Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Creatures Born to Be Killed, Part 1
Scripture: 2 Peter 2:10b-14
Code: 61-20

Turn in your Bible to 2 Peter chapter 2, 2 Peter chapter 2. We're going to be looking at 10b through verse 22 which is the full chapter. We're going to be looking continually, as we have been, at the matter of false prophets and false teachers who secretly introduce destructive heresies as it says in verse 1 of this chapter.

Now I want to warn you as we embark upon our study of verses 10b through 22 that this section is a torrent of violence, violence vented on false teachers that in some ways leaves the reader almost breathless. The profane and blasphemous purveyors of error, the seducers of men's minds and hearts who work for Satan against God are consumed in this text in a steady blast of divine fury put into words by the Holy Spirit through the pen of Peter.

As you read from verse 10 on down to the end, there is no statement within this passage that is more shocking than when Peter speaking on behalf of God calls the false prophets unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed. That's verse 12. What a description, unreasoning animals born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed.

In those words there is obviously a direct, divine assault of invectives on false teachers that reaches a peak. What Peter is saying is that false teachers are like animals who have no rational capability. They operate solely on self-indulgence. They operate on unthinking passion compelled only by instinct. Animals cannot think. They cannot reason. They make no intellectual contribution to the life of man. They make no rational contribution to the life of man. The purpose of their existence is solely to be killed. At whatever point they are in the food chain, they die to sustain the life of another creature. In the particular view of what Peter has in mind here, they are animals born to be captured and killed and consumed by men.

The only benefit that animals provide is that of physical food. So he is saying that false teachers are equally mindless, equally self-indulgent, equally driven by the instincts of their own passion and they serve men best when they are dead. Very strong language; it's hard to imagine any stronger language than that.

You might ask the question, "Why has Peter exploded in such a fury on these false prophets and false teachers?" And the answer is because he is a pastor, because he has been given by the Lord Himself the task of shepherding the Master's sheep. When Peter receives his second calling into the ministry after his defection, which calling is recorded in John 21, three times Jesus said, "Feed My sheep, feed My lambs, feed My sheep." From the very outset, Peter was called to be a shepherd who fed the sheep. He is utterly irate about false shepherds who are feeding poison to the sheep.

So here you have the man of God exhibiting a pastoral passion for truth and holiness. If we ask the question: Why has he exploded in such fury on false prophets? It is because he is the true shepherd, and they are the false shepherds who intend to poison and destroy his flock. And I want you to keep in mind that the description given in this text to be assigned to false prophets and false teachers in Peter's day is equally fit for the false teachers of our day as well.

Michael Greene writes, "Covetousness, sophisticated arguments, pride in knowledge, gluttony, drunkenness, lust, arrogance against authority of all kinds and most of all the danger of denying the lordship of the Redeemer, are these not all the paramount temptations of money mad, sex mad, materialistic, anti-authoritarian, twentieth century and I might add false teachers?" Really nothing has changed. False teachers are the same today as they were then.

But even so, after reading the first ten verses, as strong as that language is, by the time we reach the middle of verse 10 we might expect Peter to slow down a little bit, but he doesn't. It's almost as if he's just getting started in the first ten verses through 10a, and then in 10b he really lets the fury of God unleash itself. These hellish, irrational, passionate, instinctive, self-indulgent animals need more words of divine denunciation and he has more to give.

So in this chapter, which is set aside from the other two chapters to very clearly describe false teachers, the first three verses gave us a general sketch or outline, then in verse 4 through 10a he described the inevitability of their damnation. Now he goes back to that sketch he gave in verses 1 to 3 and fills it in full color so that it becomes a complete portrait of false teachers. Remember now, the whole epistle is to warn the church about false teachers and how to defend itself against them. In chapter 1 he said you have to know your salvation and you have to know your Scripture. In chapter 3 he will remind them again that they need to know their Scripture, and he will add another point, you need to know the pattern of your sanctification. If you know your salvation is sure, if you know what Scripture teaches, and if you know the pattern of sanctification, you have a defense against them. Now in the middle in chapter 2 he says, "And you need to know what they're like." And so all of this

epistle really is geared to arm us for defense against false teachers. Part of it is recognizing them and recognizing how God views them.

Now it should be noted as we study this epistle that we do not know specifically who Peter has in mind. And by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit that isn't given to us so that this might be a...a very general instruction. We don't know what specific false teachers there were at that time who are actually the threat that Peter was dealing with. We don't know the direct target of his words. We're not even too sure what their theology was, although we can surmise that certainly they were teaching some kind of liberation theology, some kind of libertine theology, some kind of "you can believe and live anyway you want" theology. But apart from that we can't be too specific about their doctrine. So these words become generally applicable to false teachers. And though we might add that not all characteristics given here would always be true of all false teachers, some of these characteristics are true of all false teachers. All of these characteristics would be true of some false teachers, but not all of them would always be true of all false teachers. So you have a very general assessment of false teachers categorically. Some of the things said here are true of all of them, such as they are unreasoning animals born only to be captured and killed because the best way they can serve mankind like a dumb animal is dead rather than alive.

So, as Peter gives this blistering diatribe against the false teachers, as he colors in the portrait, we're going to notice several points. And tonight I want to give you the first two. Number one, their presumption, their presumption. And as you listen to what I say, you'll want to stretch yourself a little beyond what I say as I try to unfold the text and see where you can apply this. You've been exposed to false teachers in our day and time, probably in many ways more than people in the past because of media. And you see if you can't sense some familiar characteristics as we look at this matter of their presumption. We're going to get a little bit technical as we go through this text because it has some difficulties in it. I don't want you to get trapped in that. I want you to be thinking about how it applies.

Their presumption, notice verse 10b, and I want to read a few verses to you. "Daring, self-willed, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties, whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord, but these, like unreasoning animals born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed, suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong." Stop at that point.

Now here is a text that describes their unbelievable presumption. It reveals something of their attitude. This is a section on attitude. The next one will be a section on action. But this one deals with

their self-willed presumption. The first word says it all in the middle of verse 10, “daring.” Literally they are darers. It's a noun. They are darers. They are brazen, they are audacious. They dare to exalt themselves. They dare to defy God and His truth. They are reckless. They are defiant, very strong and straightforward term. They give no thought to the consequence of what they're doing, to the God against whom they are doing it, to the ramifications that are going to come. They are brash, they are bold. They know no restraint.

And then he adds, self-willed. That's an adjective. If there were a noun for that word it would be used but there isn't one so he chooses an adjective, self-willed, self-pleasers. This means they are obstinate. They're stubborn. They're arrogant and they are determined in their own way. And nothing will stop them, nothing, not the truth, not the lordship of Jesus Christ, nothing. And you get the feeling here that Peter is almost aghast at their unbelievable presumption.

And how presumptuous are they? He wants to give us an illustration. How presumptuous are they? And perhaps we could have had fifty different illustrations of the kind of presumption that characterizes false teachers. Any way in which they defy the truth of God and defy the God of truth is presumption. But to show the extent of their presumption, Peter takes a very interesting approach. Back to verse 10, he says, this is how presumptuous they are, this is how stubbornly obstinate, brash and brazen they are. "They do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties."

Now that particular statement in the original text has many, many interpretations historically. People have interpreted it in a number of different ways. But I really do believe that the best interpretation of it obviously was held by those who translated the New American Standard because they follow that line. And the best way to see it is exactly the way it is translated right here in verse 10 in the New American Standard, "They do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties."

What does it mean? Well the word "revile" means to blaspheme, to speak evil of, to speak disparagingly of, to mock, to ridicule, to denigrate, to degrade. They do that to angelic *doxa*, from which we get the word doxology. It means glories, dignities, dignitaries. And in the context they are angelic, angelic dignitaries.

Now, what angelic dignitaries is he talking about? The reference must be to fallen angels. It must be to fallen angels. And we'll see that as we move into the next verse. It is a reference to demons. They fearlessly, they daringly ridicule and speak disparagingly of demons, of fallen angels. They curse demons. They curse fallen angels. They ridicule, they mock them.

Now the question that comes off of that interpretation, really a two-fold question, is how can demons be called glories? How can demons be called *doxa*, glories? Are they glorious beings? Well the answer is yes they can be called glories in the sense that they have a persona and a level of existence in the supernatural world that has a dignity and a transcendent quality about it that is beyond us. Paul said he is the prince of the power of the air. Jesus said he is the ruler of this world. Paul calls him a prince, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Jesus calls him a ruler and he is referred to by our Lord as a strong one. There is a dignity. There is a...a glorious persona that is possessed by even fallen angels, for they still retain the imprint of majesty, even like fallen, sinful, unregenerate man retains the imprint of the image of God. They're still marked by the surpassing character and quality of their creation. In fact, in Ephesians chapter 6 they are called by Paul principalities and powers and rulers. They are called spiritual beings in high places. And if we were to look carefully into 1 Corinthians chapter 15, we would remind ourselves in verse 40 that there are heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies, there is the glory of the heavenly that is one, and the glory of the earthly that is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for star differs from star in glory.

And what is Paul saying but that there are different kinds of levels of glory. There is a certain dignity that belongs even to the sun, and the stars, though they too are in a fallen universe. There is a certain imprint of dignity in the image of God that belongs to man. And there is a certain majesty that belongs to angels even though they're fallen.

Now the question comes immediately after that: How can already cursed demons be blasphemed? Well because they still maintain a certain amount of dignity, because they are still created by God in majesty and a certain level of glory even though they are fallen. They can be ridiculed unwittingly. They can be demeaned and denigrated and degraded beneath the very dignity that their creation calls for. And certainly, foolishly from the vantage point of man who is lower than they are. A certain glory, beloved, belongs to the angelic dimension of life, be they fallen or not, a certain glory belongs to those who transcend time and who live beyond and above time, a certain glory belongs to those who are spiritual, supernatural beings.

And so, there is a...a level of glory that belongs even to fallen angels that must be acknowledged, it must be recognized. Even angels have an angelic majesty of sorts and they are not to be taken lightly. We are to avoid presumptuous irreverence toward them. Listen, they are very serious beings. And God is very serious about them. And...and so are the angels, the holy angels, serious about them. There must be no flippancy regarding Satan and no flippancy regarding his angels.

So how do... What's the practicality of that? Well it could be applied to the foolishness of Halloween, say, where we laughingly, mockingly dress up like Satan or some kind of supernatural being or creature that tends to be a cartoon replica of some beings that are very seriously to be treated and not lightly. It can be applied to the daring, foolish recklessness of the Charismatic demon chasers, who presumptuously blaspheme demonic majesties. I was recently reading in a Wall Street Journal, you may have read the article, about the Phoenix First Assembly of God where they sell T-shirts that say on the front of them, "Kick Satan's," you fill in the blank. That's foolish. Prayer groups in contemporary charismatic movement wearing combat fatigues to beat up on Satan as if they were a military army. Bold, arrogant, self-willed false teachers underestimate the power of Satan and they underestimate the dignity of the host of angelic majesties and they think they are stronger than demons. They repudiate their power. They mock their dignity. They insult them and they slander them and they assume that there will be no retaliation because there's a certain kind of invincibility that they have.

And then there are the liberals who come along and just flatly deny they even exist. Anytime you despise or speak lowly or degradingly or minimize the power of Satan and his fallen angels, that's a foolish act. Speaking against those glorious beings is elevating yourself to a level you really don't belong on. It's a form of reviling that belongs to terrible presumption, terrible presumption. And yet it's a popular game to play nowadays, isn't it? Very, very popular.

False teachers have such arrogant self-will. They imagine that they are all powerful. They're head-strong. They're rebellious, reckless, contemptuous of fallen angelic majesties, creatures who are superior in power to them. That's how presumptuous they are. That's the extreme of their presumption.

And in contrast, look what he says in verse 11, "Whereas angels," and anytime you see the word "angels," reference to the angels of God, used without a modifier, without an adjective, without a descriptive, it always in the New Testament refers to the good, holy angels. "The holy angels who are greater in might and power." Greater than who? Well certainly greater than us, right? And certainly greater than the fallen angels. "Do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord."

Go back to verse 10. These presumptuous people don't even tremble when they bring their reviling against angelic majesties. And they should. They don't realize who they're dealing with. They don't realize the supernatural glory that those fallen angelic majesties have. You don't treat lightly the ruler of this world, the prince of the power of the air, principalities, powers, spiritual wickedness in heavenly

places, you don't treat that flippantly.

But these false teachers are so presumptuous that they don't even tremble when they do that. Whereas holy angels who are greater in might and power than we are, and than fallen angels are, do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord. They're greater than any false teacher. They're greater than any man. They're greater than any fallen angel. And they don't bring a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord.

It's interesting, isn't it, that holy angels don't do to demons who are inferior to them what foolish false teachers do to demons who are superior to them. Again, Michael Greene writes, "The false teachers do not hesitate to bring vituperative accusations against their superiors, whereas the angels do not ever dare to impugn their inferiors in such terms in the Lord's presence. Unlike the false teachers who are careless of the lordship of Christ and are free with their insults, the angels so revere their Lord as they live all their lives in His presence that no insulting language is allowed to pass their lips, even though it would be richly deserved," end quote.

Just as a note. The word "them" in verse 11, "The holy angels do not bring a reviling judgment against them," is best suited to refer to the angelic majesties, the demons of verse 10.

Now, just to give you a little bit of sort of underpinning with this interpretation. Why do I see these references to be to demons? Because I think it's the clearest interpretation of this text. I think it's fairly simple. It just kind of unfolds that way, doesn't it? You could see it right there. But also, apart from it being in my mind the clearest interpretation of this particular text, it is almost a direct parallel to another text, and that is Jude. Turn over to Jude and in Jude's little one-chapter epistle, verses 8 and 9, we have a very helpful parallel text. He's talking here about the same false teachers and speaking of them in much the same language. We'll be going back and forth from 2 Peter 2 to Jude all the way through this section. But in verse 8 Jude writes about the false teachers which are his subject. He says, "In the same manner, these men also by dreaming defile the flesh and reject authority" and here it comes "and revile angelic majesties." They reject authority, kurio*ttos*, they reject lordship. It's the same thing Peter said. They deny the lordship of Christ and that denial of Christ's lordship is uppermost in Jude's mind.

But then he adds, "But they revile, or blaspheme angelic majesties." And then he describes the very opposite in verse 9, just like Peter did in verse 11, only Jude is very specific. He says here these false teachers are blaspheming angelic majesties, "but Michael, the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses." Stop at that point. You say, "What is that all about?" I

don't know. Because that's the only thing in the Bible that even refers to this. You can go back and read Deuteronomy 34 if you want. But apparently there was a conflict between Satan and Michael over the body of Moses. Satan wanted the body of Moses. And you remember, Moses never was allowed to go into the Promised Land. I don't know what Satan wanted to do with his body, but he had some kind of plan. And I suppose we'll find out and we get to heaven and ask Michael. But Michael wasn't going to let him have it. And so there was this battle over the body of Moses. Certainly Satan would have been up to no good. We don't know what he would have done but it would have been to create some kind of satanic false worship. Maybe the devil claimed to have rights to the body of Moses because Moses had killed the Egyptian. But Michael, holy and with a just cause, went into conflict with the devil and they argued.

Isn't that interesting? They're real persons, they argued about the body of Moses. "But even Michael, the holy and super angel, the archangel, did not dare pronounce against him" that is against the devil "a railing judgment." He didn't even do that. He didn't do that. Michael, holy and with just cause, never brought a railing judgment against Satan but he left it in God's hands and he simply said, at the end of verse 9, what? "The Lord rebuke you." "The Lord rebuke you." By the way, go back to Zechariah 3:1 and 2 and see there the conflict where the Lord says, "The Lord rebuke you," in speaking to Satan.

And so, these seem very, very parallel. Jude 8 through 13 is almost a direct parallel to 2 Peter 2:10 to 17. And we can be reasonably sure that Jude 9 covers the same subject as 2 Peter 2:11. Peter says that good angels wouldn't revile fallen angels, and here we have a perfect illustration of it. Michael would not revile with a railing judgment the devil himself. Holy angels then, including Michael the archangel, who is superior to all the other angels in leadership roles, and all the holy angels being superior to all the fallen angels, will not blaspheme those fallen majesties out of respect for their dignity, out of recognition of their power and they will instead go to God.

But, back to 2 Peter, false teachers are not afraid to do what holy angels are afraid to do. They are so brash, so brash. You be very careful when you come across someone who is that brash and that brazen and that self-confident and that reckless and that presumptuous as to go around blaspheming and reviling, speaking in demeaning terms to those beings who though fallen are superior to them. The brash, self-willed presumption of false teachers makes a direct assault on beings that even holy angels would not assault.

Look at verse 12. He goes to describing them now. "But these, like unreasoning animals." The very fact that they revile and blaspheme and speak evil indicates that they don't have any sense. They're not using their minds. They're not rational. They don't understand. And so he goes beyond that and

says it's true in general. "They're like unreasoning animals born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, reviling where they have no knowledge." They don't even know what they're talking about. They don't even know what they're reviling. "But these," refers to the false teachers, these false teachers. By the way, Jude 10 says the same thing. "But these men revile the things which they do not understand and the things which they know by instinct like unreasoning animals." They're like stupid, King James says, brute beasts.

And I say again to you, animals have no reasoning ability. Now I don't want to get into trouble about your dog and your cat and your favorite horse or whatever it is. But animals make no rational contribution to the world. They make no intellectual contribution to the world. They are physical and nothing more. And the only thought process they have is an instinctive one that is related to their physical existence and their physical needs. They operate senselessly.

"Unreasoning animals," he says, and that's a very important note. If you want to know if animals have reason, then just look at 2 Peter 2:12 and they don't. They're unreasoning. And it says, "They are born as creatures of instinct." They have instinct, not reason, that's different. Animals are characterized by instinct rather than reason, they cannot think, they cannot reason. They can only respond to preprogrammed, prepared stimuli that are built into their physical being, through the act of God's creation. Unreasoning animals are not given to the world for intellectual purposes. You'd think they were in the culture in which we live now where "a rock is a rat is a dog is a boy" reign supreme among the animal rights people who are nothing but evolutionists gone crazy, where animals have all of a sudden become as important as people. No animal who has ever existed on the face of the earth has made any intellectual, rational contribution to life. They can't reason and they can't think. They are put in the world for one reason, to make a physical contribution.

In God's intricate design of the physical world they play a role. And the primary role they play is food for some other animal or for man in the chain. Ask yourself what the little fish in the sea are for. They're for the bigger fish to eat. Ask yourself what the bigger fish are for. They're for the very big fish to eat or for man to eat or for any other animal to eat. It's all a part of food. Their only benefit is really realized in their, you say it, death, in their death. Are you saying I should kill my dog and eat it. No, no. I am saying if you want to keep your dog alive, that's fine. But he will make no rational or intellectual or spiritual contribution to your life. He may lick you a little bit, and you might like that, but if you think it's because he knows your personality and finds you charming, guess again. It's because instinct says, "Lick hand, get food." You have to realize that what the Scripture is saying here puts these false teachers in the category of instinctive animals who have no ability to reason, who don't understand what they're doing but who, like brute beasts, unreasoning, irrational creatures who operate only on the passion of their own impulses and the passion of their own instinct and serve

man best when dead, they are in the same category. The slaves of instinctive, physical passion who fail to reason with the truth show their animal level life.

Now we've seen demonstrations of this again and again and again. People who present themselves as true teachers but who live on an animal level of passion, fulfilling their own desires and instincts in an irrational way. And he gets very general. He says they blaspheme what they have no knowledge about. They blaspheme everything, things they don't even understand. They ridicule the truth. Their mistake is to confuse the thrill of animal instinct with the presence of the Holy Spirit. In reality, they are devoid of the Holy Spirit who reveals Himself through truth they can't understand.

So like animals without reason made to be killed, false teachers are better off dead. And they will be. The end of verse 12 says, "In the destruction of those creatures they'll also be destroyed." They're going to get caught in their own trap. They're going to be fodder, as it were, for the fire, the fire of God. When God consumes the world and all the creatures that are on it, He's going to consume them, too. The Greek text actually reads this way, "In their destroying they shall be destroyed." And that's...that’s another way to read this, that in the destructive work that they do as they lead people to destruction through their witless, non-reasoning stupidity and living off their passionate instincts, as they consume others in that operation, they will themselves be consumed. They are abandoned to destruction, born for the flesh, born to perish. If all you are is an animal, you're born to be captured and killed. They are abandoned to destruction, they can't get beyond their physical instincts and that is suicide. Limited to the physical, they'll perish in the physical corruption. And down in verses 19 to 22 we will see the details of that destruction. So in destroying others they bring destruction on themselves. They behave like dumb beasts, leading others to death who themselves will perish in the same slaughterhouse.

And so, he sums it up in verse 13, their presumption, saying, "Suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong." Or suffering harm as the wages of doing harm. They harmed and they're going to be harmed. That's an axiom. That's a self-evident truth. They're going to get what they deserve. That's the law that Galatians 6:7 calls the law of sowing (and what?) and reaping. If a man dedicates himself to lies, false teaching, to a daring, brazen, brash, presumptuous, self-fulfilling, lustful, passionate approach to the things of God, it will destroy him.

William Barclay says so well, "To put it quite simply and bluntly, the glutton destroys his appetite in the end, the drunkard ruins his health, the sensualist destroys his own body, the self-indulgent ruins his own character and his piece of mind. The man who dedicates himself to these things is seeking for pleasure. For a while he may enjoy what he calls pleasure but in the end he ruins his health, wrecks his constitution, destroys his mind and character and begins the experience of hell while he's

still upon earth," end quote. It's got built-in destruction.

So the false teachers think they can get away with their self-indulgent, wicked, fleshly, sensual presumption, but they're wrong. And the implication of verse 13, that word “wages,” is their purpose is to carry off the wages of their unrighteousness, but instead of getting paid, they pay. They pay dearly with their lives.

So Peter is saying, enough of their presumption, so presumptuous as to boldly blaspheme angelic dignities even holy angels don't revile. So presumptuous as to brashly blaspheme truths and realities they are utterly ignorant of. So presumptuous as to foolishly assume they'll get paid for it, but instead they pay. That's their presumption.

Quickly a second point, their practice. We go from attitude to action, verse 13, "They count it a pleasure to revel in the daytime." Now normally sinners do their debauchery at night. If you've been with us in 1 Thessalonians 5, you remember that that's what we studied there, sinners do their debauchery at night, 1 Thessalonians 5:7. They get drunk in the night, remember that. But these sinners are so wretched that they do it in the daytime. And by the way, daylight debauchery, any historian in writing in Roman history will tell you that pagan Roman society frowned on daylight debauchery. They didn't mind debauchery; they didn't like it in the daytime. Sinning during the day was a sign of low-life, low-level wickedness. But these false teachers are so consumed with lust and so consumed with vice that they can't wait for the night. They're greedy. Their passions are driving them. Verse 2 says, "They follow their sensuality." Verse 10 says, "They indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires." It's out of control, basically.

It reminds me of Isaiah 5:11 where God indicts Israel because they were getting drunk in the morning. They couldn't even wait for the night, so consumed with vice.

Further describing their action, Peter with obvious disgust says, "They are stains and blemishes." Boy, those are absolutely vivid words. The word "stains" is the word filth spots, dirt spots. The word "blemish" is the word scab, or the word defect. It is the idea of dirt spots, defects, filth spots, scabs. They pollute. They're dirty. They're foul. They're diseased. And he says they're reveling in their deceptions.

There they are, these filthy scabs, these dirt spots, defects, blemishes, reveling. What does that mean? Living in luxury, living in sinful pleasure, living it up by the passions of their animalistic

instincts, deceiving those under their influence into the same dissipations, reveling in their deceptions; they deceive others. They suck them in to the life of dissipation.

They do it, verse 13 says, as they, note that word, carouse with you. “Carouse” might be a little bit of a strong word here. The word actually, the Greek verb means to feast together, or to eat together. It has the idea of a public banquet, a public meal. It could even mean a love feast, I guess, when the church met together. It could be that they feign Christ, they feign to belong to the church and they sit at table with Christians, whether at the love feast, or some kind of church banquet, or some kind of pot luck, or some kind of celebration, publicly, in the special times of banqueting when they all got together to eat, they were filth spots and scabs, they were debauched, filthy defects on that occasion. That's what he's saying. When they show up for your church celebrations, they pollute it. They're filthy.

That's pretty strong. They must be seen in that way. Second John 9 to 11 says, "If somebody comes along and they don't preach the truth, don't you even say `God speed' to them, let alone socialize with them, they are filth spots on your banquets."

Boy, what a stern warning. First Corinthians 11:21, he says, "When you meet together in your suppers,” to the Corinthians, “each one takes his own supper first and one is hungry and another is drunk." What? Here was the Corinthian church meeting together, people were getting drunk and people were acting in a gluttonous way and it was a debauched situation and probably being led by some of these filth spots and scabs, false teachers. They may be dressed up in religious garb; they're not the men of God they claim to be. Their actions in public make that clear. They are so debauched that they count it a pleasure to do their wretched sins in daylight and they pollute your meals.

And then in verse 14 he moves from their public action, I guess, what they do in the daylight, what they do at the banquet to pollute it, to their more private setting. Goes inside a little bit and he says, you want to know how they are on the inside? "They're having eyes full of adultery." Literally, having eyes full of an adulteress; that is a very remarkable phrase.

What does it mean to have eyes full of an adulteress? Very simple, these have lost total control. In fact they have so totally lost moral control that they cannot look on any woman anytime without seeing her as a potential adulteress. They're so polluted that in their eyes every woman becomes an adulteress. It's the very thing our Lord spoke of in Matthew 5:28. "If a man looks on a woman to lust after her, he has committed adultery in his heart." And these false teachers invariably are lustful, animalistic false teachers who see a potential adulteress in every woman. They lust for every woman

they see. It’s a... It's a dominant kind of lasciviousness. It becomes impossible for them to look without lusting. They're dominated, they're driven by lust. And Peter adds, "They have eyes full of an adulteress and that never cease from sin." It's never satisfied, it's out of control. It is always wanting more. It is restless. Literally, that never pauses from sin. They can't stop.

Here is a very clear, by the way, insight into sin. Selfish presumption leads to living by lust, living by lust brings sinful thoughts, animal instincts which dominate so totally that lust can never be satisfied and never be turned off. So it leaves a person lustfully, relentlessly, restlessly longing for more. And every woman becomes an object of adultery.

It would be bad enough to behave like this, but as the agents of Satan they don't just behave like this themselves. Go back to verse 14. "They entice unstable souls," which means they get other people to behave like this. They draw in the unwitting, the weak, to their sexual deviation, to their error, to their lies, to their passions and instincts.

It says "unstable souls." Unstable in their faith, unstable in doctrine, easily unsettled, drawn into the errors of sin. Always the victims of false teachers, beloved, are unstable spiritually. By the way, when it says they beguile, it uses *deleaz*, which means to catch with bait. They hook them. It never appears to be what it is. They bait the hook. And it looks like something else and they hook them. Maybe it's in a counseling relationship, whatever. Maybe it's under the guise of wanting to be helpful, they put the hook in to whatever they want, whomever they want and they pull them in. False teachers never capture the strong in the Word because the strong in the Word, according to 1 John 2:13, have overcome the evil one. But they prey on the weak, they prey on those who are young in the faith or who are barely escaping from error and haven't even come to Christ.

And then he closes this little section by saying, "They have a heart trained in greed." Sexual lust, passion, the eyes of the false teacher that are consumed with adultery, have as a partner a heart trained in greed. Sex and greed always go together with false teachers, always. Go back to verse 3, you'll see them there.

This phrase "having a heart trained in greed," is quite an interesting phrase. The word "trained," interesting word, *gumnaz*, from which we get the word gymnasium. That's right, from which we get the word gymnasium. It's an athletic word. You go to a gymnasium to be trained. They are well trained in greed. Boy, what a description of false teachers. Every woman they see they lust for, and they are well trained in greed. What do they want? They want sexual favors and they want money and possessions and power. They have hearts fully trained in great shape for greed.

The picture brought out in this word is a terrible one. The word is used for training in athletics, exercising and all of that. They've actually trained, prepared, exercised, equipped their minds, their hearts to concentrate on nothing but that which they desire.

Then Peter reaches a climax in the second point and he says simply, "accursed children." And again you sense his disgust. "Accursed children." He's in a sanctified rage by now. He says they are damned to hell. “Accursed children” means they're marked by a curse. When you see the word "child" here, I told you earlier, it's the familiar idea that whatever is the dominant influence in one's life, one is a child of. That's a Hebraism. And they are accursed children because the dominant thing in their life is the curse of God that is upon them. They have amazing presumption. Their attitude, their practices are equally amazing, their actions. Jude says, "Woe to them,” woe to them."

Now remember, what we're talking about here are not just sinners but false teachers, false prophets. And that's only the beginning of the description. By the time we're done, you'll be as breathless as I was when I went through this whole passage in the last couple of weeks. And again I say to you, beloved, this is important, this is essential because it is the pastor's duty to prepare his people to be warned about such.

Father, we thank You that You've given us this instruction, even though it's hard for us to take, hard for us to hear. We keep looking for a note of mercy or a note of grace or some evidence of kindness toward these, but we find absolutely none. The fury of Peter is the fury of the Holy Spirit which is the fury of God, the same fury of Christ as He breathed out fire on the Jewish leaders in Matthew 23. And, Father, we know that. We know that...that You despise those who misrepresent Your truth, false teachers. We thank You for warning us about their presumption, kind of attitude they have, their practice, the kind of actions they engage in. Lord, protect us, protect all these dear people, these sheep, from these kinds of wolves who seek to devour them for their own fulfillment. And we thank You that in the end the truth is victorious and the righteous are victorious and those who stand against You, who are nothing better than unreasoning animals, will indeed be captured and killed, that they might never again pollute Your glorious kingdom yet to come. We acknowledge the warning. We ask for insight that we might be able to apply it to know who is speaking truth and truly representing You and who is not. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

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