

Fact Sheet for **“False Teachers among You (Part 1)”**  
**2 Peter 2:1-10a**

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Think back to some of the changes that have happened in recent history (cell phones, personal computers, Bible software, internet, websites, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, copy machines). Then think of television (1920's), first fixed wing commercial air flight (1914), automobiles (late 1800's), telephone (1876). Don't forget the printing press (1440). In the days of Peter there were no Bibles in people's hands, no Bible study tools... the NT was not even finished. The authoritative Christian message was given by the Apostles and individuals like Paul (Acts 22:3). The setting was ripe for false teachers to appear in the church. It's not hard to imagine that someone who was not a Christian could work their way into church leadership. It was in this context that Peter wrote.

**ESV 1 ¶ 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.**

This verse deserves our careful attention. Peter had just mentioned the OT prophets (1:19-21). When he now wrote in 2:1 that “false prophets also arose among the people” he is referring to false prophets among the people of Israel (Deut. 13:1-5; 18:20; 1 Kings 18:19; 22:6ff.; Jer. 5:31; 23:9-18). Now Peter wrote that there will also be false teachers among Christians. In two other passages Paul mentions the same thing (Gal. 2:4; 2 Cor. 11:13-15).

In 2 Peter 2:1 “bringing upon themselves swift destruction” does not merely mean physical death or problems in this life, it means eternal punishment. This will come clear in the following verses. It will be swift because it will come upon them suddenly when they die.

But what do we do with “even denying the Master who bought them”? “The Master” is clearly a reference to Jesus Christ. What does “who bought them” mean? There are several possibilities.

1. If this means they were Christians, then the tenor of the passage would indicate Christians can lose their salvation. This is inconsistent with many passages like John 10:27-29.
2. If this means that they merely said that they were Christians but they were lying, this seems to be reading thoughts into the passage that are not really there.
3. There is another possibility. This could mean that Christ paid the price for their redemption but they did not apply it to themselves, and so were not saved. It can be said that Christ's death is “sufficient” for all but “efficient” only for those who believe. Consider 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 2:9; and 1 John 2:2.

These false prophets were presenting themselves as Christians who were speaking God's truth, but in actuality were not even believers. They did not have the indwelling Holy Spirit and were still enslaved to sin (Rom. 6:3-11). As those who were still enslaved to sin they showed it in their life choices and in their teaching.

**<sup>2</sup> And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. <sup>3</sup> And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.**

Peter will describe their sensuality and greed in verses 10b-22. Their judgment is coming!

We now come to one of the longest sentences in the Bible (2:4-10a) where Peter gives three examples of God's judgment on those who sinned.

Example #1

**<sup>4</sup> ¶ For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment;**

A key verse for this reference is Jude 1:6. (See the sermon on 1 Peter 3:18-4:6)

Example #2

**<sup>5</sup> if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly;**

(Noah was also mentioned in 1 Peter 3.)

Example #3

**<sup>6</sup> if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; <sup>7</sup> and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked <sup>8</sup> (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard);**

**<sup>9</sup> then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, <sup>10a</sup> ¶ and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority.**

1. Where do we find authoritative spiritual truth? There is only one place to find it... in the Bible (no sermon, no person, no other book, no denomination, and certainly not in politics). The authoritative word of God is only found in the 66 books of the Bible. You have some amazing resources at your disposal to help you understand the Bible, and spiritual truth is resident in its words.

2. Don't stop at understanding God's Word. Do what it says... live by these words... let God be seen in your character.

And the first thing you should do is trust in Christ for your salvation if you haven't done so already.