

Be Aware of Spiritual Cons (AKA False Teachers)



Bro. Ricky Cunningham

2nd Peter 2:1-3

Have any of you ever been in one of those situations where you got conned? Sometimes in life, there are people who are really good at conning other people. And sometimes you're being a part of a con and you don't even know it until it's over. There are just some folks that when we see them, we just kind of have this thought—he's a con artist. I will never forget as long as I live being a part of what I believe was a con. Many years ago, a guy came to my office, his name was Randy Taylor, and I already knew him a little bit. Randy was searching for spiritual truth. We developed a relationship and I got to disciple him for several years. He not only became a church member, he and his family, but he became a personal friend. A little while into that relationship, he moved out of Murray to the east side of Calloway County. He had a farm and he decided he wanted some cattle, so the next thing you know, he and I, a dentist and a preacher, were partners in cattle. We wanted to get into Angus cattle so we went to the Central Angus Association Cattle sale. We had bought our first show heifer from a person we knew, and when we saw all of the animals that were going to be sold that day, we decided we would buy again from him. To guarantee we would buy from him, he just said, "How

about we agree on a price and I will just sell them to you?" I said, "Great! Can you do that?" He said, "Yes I can" so we agreed. So there were three pretty good looking Angus heifers and we gave \$2,500 a piece for each heifer, a total of \$7,500 (I say we, but he did). So the guy said, "Now they're yours...you're going to pay me \$7,500, but we've got to run them through the sale because I've already committed them to the sale." I said, "We can't just take them?" He said, No, you can't but it's okay, we will run them through and I'll tell everybody what's happening." I got ready to go sit in the sale's arena with Randy and the last thing he said to me was, "Now Bro. Ricky, so that this works right, you have to be the last bidder." Okay. I didn't think a thing. Now, you have to realize in Angus cattle sales, normally they put the best ones first and that kind of sets the price. If you see an animal bring \$10,000 and then you give \$6,000 for one, you think you've got a deal so they don't want to start out with low animals; they want to start out with higher animals. They started out with say six animals, and man, they were bringing \$5,000-\$8,000, so Randy and I were thinking we did really, really good agreeing to \$2,500 because I thought ours looked every bit as good as theirs. Then they got to us—now remember, we've already bought them—I'm just supposed to raise my hand, show my little number, and make sure I buy the cattle. Well, after about three bids, it blew through that \$2,500...the next thing you know I'm raising my little card for \$7,000, then \$9,000, then \$11,000, then \$13,000. Now remember—I'm a preacher; Randy's a dentist. This guy's selling cattle to a preacher and a dentist. I'm not thinking a thing, except wow, everybody thinks our cattle are as valuable as I thought they were and we're getting a really good deal! When my bid got to \$20,000, Randy starts saying, "Quit, quit, quit!" So I'm having to talk to Randy while I'm bidding \$22,000 then \$24,000 then \$26,000 then \$28,000 then \$30,000. Randy is having a fit! He's saying, "Bro. Ricky, you've have to stop!" I said, "Randy, I was told to be the last bidder and we've already bought them. It's okay." The next thing you know, I bid \$40,000...and then I would have bid \$42,000, except now the guy I'm buying the cattle from is in front of me saying, "Quit bidding!" When I quit bidding, everybody in the Angus sale arena stood up and applauded. It was an all-time record sale for the Central Kentucky Angus Association sale! They had a \$40,000 animal. Now,

Randy is coming apart. He's thinking he just gave \$40,000 for an animal, and I'm saying, "Randy, no, no, no. We bought those animals for \$2,500. I don't know what just happened, but it's okay." The minute the sale was over, the sale's manager approaches me and he said, "Bro. Ricky, are you really a preacher?" I said "Yep." He said, "Did you just bid \$40,000?" "Yep." I said, "The guy told me to not quit bidding until I got the animals." He said, "I believe you, but here's what we're going to do. We're going to let you have those animals for \$7,500, but we're going to charge him sales commission on \$40,000." Then I realized what had happened. I bought cattle from a man who had never been the highest seller at a sale, so where he messed up was the guy he told to bid against me didn't know to quit, and I wasn't supposed to quit, and if he hadn't have got involved I'd probably still be bidding today for that cow!

Now I think you and I can laugh at that. We know that sometimes when we deal with people in business, there are cons out there. What we're going to learn this morning is there are also some cons in the church, and that hurts. That hurts because you know what we do right now doesn't just count right now, it counts forever. We're going to title this morning is, Be Aware of Spiritual Cons (AKA False Teachers). I thought about making it Beware...but if you look that up in a dictionary, beware means danger. And there is danger, extreme danger in false teaching, but if I said, "Beware of false teaching," some of you might come to Hardin and believe you can't trust what you're being taught. I don't believe that's true here. I don't believe *you* believe it's true here or you wouldn't be here. So, we're not going to say beware of false teaching; we're going to say be aware of false teaching. Because when you step outside this place, whether it is by radio, by TV, or by a book, you need to be aware that just as there are some people who would physically take advantage of you, there are some people who spiritually would like to take advantage of you. Peter's going to warn us about that. Let's look at verses 1–3a (we will look at the last sentence of verse 3 next week).

Scripture

"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, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. And in their greed they will exploit you with false words."

I sometimes dislike our chapter and verse breakup of the Bible because I think sometimes when we end a chapter and then start a new chapter we think there's a new thought being presented, when in reality there's not. That English word, "but," in chapter 2, verse 1 is telling us that there's going to now be a contrast, a follow up, based on what Peter has just been teaching the believers. Here's what we know through the first chapter of 2nd Peter—Peter believes that there are seven supplements that we must add to our saving faith. He says they are so important that he's not going to hush till he dies and he's going to keep reminding us of what they and we already know, and he believes the Lord has revealed to him that he's going to die soon. Peter's saying...*Just get ready for this because anytime you get a letter from me or anytime I talk to you I'm going to bring this back up. I'm going to ask you how you are doing at adding these seven supplements to your faith.*

So can I ask you, how are you doing? Have you ever noticed in the church we get to a certain level of maturity that we want to learn something new? We sometimes gauge things on is it new to us; did we learn something new? Yet Peter here is reminding us of the importance of being reminded because there are some of us that don't need to learn another new thing because we aren't living up to what we already know to be true, so why add something else that we have to live up to? I'll never forget being a First Baptist in Jacksonville, Florida at a pastor's conference. There was this evangelist speaking by the name of Bill Stafford and he was just awesome. When his 45 minute time allotment was up, he just quit and started walking off the stage, but there was a pastor sitting up in the balcony who hollered out, "Don't stop, keep on, come back, tell us more!" I'll never

forget this—Bill was almost to the front row and he looked up at that pastor in the balcony and he just said this, “I’ve already told you more than you’ll ever live up to, so just live up to it.” Wow! That’s what Peter’s doing here. Can I just ask you this? How are you doing? Are you adding those seven supplements to your faith?

Now, so the church knows why Peter has the authority to say this, he reminds them that he was on the mountain with Jesus when He revealed His inner Majesty. We call that the mount of transfiguration. Can you imagine being James, Peter, and John, and all of a sudden, you’re on the mountain with Jesus and Moses and Elijah show up? This Jesus you’ve been walking with, this Jesus you’re friends with, this Jesus you’re following—all of a sudden His flesh can no longer hide His deity—and His holiness begins to transfigure through His physicalness, and you’re seeing the glory of the Second Person of the triune God. Wow! Now, Peter’s like some of us sometimes. He didn’t know when to be quiet and he talked through important times. Sometimes instead of just being able to sit, he just had to do something and so he got it all wrong. He comes up with this great idea to build a booth for Moses, Elijah, and Jesus. And while Jesus, Moses, and Elijah are talking about Jesus’s Exodus, meaning His exodus from the earth—He’s going to go to the cross, He’s going to die, He’s going to pay the sin debt of the world, He’s going to be buried, and three days later He’s going to rise again, then He’s going back to the Father’s right hand side to take a seat—somewhere in there Peter interrupts. He says...*Hey Lord, wouldn't this be a great time for me to get into a building project and build you a building, Moses a building, an Elijah building?* Jesus doesn’t say a word, but God in Heaven speaks. Do you remember what the voice says? English translations say, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him!” Now, have you noticed when Peter tells recalls it he left off that last part, “Listen to Him?” See, here’s what I think Peter heard that day. I think when he heard the voice, he really heard...*Shut up! That's my Son talking. You don't need to do anything for Him; I am well pleased in what He's doing. Shhh, listen to Him!* Peter had eyes that saw the glorified Lord on the mountain, he had ears to hear God the Father speak, and now he tells the church that they have something that’s been confirmed even more than his experience, and that’s the

prophetic word. So, what Peter's going to draw on for adding these supplements to the faith is to rely on the Old Testament revelation of God through His prophets. He says when those guys spoke they weren't speaking their own words, they weren't speaking their own will; they were speaking the Word of God. Do you know why they're speaking the Word of God? Peter says because they were being carried along by the Holy Spirit. It's the picture of an ancient ship raising its sail and the wind blowing, the sail catching the wind, and the wind in the sail moves the ship.

So, in the writing of God's Word, the prophet wasn't passive but he relied on the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit moved on him, so that when he spoke the words he was speaking weren't his own words, they were the Holy Spirit's words; it was God's Word. We believe that, amen? We believe God wrote the Bible. So here's what we can trust—God has spoken to us, but not everybody who's speaking is speaking on behalf of God. See, in the Old Testament when a prophet got ready to speak, you trusted that was God speaking. But sometimes, there were people that would get up and speak who would say they were prophets when they really weren't prophets, they were false prophets. You remember when the children of Israel sinned God spoke to Jeremiah and also to Ezekiel and He told them to get ready. He said there's going to be an exile, there's going to be a war, and they're going to lose. That they had better surrender quickly because if they don't, they're going to die because it's God's will that He brings this army in. While Jeremiah and Ezekiel were telling the truth to Israel, there were false prophets saying hey, it's going to be okay. Well, it wasn't okay. Can you imagine being a child of Israel and not knowing if this was a real prophet or a false prophet? It's kind of the dilemma we have today. We have false teachers. If I can say this, we have spiritual con artists. How do we tell? How do we know who to listen to and who not to listen to? That's what Peter's addressing here. This whole chapter, even into chapter 3 is going to be talking about false prophets. So, to set the stage this morning we're going to look at the first three verses. There are five things that are revealed about false prophets, spiritual con artists, in these first three verses.

They are Among Us

They are among us...I just want you to let that sink in. Guys, listen to me. There are some people writing books, some people preaching in pulpits, some people pastoring churches, some people teaching Sunday school classes, some people who have worldwide ministries, and they are false teachers. They're among us. That breaks my heart. I think the church ought to be the safest place on the planet—but spiritually, it's dangerous. There are people who want to con you and they're here. Now, I don't believe they're here at Hardin because I take Acts chapter 20 very seriously. In Acts chapter 20, Paul got the Ephesian elders/pastors together he said...*Listen, when I leave there are going to be some wolves dress in sheep's clothing and they're going to come in among you. When they come in among you, they're going to try to divide the sheep and teach false stuff, and I want you pastors to guard the church.* I take that very seriously. If you are in a Bible class at this church, if there is somebody we have invested in as a teacher in this church, you can trust they are not false teachers. Now, I'm going to be honest with you—some of them will occasionally teach something that's false, but that doesn't mean they're a false teacher. How do I know if one of our true teachers teaches something false? Well, here's how you gauge it. When they teach you something that disagrees with me, you know they're false. ☺ Now, they're not a false teacher; they just hadn't fully come to the truth yet.

Now, that happened to me when I was a young pastor/teacher. I started out at Owen Chapel Baptist Church when I was 20 years old. At 21, the church asked me if I would teach the book of Revelation. Now you have to remember, at that time I was bi-vocational. I was a farmer and I was going to Bible college. I taught on Sunday morning, Sunday night, and on Wednesday night. They wanted me to teach the Book of Revelation on Sunday night. So we announced that I was going to teach the book of Revelation and we doubled our attendance. We had the highest attendance on Sunday night we ever had, it was twice as high as it was on Sunday morning, because everybody was coming to hear this 20 year old guy teach the book of Revelation. I found this really, really good book by a guy named Hal Lindsey called *The Late Great Planet Earth*. At that time, I didn't

know to read my Bible before I read a commentary, so on Sunday afternoon I would read what Hal Lindsey said about Revelation chapter 1, and *then* I would read my Bible. And when I read my Bible, man, everything he said I saw it! I thought I was preaching the Bible, but do you know what I was really preaching? I was preaching Hal Lindsey. I would get into arguments with people because I thought I was preaching the Word of God. Well, several years later, I'm at Hardin, and I start studying the book of Revelation for myself, no commentaries. The next thing you know, I begin to realize, whoa, Hal Lindsay was wrong! Do you know what I did? I scheduled a time to go back to Owens Chapel and apologize to those people for teaching them wrongly. Now please hear my heart. I was not a false teacher; I just taught something that was wrong.

There is a difference. What Peter is addressing here are false teachers, people whose doctrine is wrong, people whose motives are wrong. And there's a terrible consequence to not only the false teacher, but to the people who have been led to believe what they believe. Here's what I want to say to you...they're among us, not here in Hardin, but they're out in the county. Their books are in the bookstores. Their programs are on TV. There are a whole lot of them on social media sites. I'm just telling you to be aware. Amen.

They Bring in Destructive Heresies

We have to be aware; we have to recognize they are among us, because they secretly bring in destructive heresies. See they're already among us, so when they get ready to contradict God's Word, they do it secretly, they do it deceptively. They don't start out the conversation by introducing themselves and saying "I'm a false teacher so don't listen to what I'm going to say because what I'm going to say to you is a lie." They don't do that. They *win* followers, they're patient, but their heresies are destructive. Now, most of us are mature enough that if we saw a heresy, we would stay away from it, right? But do you know what I discovered? This word, heresy, originally didn't mean what we think it means today. It started out meaning 'to choose.' It started out to be used as you choose to have an opinion about something, so when you have an opinion, that's a heresy. So you would go to the doctor to get his opinion and he would give you his

heresy, his opinion, about what was wrong with you and how you needed to be treated. In other words, if you had a problem with something, you would go to somebody and ask what they thought, and they would give you their heresy, their opinion. Have you noticed there have been times I have been preaching and I'll be real adamant about something, and then all of a sudden, I'll say, "Alright, I'm going to give you my opinion," and I give you my opinion? Now, I still remind you that even though it's my opinion, it's right because it's my opinion, right? I would not give you my opinion if I thought it was wrong, so therefore when I give you my opinion, I'm believing it's right...just like you believe your opinion's right.

But here's what happened...opinions started leading people to get together and form groups around opinions. We call them factions. The next thing you know, some of those factions got so ingrained in the opinion that the faction in society became divisive. Whoa! That is what Peter's saying...there are some people in Christendom you have to be aware of because they've got an opinion, but this opinion they have is destructive. It's going to lead to ruin. The word that he uses for destruction here is the same word that Jesus used to talk about Judas. It's the same word Paul used in Romans 9:22 when he talked about God being the potter and us as sinful man being the clay, and how God has molded some of us to be vessels of wrath and some of us to be vessels of mercy. And that vessel of wrath is destined to destruction, eternal punishment, eternal separation from God. That's the word here. What breaks my heart is there are some different opinions we can have that doesn't matter because that different opinion is not destructive. But there are some beliefs that are destructive, they destroy people's lives, they destroy churches; they're harmful. That's what Peter's identifying here.

I want to tell you about one that affected us many years ago. In the early 1800's, two brothers came to the United States from Europe. One's name was Thomas and the other's name was Alexander—they were ministers. When they come to the United States in the Pennsylvania area, these guys were students of God's Word and they wanted to start a church. In starting their church, they realized that they had never been biblically baptized. So they checked all the churches out here in the Pennsylvania area and the

churches in America, and they come to the conviction that the Baptist church in the early 1800's was the church in America that had biblical baptism. That is an historical fact. It was baptism by immersion to profess your faith in Jesus Christ, being baptized to identify that your faith was bringing you into a right relationship with Jesus. So they wanted to be baptized in a Baptist church so they went to the Redstone Baptist Association. The association realized real quickly that Alexander (by the way, their last name was Campbell) had this natural ability as a speaker, as an orator. He was an excellent debater so the Baptist church used him to debate other churches that did not believe baptism to be by immersion. Now, they want to be baptized to start a church but they don't want their church to necessarily be a Baptist church. Eventually, they baptize Alexander and Thomas Campbell and then Alexander and Thomas go back and baptize their followers, and the Brush Run congregation starts, cooperating with the Redstone Baptist Association. It wasn't long until the association began to realize that Alexander had opinions that differed from the Baptist church and they couldn't work it out, so in 1821 to 1822 the Brush Run Church, under Alexander Campbell, pulled away from the Redstone Baptist Association. When they did, there was this swath of the United States who followed him—from Pennsylvania to Ohio, to Kentucky, to Tennessee. In Kentucky alone, we lost 9580 church members to Alexander Campbell in 1821. Half of our churches we lost. That group became known as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). However, we know that Alexander Campbell is not known for being a part of that church; Alexander Campbell is known for being part of another church. See, once that church started, again, there was a dispute over the opinion of Alexander Campbell. The next thing you know, another group of people called the churches of Christ came out of the Christian Church, who had come out of the Baptist church.

Guys, listen. What Peter is referring to here happens all the time. Now I want to be clear here—as a pastor there is part of me that is so thankful we have other denominations. Imagine if all of us here this morning all had about six or seven different beliefs on different things, and every time I started to preach on something, somebody stood up and wanted to debate me on what I believed. Or they wanted to debate you on what you

believed. That would be horrible, agreed? Now, I want to be on record here—there are some different opinions people have that don't matter, but there are some things that do matter. There are some differences when it comes to the Bible interpretation that if we believe falsely, we're going to split Hell wide open, and not only for us who teach that, but for those who follow that teaching. Do you hear Peter's words? Secretly, these false teachers, these spiritual cons, bring in destructive opinions, destructive divisions, destructive heresies. They physically tear down God's church and they spiritually keep a person from being with God in eternity forever. Be aware!

Now, Peter won't quit. He says they even denied the master who bought them. This word, deny, means ultimately they don't really follow Him. They're in the church, they talk about Him, but in reality, they are not submissive to Him. They're denying Him and His work for them. That blows my mind! This word, master, is not used very many times in the Bible but it is used. I want to preface what I'm going to say next by saying I cannot believe there was ever a time in human history when people, especially Christian people, believed it was okay to own slaves. I'm sorry...how could somebody not know that's wrong? To forcibly take a person from their land who did not want to be with you, and you believe it's okay to do that is abominable! If you believe it's ever been okay, something is wrong with you, it's just wrong! Yes...it was practiced in the Roman Empire; therefore, there were people who were Christians in the Roman Empire who were slaves and they had earthly masters, and that's the word that's used here. The word master means someone who completely owns you because they have bought you, and that's what Peter's referring to here. You realize that if you're a Christian you were bought by Jesus Christ. He paid for you on a cross so that you could be His. When you became His, you surrendered your life to Him, not forcefully but voluntarily. So here's what Peter's saying...these false teachers, these spiritual cons, they deny that. They deny what? They deny Jesus being Lord and master, having complete control of us as believers. They deny the one who bought them.

Now, not all of us have been raised in the background I've been raised. It took me a long time to get over the way I was raised spiritually. How about

you? There were some things I was taught that I was just taught wrong on. Some of you were taught wrong on things and it takes a while to get over that. It took a while to admit Granddaddy Bogard and Papaw Cunningham might not have known everything right spiritually. You have the same problem in your world, right? When I first started studying the Bible, I believed in this doctrine called "once saved, always saved." So when I would come to passages like 2nd Peter 2:1, I would dismiss them because it would contradict what I already believed to be true. So I have a problem here...because I have a person who is a false teacher and it says the Lord has bought him, and an eternal destruction's going to come upon him. So if he really is saved, then he's going to lose his salvation because he's a false teacher. Well, there was a time where I couldn't have entertained that because I had other beliefs that caused me to believe that can't be true. I would use those other scriptures to influence this scripture. Then I had this thought one day—what if I've misinterpreted all those other scriptures, and what if this is the scripture that is teaching something that I should be using to influence those other scriptures? Stick with me here. Here's what I want to warn us about...don't use what you already know to cause you to believe this may be saying something it's not saying. We have to approach every scripture in the Bible honestly and objectively, and not let other scriptures influence the scripture we are looking at, but trust it may influence the other scriptures we've already believed. Does that make sense? So here's my dilemma. This could be teaching that a Christian can become a false teacher, and once you become a false teacher and you start teaching falsely, you're really denying the one who bought you; therefore, if you go to Hell, you actually can lose your salvation. It's a possibility. Now don't turn me off yet; you have to let me finish this. Is this a possibility? Yes...until we get to the last verse of chapter 2. When we get the last verse of chapter 2, it's describing these false teachers who are in the church, they look one way but then they go back to another way, and then to summarize it here's what Peter says, "What the true proverb says has happened to them: 'The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire.'" Wow! Do you know what a false teacher is? They're not a Christian, they're a dog; they're a pig. Do you know what the nature of a pig is? To be muddy.

I raised pigs so I know about pigs. My Papaw had a bunch of pigs. Let me tell you what happened. I heard Murray State University was putting on a gilt show and I wanted to show in the gilt show. I'd never shown a gilt in my life; I had never even been to a gilt show. Me and Papaw decided to go and we picked the biggest, baddest gilt we could get, thinking that's what everybody would want. So I take my gilt and we go to the Murray State show. I've washed my pig and have my pig ready. I've got a stick somebody gave me, and my pig didn't know about a stick, I didn't know about a stick, but I learned how to do the stick thing. Now, my pig is looking really good (this is the first time I had washed the pig)! We start to go into the arena and there was this little crack in the fence...and guess what my pig did? My pig went through that crack in the fence, and it was in the winter. My pig got outside the fence, found some snow, found some mud, and the next thing you know my pig laid down and got muddy. Let me just say I didn't show my pig in the hog show! Do you know what my pig reminded me? My pig was a pig. For a little while, it was all clean but that's not the nature of a pig.

Here's what Peter's saying—false teachers are not saved and eventually you're going to see the true side of them—but by the time you realize the true side of them, it's already too late. They are already destined to the road to Hell. So I don't believe this is contradicting security of the believer but it's contradicting something else; it's contradicting something that people believe, and that's Jesus Christ did not die for everybody He just died for some. Yet when I read this, these false teachers were bought by Jesus...and do you know what Jesus Christ did? Even for a false teacher who's going to bring destructive heresies on himself and on the church, Jesus Christ laid down His life for them—He died for them and He paid their price on that cross. No, the substitutionary atonement never gets applied to their life because they don't believe, but it doesn't mean Jesus didn't die for the sin of the whole world. I believe Jesus died for the sin of the whole world. Now, I also recognize that not everybody's going to come to Jesus, and the only people that ultimately come to Jesus are the elect, those whom God chose before the foundation of the world. That's a choice God made, not me. These two doctrines do not contradict each other.

While only those who believe will come to know Christ, those who've been elected will believe He still died for the sin of the whole world.

They Will Have Followers

Can you imagine this? Someone that Jesus died for on the cross, they're tearing up His church! They're building buildings, they're building ministries, they're building everything around themselves, and they've got followers. They've got people who believe them...and they're following sensuality. Now, sensuality normally is going to be translated in a sexual way, but what the word sensuality is really referring to here is we live our life by our senses—not spiritually but physically. I want to say this...when you're in the Bible Belt of America and you're a false teacher, you don't just appeal to people's desire to be rampant sexually outside the boundaries God set. There are a lot of us in here that are driven, we like a challenge, and we think there's not anything we can't achieve, so you present the gospel to us in a 'me plus God' way...*Jesus had to die on that cross. He had to die on that cross because He had to pay your sin debt; you couldn't pay your sin debt. He did what He was supposed to do now you do what you're supposed to do. Now it's on you. You believe, you get baptized, you join the church, you read your Bible, you witness.* That is a 'me plus God' thing for salvation. The next thing you know, we have a whole groups of people who are not trusting in the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross for their salvation. We're trusting in Jesus plus ourselves. No! No! No! That appeals to sinful humanity but it's not biblical. For salvation in the one who bought us, our faith can only be in Him. If our trust is in anything but Him, we are not His and we are not part of the body of Christ.

They Harm the Truth

Do you know what these people do? They blaspheme the way of truth. The way of truth, the gospel, the church! In the book of Acts, we're called The Way. Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." By the way these false teachers are teaching and living, all of a sudden people are beginning to blaspheme the way of truth. The word, blaspheme, means they ridicule, they make fun of, they malign. I'm going to get in trouble for saying this, but I have to say it

because when you get to my age, it doesn't matter anymore. I used to defend this teaching called "once saved, always saved," but then I started to see that people were using that doctrine to defend people who were living like Satan in the community. The church I was part of was defending those people saying, "Yeah, they're really saved because I remember they knelt down and they prayed a prayer." Now they're living like Satan; never saw a life change in him at all. Then, I started noticing when the people in the community I was trying to witness to found out 'so-and-so' was a part of the church, and I was saying that person's saved, they started asking me this question, "If they can live that way and go to Heaven when they die, why can't I just keep living the way I am living? Why do I need Jesus?" Whoa! I realized that those of us who are arguing for somebody who's living in sin that yes, they've been saved, we are ridiculing the gospel...we are blaspheming the gospel. This is why, not even at funerals, I will not say you're saved when some of you live the way you live, because everything in your life contradicts a life change. No, we are not perfect, but when God's Holy Spirit drew us to Jesus Christ and we repented of sin, we repented of a sinful lifestyle; God crucified us with His Son. The sinner we were died with Jesus and the new man got up with Jesus. That new man that got up with Jesus is dead to sin and alive to God, and there's a change that comes to our life because we're a believer in Christ. Do I believe in security of a believer? Absolutely! But you had better make sure you're a believer, because if you're not life is going to reveal that at some point and things are going to happen and they will reveal you don't really know Christ. Don't you listen to all those false teachers who tell you you're okay because of a prayer you prayed at the altar of a church in Bible school or in a revival—if there was not a life change you are not a believer in Christ.

Because of Their Greed, They Exploit with False Words

Why are teachers false? Because they're greedy, Peter says, and they exploit us with words, false words. This word, false, is where we get our English word, plastic, from. They have plastic words. Have any of you ever thought something that was plastic was real? This has actually happened me before. You know I like fruit. I have been into people's homes before and they tell me to make myself at home. When they tell me that, I look

on the table and they've got this bowl of fruit—apples, oranges, grapes, bananas—the next thing you know I've got one of them in my hand...and it's not real; it's plastic. That's false teachers. Looks real, sounds real, but it's not based on God's Word. It's false. Why would someone be false? Because they're greedy. Now, normally when we think of someone who's greedy, we think of someone who wants money, wealth. No, no, no...there are other things you can be greedy for. I don't know of anybody who would go into ministry for wealth or money, do you...unless you're going to be on those guys who gets their own private plane and have a national ministry, but a local guy's not going to get wealthy. Do you know where some of the motivation comes from? Some of our false teachers we have to be aware of can be the greed of popularity, the greed of wanting to have a follower, or the greed of wanting to be perceived as the best and have the biggest. That person's motive is greed. They want more, and they want more, and they want more, so they just keep coming up with more and more words that we never put through the pages of God's Word. Therefore, there are some opinions out there that are destructive. Please don't let your friends, your family, or yourself follow one of these destructive heresies. They lead to the pit of Hell.