

## **LETTERS TO THE EXILES - PART 8**

### **Warning: Read Before Operating**

July 11 & 12, 2015

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

*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. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.*

#### **2 Peter 2:11-22**

*Whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord. But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction, suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you. They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children! Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray. They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing, but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with human voice and restrained the prophet's madness. These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm. For them the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved. For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error. They promise*

*them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved. For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them. 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."*

### **1 Peter 2:16**

*Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.*

## **5 Primary Categories of False Doctrine in the early church:**

### **1. Docetism**

Jesus only "appeared" to come in the flesh. The idea was that human and divine could not be seamless. John, the Apostle, primarily counters this in 1 John 2:18-26, 1 John 4:1-3, and 2 John 8-11.

### **2. An Early form of Gnosticism**

There appears to be some hint of it in the "knowledge-talk" that Paul challenges in places like 1 Corinthians 8:1-3 and 1 Timothy 6:20-21. This heresy suggested that there were "secrets" that only a few "elite Christians" would know, as was the case in so many of the pagan mystery religions that filled the Roman Empire.

### **3. Jewish Legalism and Asceticism**

This false doctrine taught that Jesus was insufficient to save. This teaching included the need for circumcision, not marrying, not eating certain foods, and adhering to certain

religious festivals. See Acts 15:1ff, Galatians, Colossians 2:16-23, and 1 Timothy 4:1-3.

#### **4. Antinomianism**

At the heart of this false doctrine is the separation of body and soul, therefore, you can do anything you want and your soul will not be harmed. So, Christians can go on sinning and grace will cover their wrongdoing. The term "antinomianism" comes from the Greek term "antinomos" – "anti" meaning "against" and "nomos" meaning "law." The substantial idea is that there are no moral laws God expects Christians to obey. See Romans 6:1-2, 15, 2 Timothy 3:2-9, 2 Peter 2:1-3, 2:18-19, and 1 John 5:3.

#### **5. A False Christology**

There are hints of this heresy in the previous four categories already mentioned. However, there needs to be a special emphasis placed upon the false teaching that surrounded the person of Christ that existed in the first century. This false doctrine included: He was not the Messiah (Judaism), He did not rise from the grave and He is not supreme and authoritative. See Matthew 28:11-15, 1 Corinthians 15, and the entire letter of Hebrews. Jesus is "superior" or "better" than angels, Moses, the priesthood, etc.

#### **False Teachers:**

1. Come from within
2. Are false advertisers
3. Are rejects
4. Are above all and below none
5. Predators after prey
6. Over promise and under deliver
7. Want freedom without responsibility