

# **The Reality, Nature, and Judgment of False Teachers**

## **II Peter 2:1-3**

The major theme of II Peter is warning Christians of false teachers. Chapter 1 laid a foundation of truth. This is the true gospel, this is what true Christianity looks like, this is how we know the gospel is true: All that is laid out in Chapter 1. Beginning in chapter 2, the focus of this epistle now turns directly toward false teachers. God wants us to be equipped to resist false teachers.

### **I. The Reality of False Teachers**

Verse 1 begins, “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you.” Chapter 2 begins with this reminder that in the time of the Old Testament prophets, there were also false prophets among the people.

The previous verse, II Peter 1:21, is speaking about the Old Testament prophets: “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

That same thought is continued here in II Peter 2:1, “But there were false prophets also among the people.” God spoke His Word through men He chose and

prepared and equipped for this work. These men were true prophets of God, but there were also false prophets among the people.

Whenever God sends true prophets to deliver His words to His people, the devil stirs up false prophets to seduce and deceive. One early example is the magicians in Egypt who worked signs and wonders before Pharaoh. These false prophets had a form of power, but they could not match the signs and wonders God performed through his servant Moses. Yet the works and words of these magicians helped harden the heart of Pharaoh against the word of God that Moses delivered.

Another example of false prophets can be found in I Kings 22. In that passage we read of Jehoshaphat, the good, godly king of Judah, went down to visit Ahab, the wicked king of Israel. Ahab asked Jehoshaphat to join him in battle against the Syrians. During this discussion they brought in some prophets to advise them. I Kings 22:6 tells us that 400 prophets came and claimed to speak on behalf of God. They used God's name with their prophecies. They presented their words as if they were the words of God. They said, "Go up, for the Lord shall deliver [Ramoath-gilead] into the hand of the king."

But Jehoshaphat, that godly king, could recognize false prophets. He asked Ahab [in verse 7], "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides, that we may inquire of him?" Jehoshaphat wasn't fooled. Jehoshaphat wanted a true prophet of the Lord to advise them.

What I find most interesting in that whole passage is Ahab's response in I Kings 22:8. Ahab said to Jehoshaphat: "There is one man . . . by whom we may inquire of the Lord: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil"

It seems that Ahab also knew these 400 prophets before him were false prophets. Ahab knew that they did not truly speak on behalf of God; but they told him what he wanted to hear, so he accepted them. The one man Ahab knew would speak from the Lord didn't tell Ahab what he wanted to hear, and so Ahab hated him.

How often do we have an attitude like Ahab, where we hate the truth simply because it isn't what we want to hear? How often do we reject the Word of God and reject those who would share the Word of God with us because it isn't what we want to hear? Instead we go and find false friends, false teachers, who will sooth us with comfortable words.

In the Law, God equipped His people Israel to handle false prophets. Deuteronomy 18:20 says, "But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die."

It was a very serious thing in the eyes of God for a prophet to claim he spoke in the name of God if God had not commanded him to speak or if he spoke in the

name of false gods. Under the Old Testament Law, this was a capital offense. That false prophet was to be put to death.

How can the people of God discern between the false prophets and the true? The next two verses, Deuteronomy 18:21-22 give this instruction, “And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.”

This is a very simple test. Did the prophecy come to pass? If not, then the prophet in question is a false prophet. However, we have to be careful here because the opposite is not necessarily true. If a prophet claims something will happen and it doesn't happen, then they are clearly a false prophet. But if a prophet claims something will happen and it does come to pass, it doesn't necessarily mean that they are a true prophet. There is still another test that must be applied.

Earlier in the book of Deuteronomy, in chapter 13, we find more instruction God gave to His people concerning false prophets. Consider Deuteronomy 13:1-3, “If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, *And the sign or the wonder come to pass*, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; *Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of*

*dreams*: for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul” (emphasis added).

Even if a prophet was able to perform signs and wonders and his prophecy came to pass, if the prophet’s instruction didn’t line up with the revelation God had given in this Word, than that prophet was to be rejected.

What an excellent reminder this is that the revelation God has given in His Word is always superior to our feelings and experiences. Our feelings and experiences can lead us astray. God’s Word will never lead us astray. From all this we see that God had equipped His people in the Old Testament to handle false prophets.

Why does Peter, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit bring this up? Why remind New Testament believers that the Old Testament saints also had to struggle against false prophets/false teachers? Old Testament examples of false prophets serve to remind, instruct, and encourage us as we face false teachers in our time.

First, these Old Testament examples serve as a reminder. As we consider the history of God’s people and the false prophets among them, we are reminded that there is no novelty in false teaching. God wasn't caught by surprise when false teachers tried to infiltrate the church. This is no new thing. We are not the first generation to face false teachers, and if the Lord tarries we will not be the last.

Sometimes we can be like Elijah when he cried out to God and said, “I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away” (I Kings 19:14). Except we

might say something like, “I, even I only, am faithful. I alone have resisted these false teachers.”

In this verse, II Peter 2:1, God reminds us just as he reminded Elijah, “There are others who are faithful. There are others who have struggled in the defense of the truth. There are others who have had to face false prophets and false teachers.” False teaching is no new thing, and just as God equipped the Old Testament saints to face false prophets, God will help and equip us as well.

Next, these Old Testament examples serve to instruct us. Throughout the ages, God has allowed His people to endure the temptations brought by false teachers. I would again point you to one of the verses we looked at earlier, Deuteronomy 13:3, “Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: *for the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul*” (emphasis added). This is a powerful verse. It reveals that God allowed His people to be tempted by false prophets. Not because he had rejected them. Not because he had given up on them. Not because he no longer loved them. No, rather, God allowed them to be tempted in this way to prove them.

God has used false teachers in every age to test, purify, and motivate His people. False teachers are used by God to test. Any movement that claims to be Christian, yet accepts open, blatantly false teaching has been exposed by this Divine test. They have been tried, and found wanting.

False teachers are used by God to purify. When false teachers infiltrate a church or movement, they expose the camp followers. They expose those who are not truly regenerate, those who are not born-again and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, those who are not equipped to resist false teaching. Those who are God's are kept by the power of God (I Peter 1:5). Those who are not God's are not kept.

False teachers are used by God to motivate His people. We are coming up on a very significant date in Church history, October 31. On this date the world celebrates an ancient holiday that has come to be called Halloween. But on October 31, 1517 an unassuming German monk named Martin Luther set into motion a series of events that culminated in a movement that today is called the Reformation. On that day, over 500 years ago, Martin Luther nailed a document called the *95 Theses* to the church door in Wittenberg. These 95 theses were points of doctrine that Martin Luther wanted to debate with church officials.

Why did Martin Luther do this? He wasn't trying to alter the course of world history. He wasn't trying to break apart the Roman Catholic church. He wasn't trying to become the figurehead of hugely divisive religious, political, social, and cultural issue.

Martin Luther did what he did because he was a child of God. He knew God. He knew what God's Word said. And he knew he had a responsibility to confront false teachers. God used false teachers to stir up Martin Luther and other men of that time to bring about a resurgence of biblical Christianity. Throughout biblical

history and church history you find many such examples of people who have been motivated to stand boldly for the Lord as a result of the false teaching that was around them. Old Testament examples of false prophets and examples of false teachers throughout church history serve to instruct us on how to handle the false teachers of our time.

Third, these Old Testament examples serve to encourage us. What encouragement could possibly be found in a history of false teaching? Sometimes we can feel small, insignificant, and helpless in the face of all the false teaching that is out there. The false teachers seem to be so numerous. What's worse, the false teachers are so popular. The vast majority seems to be on their side. It can feel like a hopeless fight.

But as we look at the Old Testament examples of false prophets and consider all that the true people of God faced in those times, we are encouraged because we find that God has never lost. The mightiest waves of falsehood the father of lies has ever been able to muster up have always broken ineffectually against the sure rock that is the Word of God. As we study the Old Testament we are encouraged to find that the truth of God has always prevailed against the false prophets. Not only has God prevailed, but He has been magnified and glorified through this.

Here we see yet another example of a weapon the devil believes he will use to strike against God, but God in His sovereignty turns and uses it to accomplish

His perfect will. What an encouragement this is for us be faithful where the Lord has placed us.

From our text this morning we have seen the reality of false teachers: “There shall be false teachers among you.” This is not said to dishearten or discourage us. Rather, this is a warning so that we can be alert to the danger and equipped to face it. This passage goes on to describe the nature of false teachers.

## **II. The Nature of False Teachers**

False teachers secretly bring in heresy. Verse 1 says, “false teachers . . . privily shall bring in damnable heresies.” The particular word that is translated as “privily bring in,” or “secretly bring in,” is only used in the New Testament in the context of false teachers infiltrating the church. It was used by the Greeks to describe enemies who were introduced secretly into a city by traitors within.<sup>1</sup> What a fitting description this is for what false teachers do in the church: “Enemies brought in by traitors.” They are traitors who secretly bring in false teaching. That false teaching is described here as “damnable heresies.”

This word “damnable,” as it is used here means “fit to be utterly destroyed.”<sup>2</sup> This word is used six times in II Peter. Twice it refers to false teaching. The other

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<sup>1</sup> *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, p. 215.

<sup>2</sup> *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, p. 303.

four times it is used to refer to false teachers themselves. In the eyes of God, false teaching is damnable, it is fit to be utterly destroyed. As far as God gives us the opportunity and the grace to resist false teaching, we must resist it with all our might. It is fit to be utterly destroyed.

This word “heresies” is also an interesting word. Our English word “heresy” is just a transliteration from the Greek. The Greek definition for heresy is “a choosing, a choice . . . and hence, an opinion, especially a self-willed opinion, which is substituted for submission to the power of truth, and leads to division.”<sup>3</sup>

What a picture that paints of heresy: a self-willed opinion which is substituted for submission to truth, and leads to division. John Calvin commented here, “The bond of holy unity is the simple truth. As soon as we depart from that, nothing remains but dreadful discord.” False teachers secretly bring in heresy.

False teachers deny the Lord. Verse 1 describes false teachers as “even denying the Lord that bought them.”

It is important that we don’t miss-apply this verse. This verse does not teach that Christians can somehow deny the Lord and forfeit their salvation. In these verses Peter is speaking about false teachers. People who by the nature of their teaching are anti-Christ. People who are under the wrath of God. If Peter was going to comment on the ability of Christians to somehow lose their salvation, why would he talk about it here, in the middle of this discussion about false teachers,

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<sup>3</sup>*Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, p. 217.

and not in the first 11 verses of this epistle where he is specifically talking about the gospel and salvation?

Our salvation is secure in the finished work of Jesus Christ. I Peter 1:5 teaches that Christians are “*kept by the power of God* through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

Philippians 1:6 says, “Being confident of this very thing, that *he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it* until the day of Jesus Christ.”

Jude 24-25 say, “Now unto *him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy*, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”

In the light of many clear passages that speak about a believer’s security in Christ, this verse cannot be teaching that Christians can somehow lose their salvation.

This verse is simply describing the hypocrisy of these false teachers who claim to have faith in God. The false teachers Peter has in mind here are false teachers “among you,” among the church, among Christians. These are false teachers who claim to be Christians. They claim to be bought with the precious blood of Jesus Christ. On one hand these false teachers claim Jesus is their Lord, their Master, but on the other hand they deny him.

False teachers often don't deny the Lord with their words. With their words they claim Christ. They claim that their message comes from the Lord. They claim to speak to the people of God on God's behalf. Yet they deny the Lord. How do they deny Him? They deny the Lord by refusing to submit to the authority of Jesus Christ.

This is the foundational error of all false teachers. They may teach many false things: denying the full deity of Jesus Christ, denying the virgin birth, denying the bodily resurrection. But the foundational error of false teachers is denying the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Jude wrote about this as well in Jude verse 4, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

Turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, into sensuality, into an excuse to gratify the lusts of our flesh. Such mishandling of the grace of God is a denial of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you claim the grace of God, if you claim to be a Christian, and you use the promise of God's forgiveness as an excuse to continue in sin, you are denying Jesus Christ. You might claim Him with your words, but with your life you deny Him.

False teachers may claim Christ with their words, but with their actions they deny Him. False teachers deny the Lord.

False teachers lead many astray. The beginning of verse 2 says, “And many shall follow their pernicious ways.” It is not a few who are led astray by false teachers, but many. The heart of man is hardened in sin against God. In our sin we not only resist the truth, but we readily embrace lies. Jeremiah 5:31 says, “The prophets prophecy falsely . . . and my people love to have it so.” Matthew Henry’s commentary says, “Men drink in iniquity like water, and are pleased to live in error.”

In fact, there have been many times when the faithful have seemed so few that God’s people have felt despair. We saw this despair in God’s prophet Elijah when he prayed, “I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away” (I Kings 19:14).

If you are familiar with John Calvin’s life, you know that one of the major struggles he had during his ministry in Geneva was with a group of people called the Libertines who taught that the free grace of God was actually exalted by a sinful life. The Libertines hated John Calvin because he preached repentance, a turning away from sin, and holy living. They made his life in Geneva miserable and dangerous. One of their leaders was arrested for being part of a conspiracy to assassinate Calvin. At times, John Calvin was deeply discouraged by the large following these false teachers had.

You can sense some of that when you read Calvin's comments on this verse. He said, "A large number of men are led astray, so that few continue in true obedience to Christ. So, at this day, there is nothing that more violently disturbs pious minds than such a defection. For hardly one in ten of those who have once made a profession of Christ, retains the purity of faith to the end. Almost all turn aside into corruptions, and being deluded by the teachers of licentiousness, they become profane." Throughout history we see example after example like this, where false teachers have led multitudes astray.

It is not uncommon for false teachers to have large followings. We must keep in mind that the world's metrics for success do not necessarily reflect godliness or truth. Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. When we are seeking to have discernment about a particular group or a teacher, we must compare what they say with the Word of God.

Success is no measure of godliness. A robust building program, large bank accounts, great crowds of people gathered: these things can happen among the faithful, but they can also happen among the false. We must compare their teaching to the Word of God. This is the guide we have been given. We must rely on the Holy Spirit to give us discernment from His written Word.

Notice also where false teachers lead their crowds of followers: "Many shall follow their pernicious ways." "Pernicious" simply means destructive. False teachers lead those that follow them to destruction.

Back in 2005 in the country of Turkey there was a flock of 1500 sheep that were grazing on a hill.<sup>4</sup> One of those sheep jumped off a cliff that was about 45 feet tall and fell to its death. To the shock and horror of the shepherds who were watching that flock, the rest of the flock, all 1500 sheep, followed that one on it's deadly plunge. Over 400 of the sheep died from the fall or from being crushed by the sheep that followed. False teachers are like that first sheep that jumped to destruction and led the others to their destruction as well.

Some of your Bibles may have a different word here for pernicious or destructive. For example, the ESV says, "And many will follow their sensuality." This is a not a reference to just sexual immorality, but any indulgence of the lusts of the flesh.

What makes false teachers so appealing to so many people? Their teaching allows for the indulgence of sin. False teaching and immoral practices often go hand in hand. Look further down in this chapter to verses 18b-19a, "They [false teachers] allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption."

Faithful teachers will call us to holiness and true godliness. False teachers will indulge sin. Through their licentious or sensual teaching, they will lead multitudes astray.

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<sup>4</sup><http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4665511.stm>

Verse 2 goes on to show that false teachers tarnish the testimony of the church. The second part of verse 2 says, “By reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.” The “whom” spoken of in this verse could be false teachers, or it could be the great crowds who are led astray by false teachers. The “way of truth” is the gospel, Jesus Christ, His Body the church, those who are called by his name. False teachers and their followers, through their sin, bring great reproach upon Christianity.

The world, those who are outside of the church looking in, blame Christianity for the evil practices of some of its professors. See here the vast scope of damage done by false teachers. They have set themselves upon a course that ends in destruction. They lead many others astray. But what’s more, they bring shame and dishonor upon the name of Christ.

May we all be mindful of our responsibility to represent Christ before a watching world. It is not just false teachers who can tarnish the testimony of the church. I think of what God said to David after his sin with Bathsheba in II Samuel 12:14, “By this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.”

Our sin doesn’t just affect us. It affects those around us. It affects the body of Christ we are a part of. It gives occasion to enemies the Lord to blaspheme. May the lives we live be lives of truth and virtue. May we never give occasion to the world to blaspheme the name of Christ, or speak evil of Christianity.

False teachers are motivated by covetousness. The first part of verse 3 says, “And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you.” Covetousness or greed is the primary motivation of false teachers. False teachers don’t care about the truth, they care about themselves. They will always be looking for some way to exploit their followers. Consider the strong accusation this verse brings against false teachers. It says, “They make merchandise of you.” They see you as something to be bought and sold and traded. They don’t care about you as a person. They see you as an object to be exploited. The language that is used in this verse to describe false teachers could have been used in New Testament times to describe a slave trader who bought and sold human beings like they were some sort of commodity.

How do false teachers accomplish this? How do they bring people under their control to be exploited? They use feigned words, false words. They lie, like their father the devil. They may flatter you. They may say all sorts of wonderful sounding things. They may preach sermons that impress with beautiful language and an eloquent delivery. They might write books that on the surface seem wonderful and helpful. But all these things are feigned words. They are false. They are lies. False teachers are only looking to gain followers in order to exploit them.

Compare false teachers with faithful teachers. Faithful ministers of Christ are concerned about the truth and preach the truth from the Word of God. False teachers use false words to mislead and deceive. Faithful ministers of Christ desire

that those who follow them would benefit spiritually, that they would come to know Christ and be conformed into His image. False teachers desire that those who follow them would serve their own carnal desires. Faithful ministers of Christ are motivated by the grace of God at work in their lives. False teachers are motivated by covetousness.

From our text this morning we first looked at the reality of false teachers. Next, we saw the nature of false teachers: they secretly bring in heresy, they deny the Lord, they lead many astray, they tarnish the testimony of the church, and they are motivated by covetousness. The final point we will consider from this text this morning is the judgment of false teachers.

### **III. The Judgment of False Teachers**

False teachers bring upon themselves swift destruction. The end of verse 1 tells us, “False teachers . . . bring upon themselves swift destruction.” False teachers are on a trajectory that ends in destruction. By opposing the true gospel of Jesus Christ, they have set themselves up in opposition to God. Their end will be destruction. There can be no other possible outcome for false teachers. When self-serving, covetous, lying men meet the holy God, it will not be God who is hurt in that encounter. The end of false teachers is destruction.

False teachers have brought this destruction upon themselves. Who will be responsible for the destruction of false teachers? We understand, of course, that God will ultimately bring about their destruction, just as He brought the flood upon the ungodly in the time of Noah. But this verse says that false teachers bring destruction upon themselves.

Where does man's responsibility and God's sovereignty meet? Normally we wrestle with that question in the context of salvation. Here it is brought up in the opposite context, in the context of God's judgment.

Who is responsible for the destruction of false teachers? The blame lies squarely upon the shoulders of man, and the glory of righteous judgment belongs to God alone. False teachers choose this end. They ignore the warnings of scripture and press on in their carnal desires. God will bring about righteous judgment and he will be glorified in that. Just as the consideration of our salvation should lead us to worship the sovereign God, so the consideration of God's judgment upon the ungodly, upon false teachers, should lead us to worship. False teachers bring destruction upon themselves.

Their destruction will be a swift destruction. How often do we feel like the Psalmist in Psalm 73:3, "I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked?" As we mentioned earlier, it can be disheartening at times to see the great crowds that follow after false teachers. This passage reminds us that the end of false teachers is destruction, and it will come upon them quickly. Throughout

the Bible we see that God's mercy is long, but when His judgment comes, it comes swiftly.

Proverbs 29:1 says, "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall *suddenly* be destroyed, and that without remedy."

When God brought his judgment upon Korah in Deuteronomy 16, we are told that they went "down *quick* into the pit."

I Thessalonians 5:2-3 says, "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then *sudden* destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape."

Never envy false teachers for the prosperity and popularity they enjoy in the present. Plead with them. Pray for them. Pity them. They bring upon themselves swift destruction.

Next we see that God's judgment against false teachers was established long ago. The middle of verse 3 says, "Whose judgment now of a long time . . ." The principle of God's judgment against false teachers was settled in eternity past.

Consider Jude 4, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

God knew that there would be false teachers who would come and try to lead others astray, and from all eternity, God had a settled, steady, resolute condemnation of false teachers.

Don't ever think that God is reactionary in His wrath or judgment. False teachers don't aggravate God until His judgment falls upon them. God doesn't react to our sin. He is holy. He is unchanging. He has a settled, steady, and consistent opposition to sin. As we consider this it should cause us to wonder at the mercy of God. Why has God been so merciful to us?

If you are not a Christian, this should cause you to fear the judgment of God. God's opposition to sin is settled, unchanging, and determined from eternity past. You can't outrun God's judgment. You can't hide from God's judgment. You can't out-smart God's judgment. There is only one way to escape from the judgment of God. You must repent. You must turn away from your sin. You must turn to Christ. The blood of Jesus Christ is the only safe refuge from the judgment of God.

God's judgment against false teachers will certainly come to pass. The end of verse 3 says, "Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." Men are apt to think that an extension of mercy is a sign that judgment will never come.

Men will tempt God and say things like, "God, if you are real, if you are angry with my sin, then strike me dead."

Then when they don't die, when God allows them to go on living, they never fall to their knees and thank God for His mercy. No, they go on in their sin assuming that God doesn't care. If judgment doesn't fall upon us swiftly, we think that somehow it will be avoided all-together.

The wicked world in the time of Noah had over 100 years to repent. Noah preached righteousness for over 100 years while he built the ark. No one believed that God's judgment would ever come. No one repented. No one wanted to get on the ark until the rain began to fall, and then it was too late.

The judgment of God is not idle. He is rich in mercy and long suffering, but He will bring about the judgment He has ordained against the ungodly. Specifically in this context we are reminded that God's judgment against false teachers will certainly come to pass.

The world is full of false teachers. Many who claim to be in Christ are wolves in sheep's clothing. Lest this should make our faith to falter, the Lord has graciously given us passages of Scripture like our text this morning. This text warns us that there will certainly be false teachers. This text describes false teachers so that we can recognize them and guard against them. And finally this text assures us that false teachers will face the judgment of God for their evil deeds. May God give us grace to heed His word and exercise discernment in this area.