

# Ministry of Grace Church

## 2 Peter 2:9-14 - Speaker Notes



### Background

What does a person have to do to be saved?

During the Protestant Reformation in the 1500s, the reformers developed what are called the 5 solae (sola is Latin for “alone”). The 5 solae are Sola Scriptura, Sola Christus, Sola Fide, Sola Gratia, and Sola Deo gloria. This translates to

Scripture alone, Christ alone, faith alone, grace alone, and glory to God alone. So basically, they were saying that to be saved you have to depend on Scripture alone (no other writings, traditions, or creeds), you must believe in the death and resurrection of Christ alone (no saint, priest, king or anyone else but Christ), you are saved by faith alone (no works, church membership, or indulgences have anything to do with it), this salvation is by grace alone (it is strictly an unearned and undeserved gift from God), and the glory goes to God alone (no one gets credit for your salvation except God and God alone).

But what does it mean to have faith in Christ? Some people, like those in the New Thought movement of today believe that Jesus and Christ are two separate entities. They believe that Jesus was a good man, and that Christ is the god-ness that we all possess. However, in order to be saved (justified in God’s record book) you must believe that:

- Jesus **is** God who became completely man.
- He is without sin.
- Every other human being who has ever lived or ever will live is a sinner. That means that you must believe that you are a sinner.
- The penalty for sin is death.
- Jesus died on the cross as a substitutionary payment for your sins (He paid your sin-debt).

In order to be saved you have to believe these things and confess. Anything else, such as baptism, church membership, taking communion, or doing good works is not required in order to be saved. In fact they have no effect on you getting saved. But - what do we need to confess? According to the Apostle Paul in his letter to the church at Rome:

... if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, leading to righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, leading to salvation. (Romans 10:9-10)

And - once we are saved, we are no longer free to pick and choose how we live our life because:

... you are not your own? For you were bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19b-20)

When we were bought, we were redeemed from our sinful state. And - it is the blood of Jesus which was paid to redeem us:

knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things like silver or gold from your futile conduct inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. (1 Peter 1:18-19)

In other words, if you are genuinely saved, then you have confessed Jesus Christ as your Lord and you have been purchased by God with the blood of Christ - you are now His property. God is your Lord and your Master. You are His slave. He owns you. I don't know how to make that any more clear! Once we are saved, we are under the spiritual authority of God, Himself and we are obligated to do whatever He tells us to do and to live our life as He says.

Now, let's compare that to the false teachers that Peter has been talking about.

You may recall that earlier in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter, we were told that false teachers will come in and introduce destructive heresies. But – Peter also told us that God will not let them go unpunished. Remember, the long “If-then” that he started in 2 Peter 2:4

“For if God did not spare angels ... and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah ... and if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah ... and he rescued righteous Lot ...”

Now we get to the “then” portion of this conditional statement.

## **2 Peter 2:9-11**

**then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trial, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, and especially those who go after the flesh in its corrupt lust and despise authority. Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they blaspheme glorious ones, whereas angels who are greater in strength and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord.**

Now Peter makes a summary statement about what God will do with these false teachers.

Before we look at it, though, let's spend a minute talking about what is the root cause of these false teachers having gone wrong. The answer is back in verse one, “denying the Lord who bought them.” The root of their problem, Peter says, is that they refused to submit to the Lordship of the One who paid for their sins. They refused to place themselves under God's spiritual authority. Rather than believing that God is all powerful and able to do as He pleases, these teachers try to bring God down to their own level.

This is nothing more than “big man, little god” theology that has been espoused by churches throughout the ages. It has been expressed in many ways, most of which sound reasonable, some of which are well intentioned, and some are out and out heresies. Whatever the case, the ultimate

result is to draw people away from the type of relationship that God wants into the type of relationship that man thinks he wants.

One of the subtle points that Peter is making is that God is the one in control, not man. We also know that we can't control these false teachers, but God can! That's what these examples which Peter has just given us are all about. He now makes the summary statement that not only does God know how to deliver the godly out of temptation, but He also knows how to keep the ungodly from escaping. They will be judged, and they will be punished!

It's interesting that this verse does not say that God will keep us from being tested; it says that when we are tested, God will deliver us out of it. Compare what we are told in the book of Revelation. This is in the letter sent to the church in Philadelphia.

Because you have kept the word of My perseverance, I also will keep you from the hour of testing, which is about to come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.  
(Revelation 3:10)

Peter says that God will deliver the Godly out of their time of testing, but He will not allow the unjust ones, those who deny His lordship, to escape the Day of Judgment. The judgment he's talking about is the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of days where all the ungodly will be cast into the lake of fire.

The point is - these false teachers, who are teaching a theology laden with humanistic ideas and subtly denying who is really in supreme control, will eventually be judged by the Master himself. This is especially true of these false teachers. They have a way of life that caters to their appetites, especially their perverse lusts. They have so allowed their lusts to overpower them that they have become corrupt and perverse. Yet, in their mind, their actions seem normal.

Peter says that they "despise authority." This expression comes from the Greek words *kuriotētos kataphronountos*. The first of these is from the root, *kurios* which means "lord or master" and the other is a compound word which means "to think or have an evil mindset." Therefore, these words mean "to think evil of their masters" or "to despise authority." These false teachers are people who don't like anyone telling them what to do; that is, they don't have respect for authority, either civil or religious. They certainly don't want a God who tells them what to do, so they invent a theology that gives them control over their god.

But Peter doesn't stop here. He continues to describe these false teachers as "bold and arrogant;" that is, they think far too highly of themselves. He also says, "they do not tremble when they blaspheme glorious ones." In other words, these false teachers have no fear of those who are worthy of praise and glory and will freely slander or blaspheme them.

Wow! Peter certainly doesn't pull any punches when he talks about these false teachers. They have become self-absorbed and self-seeking. Their entire focus is inward instead of God-ward. For the most part, however, these false teachers appear outwardly good and honorable, hiding the reality of their desires behind a façade of devoted religiosity.

We have talked in the past about the fact that the central notion of sinfulness is really "self-ness," making our own decisions and considering only ourselves. That's the opposite of submission to God.

But these false teachers despise the ones in authority, especially those who are in spiritual authority over them. They are not afraid of the principalities and powers, and they even speak evil of them. Peter now contrasts that with the attitude of the spirit beings themselves, the angels.

Let's look at these spirit beings for a minute. There are differing ranks among the angels. There are those who are simply called "angels." This comes from the Greek word *angelos*, which means "a messenger," like those who appeared to the shepherds announcing the birth of Christ; there are a few, like Michael, who are called archangels, having a superior position to the others; and there are cherubs and seraphs that seem to have special functions around the throne of God. There are also those angels referred to as "**principalities**," translated from the Greek *archai*, meaning "those who are chiefs among the rest."

Peter says that even angels, who are greater in power and might than these false teachers who freely blaspheme higher powers, do not bring a slanderous accusation against those with spiritual dominion over them. Peter may be referring to an incident that is mentioned in the book of Jude. Jude also talks about false teachers who have crept into the church and who have spread destructive heresies. Also, like Peter, he talks about how these false teachers do not respect the spiritual hierarchy.

Satan (the Devil) is one of the top angelic beings and he was described as "full of wisdom and perfect in beauty" (**Ezekiel 28:12**) before his fall, and he remains a powerful force among the spirit beings, higher and more powerful than even Michael the archangel. Jude speaks of Michael's encounter with Satan regarding the body of Moses.

**But Michael the archangel, when he, disputing with the devil, was arguing about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a blasphemous judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" (Jude 1:9)**

Michael, though he is a powerful and mighty archangel, would not bring an accusation against Satan who is more powerful, and mightier. Instead, he left the rebuking up to the even more powerful God.

Angels will not bring a reproaching accusation against another angel, but these false teachers will freely blaspheme them before the Lord. These false teachers don't understand the very things they claim to have mastery over. Instead, as Peter will say in a later verse, they are "**speaking out arrogant words of vanity...**" (**2 Peter 2:18**) and God **will** judge them for it!

## **2 Peter 2:12-14**

**But these, like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, blaspheming where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed, suffering unrighteousness as the wages of their unrighteousness, considering it a pleasure to revel in the daytime—they are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they feast with you, having eyes full of adultery and unceasing sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed—they are accursed children.**

Peter now gives a very graphic description of these false teachers, what drives them, and what will ultimately happen to them. He says that they are "**like unreasoning animals ... creatures of instinct**" In other words, they are irrational and they are totally controlled by physical impulses and desires. They don't possess any intellectual reasoning of any kind. And, like animals, they were born only to be caught and destroyed, which is precisely what God will do to them at the end of their lives.

The word translated “**destroyed**” means “corruption, destruction, ruin, or decay.” It is a picture of a piece of rotting fruit sitting out in the hot sun; in fact, Peter uses words from this root three times in this verse. Although our translation here says, “**they ... will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed.**” A literal translation is “they will utterly perish in their corruption.” In other words, “in their rottenness, they will completely rot away.”

He also says, “these men blaspheme in matters they do not understand.” These teachers are not at all shy about condemning and speaking evil of others, even though they have no real understanding of the things about which they speak so disrespectfully.

Peter is not very kind at all in his description of these false teachers. He says they take the precious message of hope and peace from a loving God and turn it into a watered down, warm and fuzzy, feel-good-about-yourself message that is designed simply to provide for their own physical desires. These foolish teachers are totally missing the spiritual implications of what they are supposed to be doing. And - Peter says that they will rot like spoiled fruit.

This next verse is a tricky one to translate, so let’s look at it carefully. We also have to tie it to the previous verse to get the full meaning. My translation of the end of the previous verse and this one is:

**And like beasts they too will perish, suffering wrong as the reward of unrighteousness. Considering the self-indulgence of the daytime to be pleasure, they are stains and blemishes indulging in their delusions while feasting with you. (2 Peter 2:12-13)**

“**Suffering wrong as the reward of unrighteousness**” It may seem totally wrong to us when we see the ungodly getting away with, even being rewarded for, their evil deeds. But - Peter says that these false teachers will get what they deserve when all is said and done.

He goes on, “**Considering the self indulgence of the daytime to be pleasure.**” They believe in indulging themselves in pleasurable things all day long. And lest we get too self-righteous, consider that this is precisely what advertising is telling us everywhere we look: “live for pleasure, and live for today. Don’t worry about what it will cost tomorrow.”

“**They are stains and blemishes indulging in their delusions while feasting with you**” These people indulge themselves in activities that they consider appropriate, but which are morally wrong. And - these false teachers do these things under the pretense of ministering, fellowshiping, and celebrating with you in church. But all the while they are deceiving you so as to keep you around, not for what they can give you spiritually, but for what they can get from you materially.

Peter says that they are, “**enticing unstable souls.**” The word translated “enticing” is *deleadzō*, which means “to entrap with bait.” It is a picture of a fisherman (like Peter) who baits a hook with the intent of ensnaring the fish.

Once again, let me remind you that, outwardly, these false teachers are pious and righteous, pretending to teach the word of truth but instead they are corrupting the message, turning it into their own message instead of God’s message. Their purpose, of course, is to satisfy their own desires for power, possessions, and passion. These false teachers are preying on the souls of immature or unstable Christians with a message that, instead of freeing them, is entrapping them further in their ways of sin. These false teachers are well practiced in greedy covetousness.

They are not at all what they appear to be. Perhaps they do not even recognize, themselves, what is driving them. Instead of being caring and loving shepherds of the flock entrusted to them, they

are more focused on what they can get out of the flock than what they can give to the flock. Their message may sound innocent, and comforting, but their real purpose is not to meet the spiritual needs of the flock but to satisfy their own physical desires.

### **So What?**

One of the big takeaways we can get from this part of Peter's letter is that those who do not respect God's word will perish.

And - keep this in mind when you want to please God. He is not looking for eloquent leaders; He is looking for submitted and committed followers. He is the Lord and Master and He wants His followers to recognize Him as their Master and to proclaim this truth. Is that what you do?

So, the question is, are you submitted to God, or are you more like these false teachers who serve their own overpowering desires? Only you can answer these questions. Think carefully before you answer - and be honest with God. Remember – He already knows how you will answer.

The false teachers that Peter has been talking about are **not** submitted to the lordship of Almighty God. They may be great teachers. but without being submitted to God's authority, their teaching is empty vanity. In fact, none of us can be used by God unless we're submitted to His lordship. So, let me ask you, "Is Jesus Christ your Lord, or just your Savior?" He is not your savior if He is not your Lord!

How do you view the Word of God? Do you look at the Bible with respect and awe; a message for mankind from God Himself? Or do you simply see it as "the Good Book?"

Keep in mind that God will not treat with kindness those who treat His message as anything but precious and sacred!

In light of Peter's harsh condemnation of the false teachers of his day, let's examine ourselves, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11. Let's determine what our own motives really are. Are they selfish and self-serving, or are they submissive and God-seeking?

Finally, - the next time you hear a message that doesn't seem quite right, let me urge you to be like the Christians of Berea in [Acts 17:11](#) who "searched the scriptures daily to see whether these things are so." Do not assume that because they are in the pulpit that these teachers have some special revelation from God regarding the truth of the Word. Check it out yourself and let the Spirit of God teach you.

Let's pray.