: fate of false teachers concludes
chapter.

21: includes fate of converts (2, 18).

22: both groups suffer same tragic end.
Mt.15:14

I. The World Defiles, 20a

World

- 'World' is not earth
- 'World' is not people in general
- **World: all that is hostile to God, 20**
 - Lost in sin; wholly at odds with anything divine, ruined and depraved – BDAG

World

- Escaped pollutions – stain, defilement, filthy things [synonym: v.10].
 - Ja.1:27, keep oneself *unstained* by the world.

Synonym: the times

- Thoughts, opinions, actions, phases of society: *religious world, scientific world...*
- 2 Co.4:4, whose minds the *god of this age* has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them
- Ga.1:4, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this *present evil age*

In spite of revelation and conscience, faithful were few, evil was predominant

I. The World Defiles, 20a

II. **Jesus Saves**, 20b

Jesus is Lord and Savior

- 2 Pt.2:9 – His part
- Through knowledge – our part

2 Peter 1:2

...

2 Peter 3:18

- Know (in some form): 16 x in 2 Peter
- 2nd Century gnostic heresies discussed 'true' knowledge
- One who rejects light will live in darkness

I. The World Defiles, 20a

II. Jesus Saves, 20b

**III. The World
Recalls Us, 20-21**

Cause: entanglements

- Fish in net . . . sheep . . . gladiators . . .
- Overcome, defeated, conquered, controlled by . . . (19-20) –
 - **Slaves:** bondage; evil desires master them, 19
 - **Pollutions:** 19-20; 1:4, depravity

We become either
regenerate or degenerate

Cause

Condition: worse off (20-21)

- Harder to restore apostates.
- May become angry, hardened, disillusioned. Mt.12:43-45. Hb.6:4-6.
- Worse influence on others. Mk.4:7.
- Worse punishment? (Lk.12:47-48). Ac.5
- Reflects on Lord. 2:21

Cause
Condition

Comparison:

- Dog returns to own vomit.
 - Escaped corruption within, returned to it.
 - Pr.26:11, As a dog returns to his own vomit, So a fool repeats his folly.
- Sow returns to mire.

Escaped
corruption

Returned to
corruption

I. The World Defiles, 20a

II. Jesus Saves, 20b

III. World Recalls Us, 20-22

IV. **Lessons**

1. Possibility of apostasy

- 20: again entangled
- 20: latter end worse than beginning
[Mt.12:43-45]
- 21: turn from holy commandment
- 22: from washed to wallowing

Sinner heard gospel

Detested sin

Came to God for mercy, cleansed

Returned to old filth

1. Possibility of apostasy

- Objections . . .
 - “Man of God would not call child of God an animal”
 - Gn.49:14, Issachar is a strong donkey, Lying down between two burdens

1. Possibility of apostasy

- Objections . . .
 - “Man of God would not call child of God an animal”
 - Jer.2:23, How can you say, I am not polluted, I have not gone after the Baals? See your way in the valley; Know what you have done: You are a swift dromedary breaking loose in her ways,
24 A wild donkey used to the wilderness,
That sniffs at the wind in her desire . . .

1. Possibility of apostasy

- Objections . . .
 - “Man of God would not call child of God an animal”
 - Ho.4:16, For Israel is stubborn Like a stubborn calf; Now the LORD will let them forage Like a lamb in open country

1. Possibility of apostasy

- Objections . . .
 - “Man of God would not call child of God an animal”
 - Am.4:1 Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who are on the mountain of Samaria, Who oppress the poor, Who crush the needy, Who say to your husbands, “Bring wine, let us drink!” 2 The Lord GOD has sworn by His holiness: “Behold, the days shall come upon you When He will take you away with fish-hook

1. Possibility of apostasy

- Objections . . .
 - “Man of God would not call child of God an animal”
 - Gn.48:14
 - Jer.2:23
 - Jer.2:24
 - Ho.4:16
 - Am.4:1-3
 - 2 Pt.2:12

Really?

1. Possibility of apostasy

- Objections . . .

- “Since the dog / hog remained animals, they never changed.”

- Ignores Peter who escaped, and

- Even if true

“No assertion of universal redemption can be plainer than this”

– Alford

Peter, Lk.22; Jn.21 and, yet...

- Proverb: current or trite saying. Prov 7:6

- Verse 1 states it literally: Lord bought them . . . they denied Him

2. Worldlings uses means to attract saints

- Attack faith. 2 Pt.1, myth accusations

“It is quite common with young scholars, when they begin to get hold of important ideas, to imagine themselves original discoverers, and they begin to pity a world which knew so little before they were born” – McGarvey

- Each generation fights same battles

2. Worldlings uses means to attract saints

- Attack faith. 2 Pt.1, myth accusations
- Corrupt morals. 2 Pt.2, lust, bad examples...
 - Commercials
 - 1 Co.9:27 . . . 1 Pt.4:1-2
 - God works through spirit to control flesh
 - Satan works through flesh to control spirit
 - We determine outcome

2. Worldlings uses means to attract saints

- Attack faith. 2 Pt.1, myth accusations
- Corrupt morals. 2 Pt.2, lust, bad examples...
- Hopelessness. 2 Pt.3.
 - Don't let delayed fulfillment destroy your hope. 1 Pt.1:3... Mt.23:37

3. Lord uses means to keep us saved

- Growth, 2 Pt.1:5-11; 3:18
- Warnings, 2 Pt.2:1-3
- Insight, 2 Pt.3:8-9

Conclusion

- The false teachers were not made outside the NT.
 - They obeyed truth, rejected it, then seduced others to join them in eternal misery
- “Wrong-Way Reigels”