

Teachers of Lasciviousness

by Anton Bosch

This sermon delves into 2 Peter, Chapter 2, discussing the presence of false prophets and teachers who bring destructive heresies, exploiting others through deceptive words driven by covetousness. The sermon emphasizes the impending judgment of God on those who deny His authority and live in sensuality, warning about the consequences of following false teachings and the importance of living in truth and holiness to honor God's name.

Scripture: 2 Peter 2:1, Romans 2:5, Ezekiel 36:22, Proverbs 2:12, Romans 14:12, Hebrews 12:28

Topics: "False Teachings", "Living in Truth and Holiness"

Description

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Transcript

All right, so let's start. For those who are watching online, we apologize for the noise on the line. We have tried to find the problem.

We don't know where the problem is, so please bear with us. You can still hear, but we're sorry about the noise. So let's turn to 2 Peter, Chapter 2, 2 Peter, Chapter 2. And we're continuing our study.

I don't know when we started in 1 Peter, but it's been a couple of years. And we're now in 2 Peter, and we've just begun in Chapter 2, and I'm going to read verses 1 through 11. 2 Peter, Chapter 2, reading 1 through 11.

But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who brought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words.

For a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber. For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment, and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people,

preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly, and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them to destruction, making them an example to those who afterward would live ungodly, and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked. For that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day, by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds.

Then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment. And especially those who walk according to the flesh, in the lust of uncleanness, and despise authority, they are presumptuous, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries, whereas angels who are greater in power and might, do not bring in a reviving accusation against them before the Lord. And so we dealt with the first verse this last week.

There were also false prophets among the people, referring to the Old Testament, even as there will be false teachers among you. And so he changes from prophets in the Old Testament, who were the preachers of the word, to the teachers of the New Testament. And they will secretly bring in, so they are among you, the false teachers, remember, are not from outside, they are from inside.

While there are false teachers that come in from outside, Paul warns us about that, these are from inside. And what they do is they secretly bring in, they smuggle this wrong teaching, destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who brought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. Remember we said that when they deny the Lord, they don't deny his existence, but they deny his lordship, they deny his authority in their lives.

And we'll see how that plays out in the next verse. So because they do not acknowledge that the Lord is their master, that the Lord is their despotis, the Greek word, their sovereign ruler. And the New Testament only uses that word, from which we get the word despot, five times, if I remember correctly.

And in every time it speaks of the Lord, not as a despot in the way we understand despot today, but in the sense of a sovereign ruler, as the one who calls the shots, the boss. And of course he is our Lord, because he has bought us. They deny the Lord who bought them, and they bring on themselves swift destruction.

Now this word swift destruction is really the theme of the rest of the book, of the chapter. And he's now going to continue, as we've read, he's going to speak about Lot, he's going to speak about Noah, he's going to speak about God's judgment at other times, and what he is doing is he is showing that God's judgment is sure, and God's judgment will come upon them. But he now continues to speak about them, and he says in verse 2, and many will follow their destructive ways.

Many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. Here's one of the problems with false teachers. They are popular.

I'm almost at a place where I would say that if the church is a big church, it's probably a false church. I acknowledge that there may be big churches that are good churches, but they are very few and far between. The false message is very, very attractive, and particularly this false message which they are preaching, and I'll explain in a moment why it is so attractive, and it is attractive today.

But generally the message of false preachers who have an agenda, and he gives us their agenda in verse 3, I think it is, sorry, verse 3 is way down on the slides, but because of greed, and so they are motivated,

Peter says, not me, Peter says they are motivated by greed, and that greed is not just for money, that greed can be for power, and in many cases, not in many cases, but in some cases it can be for sexual pleasure, unfortunately. And so they make their message acceptable. They make their message easy.

They make it sound so great, and many of these teachers, when you listen to them, they're good speakers. Most of them are better speakers than I could ever have been. They don't stumble over their words.

They have all the right words. They're able to speak very eloquently. They speak the words that people want to hear, things that build people up, that motivate people, that make people feel excited.

They make all sorts of promises, and this is attractive. People enjoy that kind of thing. They don't really, people don't really want to hear the truth, and that's the problem.

And so from the very beginning, those who preach the truth are not popular. Those who preach a populist message or a popular message, they are popular. People follow them.

Many of these preachers will read the signs of the time, and what they will do is they will present a message which is what people want to hear. I may have shared with you before, but when I studied marketing, one of the things about marketing is that you need to find out what it is that people need. What is it that people need? Do people need a square wheel? No, nobody, I've never heard anybody say, I'd love to have square wheels on my car.

So you can invent a square wheel, but you're not going to sell it because nobody wants it. But if you invent something that people want, or you design something that people want, it will sell. And so it's not a matter of selling what you have, it's about finding out what people want, and then getting what people want, and being able to present it to them.

And that's exactly what preachers are doing. They're reading the culture, and they're saying, what is it that people want right now? People want some kind of assurance in the times of COVID. People want some kind of political message.

People want some kind of message that everything's going to be all right. Things are going to turn around, and the list goes on and on and on of those things that we think we need. We speak about them as felt needs, the needs that you feel you have.

But that's not your real need. Our need is not for more money. Our need is not for whatever we think it is.

Our need is for Jesus Christ. Our need is for His Word. Our need is for more holiness.

Our need is for being closer to the Lord. These are the things that we really need, but generally people don't want those things, they want everything else. And so these preachers will present a message which is popular, and it is attractive.

And one of those messages today is the message of licentiousness. Licentiousness, it's a big word, but you can hear that it comes from the word license. What happens when you get a driver's license? Well, you get the right to go on the roads.

It doesn't mean you can drive, but you can go on the roads, and you can drive. It gives you a license to do certain things. If you have a trader's license, it gives you the right to trade, to sell things.

A license gives you a right to do certain things. Licentiousness means that I have license, I have right to do certain things, and those certain things are sin. They are not the right kind of thing.

The problem we have here in this particular translation is that he uses the word destructive ways. Many will follow their destructive ways. It's not a good translation.

If you go down to verse 7, I think, yes, in verse 7 in chapter 2, he delivered righteous lot who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked. That word filthy is the same word as the word destructive in this case. Same Greek word.

Now you can see the problem translators, there's all sorts of reasons why translators do the things that they do. Then further down, I think it was verse 15. No, I lost it.

It's further down, the same word comes up again. So here are a few other translations. Many will follow their depraved conduct.

Their depraved conduct. That's a little closer to the Greek. Another translation says many shall follow their lascivious doings.

Lascivious means sexually loose, generally. Generally this has to do with sexual activity, but it can be drunkenness, it can be all sorts of other things. By reason of whom the way of the truth shall be evil spoken of.

Here's another one. Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be maligned. So the word destructive there really has to do with sexual permissiveness.

Sexual permissiveness. This is the time in which we're living today, and not only is it preached, but it is practiced in the pulpit and in the pew. Preachers are setting an example.

Preachers are divorcing their wives, and marrying second and third wives, and continuing to preach the word, and the church is saying it's fine. And those who are following those preachers follow in their examples. And so the message is one of just become a Christian, and you can continue in your adultery.

You can continue in your homosexuality. You can continue in your drunkenness. You can continue in your worldly lifestyle.

That is the message which is being preached today. Now remember, we're not saying you need to clean up your act before you come to Christ. I think we understand that, but let me make that clear.

We come as we are. We come as adulterers. We come as drunkards.

We come as murderers. We come as whatever we are, and allow Him to change us, to forgive us, and to make us new creatures. But if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature.

In other words, he cannot continue in his old ways. Paul says in Romans, do we continue in sin because we have grace? No. God forbid.

So we're not saying that we're not reaching out to those who are sinful, in whatever form it may be. But you cannot continue in those things. This has become so much part of the thinking today, and I know that those who are part of this church will probably say, well, yeah, I don't know what you're talking about,

because it's not something that we encourage in any way.

And yet this is very much part of the thinking of the world. Let me give you a right now example. You remember that on Sunday morning I was preaching about, well I wasn't, but I made reference to sinning in our minds.

Anyone remember that? So someone on YouTube commented that temptation is not sin. Now I never used the word temptation once in the 45 or 50 minutes that I can remember of. I never spoke about temptation.

I spoke about what happens up here. And I responded, and I said, I never spoke about temptation. And then he came back with some comment I don't remember.

You can have a look at YouTube. Then I decided, because the same guy has been leaving all sorts of snarky comments on my YouTube's for a while, both on our YouTube, on the church's YouTube, as well as on on Sermon Index, I decided to try and look at who this guy is. So I went to his YouTube channel and looked at his playlists.

And he has, I think, three playlists. The one is of scantily clad women doing exercises. Dozens of videos of women in all sorts of positions, wearing very little.

Can you see the problem? He does not believe that there's a problem up here, because it's all okay. You can do what you want. You can think what you like.

You can desire what you want. This is the message today. I don't know who this guy is.

He seems to know a few things about Christianity. He seems to have read his Bible at some stage, because his comments are not the comments of an outsider. His comments are those of someone who clearly knows the language and knows a few verses, just doesn't know how they fit together, though.

But this is not one guy. He is representative of the culture of the time in which we are living. It's okay to be involved in pornography.

It's okay to be involved in all sorts of sexual activity outside of marriage. It is not okay. But that's the message, and that is why he says many will follow their sensuality.

Now, here's one of the other problems. Some people will say to me, well, you know, the preacher that fell, and we can think of a dozen right now, he never preached sensuality. He just lived it, and he lived it in secret.

So how does that affect the people who hear him? Because he never preached it. He never showed it. It was in the closet.

So surely that makes no difference. Yes, it does. One of the things I've learned is that even if the preacher does not preach that message with his words, and even if he does not show it, if it's not visible, if it's in his heart somehow, and I don't understand how this works, but somehow it is translated to the people.

As it is in the pulpit, so it is in the pew. This puts a tremendous responsibility on those who want to be in leadership, because you can put on a good show. You can say the right things, but if your heart is not right, that has an impact on people in the congregation.

I've seen it over and over and over. Those preachers who fall and are exposed as having a long legacy of sexual misdeeds. Once you know that, and you begin to look at the congregation, and look at the issues that are happening in the congregation, you can see it come out in the congregation.

There's a spiritual, and I don't know, I don't have scripture for this, and so if you, this is just my, this is just my understanding, and so don't build a doctrine on it, and don't say that I have this doctrine. This is simply my observation, that somehow spiritually, that sensuality, that licentiousness is transferred to those whom he pastors, whom he shepherds. So many will follow their sensuality.

Let's go back to the New King James. Many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. Now here's a theme that we've seen over and over and over.

Now the first thing we have to ask is, because of whom? Who is the whom? Is it because of the preachers, or because of the followers, who follow their sensual ways? And, and I guess that if you look at the commentaries, well I have looked at the commentaries, and they are split equally. Some say no, this refers, the whom refers to the preachers, and others say no, the whom refers to the congregation, or the followers, who follow in their, and so you should know by now, I don't like to make these hard decisions. So I accept both.

And I really believe that it is ambiguous with, on purpose, because it's because of both. It's not just the preachers who bring ill repute, who bring bad testimony on the church, and on the gospel, and on the name of the Lord. But it's also those who follow in their ways, that bring that, that reproach upon the name of the Lord.

So it's both. It doesn't, you know, I don't think there's any point in trying to say, well it's just the preachers. No, it's not just the preachers.

It's the preachers and those who follow them. And so, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. Notice, the way of truth.

So many preachers today are emphasizing that they are preaching truth, and that as long as we preach truth, that's all that matters. But notice, he's not saying of whom truth will be blasphemed, or the message of truth will be blasphemed, or the word of truth. Remember, the Bible is referred to as the word of truth.

But the way of truth. What is the difference between truth, and the way of truth? Well, we are the way. Remember that they referred to those, I think it was in Antioch, and they called them those of the way.

The way of Jesus. The way of the truth. The way of the truth is how we live.

So they're not necessarily discrediting the Bible. They're discrediting the lifestyle of Christians. But therefore, obviously, also the gospel.

Now, if we go to Ezekiel, and there's a scripture in Isaiah, and of course, Paul quotes these, either or both of these in the book of Romans. And we looked at this verse, I think at some stage last year, there's four verses in Ezekiel, and I'm not going to preach on them. I just want us to look at them.

But he's speaking about Israel, and then he says, when they came to the nations, wherever they went, they profaned my holy name. This is the people of Israel. When they said of them, these are the people of the Lord, and yet they have gone out of his land.

They've left the covenants. But I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations, wherever they went. But this is prophetic.

This is, of course, Ezekiel is speaking, or God is speaking through Ezekiel to Israel. But I believe that God is speaking this to the church in the world today. And God says he has concern for his name, which the church has profaned among the nations wherever they went.

In fact, the church has profaned the name of the Lord in America, and in the rest of the world, by so many things. Not just the sexual stuff, the money stuff, the political stuff, the lack of compassion and mercy, and the list goes on, and on, and on, and on. But God's name is to be honored, and God's name will not be profaned.

And so he says, therefore I say to the house of Israel, thus says the Lord God, I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for my holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. And I will sanctify my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. And the nation shall know that I am the Lord, says the Lord God, when I'm hallowed in you before their eyes.

Now I'm not going to get into all of the prophecy, but he's speaking about the future. He's speaking about the time when Israel would return to the Lord, and when Israel will make God holy in their own hearts. And when they acknowledge him as their Savior, and when they make him great in their lives, he will be made great among the nations.

And so I want you to see the last, the last three lines on the screen. The Lord God says, when I am hallowed in you before their eyes. When will God's name be honored in America today? When he is hallowed in our hearts.

Because Paul, remember, says because of you his name is being blasphemed. For God's name has never been blasphemed more than it has in these last few years throughout the world. God is looking for a people who will honor him, and by honoring him, bring glory to his name.

Now verse 3, by covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words. Covetousness. The covetousness here again cuts two ways.

First of all, they are driven by covetousness. Paul speaks about this. Peter speaks about it.

Jude speaks about it. Preachers who are driven by money. And remember I said that covetousness here does not just refer to greed for money, but many times it's greed for power, and sometimes greed for other things as well.

But it's generally money and power, and then sex, those things. When preachers are driven by those things, they forsake the truth. Hopefully there are no secondhand car salesmen watching the video here, but we know that a secondhand car salesman will tell you anything you want to hear, just to get the deal.

Because he's motivated by that commission. That's how the system works. He's not going to buy it.

And preachers who are driven by greed, or whatever kind of greed it is, will tell you whatever they need to tell you. Because their purpose is to exploit. By covetousness they will exploit you.

In other words, they want to make profit out of you. They want to get something out of you. But the covetousness is not just on the part of the preacher.

The covetousness is also on the part of the congregation. In the prosperity message, why do people go to those churches? Because the preacher promised them that if they give money to the preacher, they're not giving it to the Lord, if they give money to the preacher, then God will give them a new Mercedes. And so they are being exploited because of their greed.

And so that's why it is a false gospel. Because the gospel of the Lord Jesus is not, come to me so that I can give you a new motor car. But the gospel is that you're wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, come to me and I will wash you and cleanse you and make you a new creature.

That is the gospel. It's not about what God is going to do for you, it's what he has already done for you at the cross of Calvary. But what in fact they are saying is, forget about the cross, that's nothing.

What I'm looking for is the new Mercedes, or the whatever. Can you see how perverted this is? Because it denies the great work that Jesus did at the cross of Calvary. It denies the tremendous price he paid.

And when we come to him, there should be no need for us to say, well, what can I get out of this deal? I'll become a Christian because he's going to fix my marriage, or he's going to fix this, or do this, or do that, or do the other thing. That's the wrong gospel. No, we come to him because he has already done everything by dying for us at the cross of Calvary, paying the price for our sin, that we might be cleansed and be washed and be brought into a relationship with him.

That's all there needs to be. But because people are greedy, thousands, millions flock to these churches. The biggest churches in the world are in Nigeria, and this is the message.

Covetousness, greed. Don't be satisfied with last year's model car. You need to have this year's model, preferably next year's.

So by covetousness they will exploit you. You see, they're not servants. They're not in it to serve the body of Christ.

They're in it for what they can get out of it, and they will exploit you with deceptive words. Words are so powerful. I'm sure that we've all on occasion fell fall fallen foul of a slick salesman and bought something that we didn't really intend to buy.

Now I know nobody's going to admit to it. I'll admit to it. I'm not stupid, but I've been suckered a couple of times, and been talked into something that I knew I shouldn't have gotten into.

And people say, well how can, how do people follow these teachers? Because of their deceptive words. They're able to deceive with their words. And over and over I see these preachers, and when when you confront them, and you say, why do you believe this? Oh no, I don't believe that.

But here's the recording. You said this. Oh no, that's not really what I believe.

And they'll find a way, a way out of it. There are some of these preachers that I will not even discuss things with, because they're just too, they're just too good with words. I don't have a chance.

Seriously. In fact, very recently one of them approached me and said, I want to talk with you. I said, I won't talk with you until you humble yourself, because I know I don't have a chance against these arguments.

Not because I don't have the truth, but because he's just too slick. He's just too clever. He just knows how to, how to argue, and how to, how to twist the truth to end, to end in his, in his favor.

Deceptive words. Folks, let's be careful of those who have, who are smooth talkers. And I'm not saying, you know, you need to be a stuttering, stammering preacher like me.

I wish I was a smooth preacher that was eloquent. Somehow God never gifted me that way. And I admire preachers who are good preachers, the real men of God, and who are eloquent, and who can speak without umming and ahing, and stuttering, and looking for words.

But be careful of the smooth tongue, the book of Proverbs says. For a long time their judgment has not been idle. Here is the introduction then to the rest of this chapter, and he's now going to show how that God's judgment was sure in the Old Testament, and that God's judgment will be sure in the future.

But remember, the problem is that we say, well, where is his judgment? Remember in the third chapter, Peter's going to speak about the fact that they say, well, where's the coming of the Lord? From the beginning. Everything is continued. He's never come.

And in the same way these teachers are saying, judgment's never going to come. But the Lord is not slack, Peter says, concerning his coming. Now that's in chapter 3, dealing with the coming.

But here he's going to deal with judgment, which is connected to his coming. And he is not slack concerning the judgment of these men. Now maybe this doesn't affect those who are here so much, but maybe those preachers who are watching.

I think all good preachers today are struggling and saying, Lord, how come these false teachers are prospering? How come they're doing so well? And I'm not talking about financially. How come they have so much influence? How come every magazine in the country and in the world wants to publish their nonsense? When I look at good preachers, and I see that they have maybe 200, maybe 400 views on YouTube, and I look at the bad preachers, and they have thousands and thousands of views. And, folk, we wouldn't be human.

Now I'm just speaking on behalf of other preachers. We wouldn't be human if we didn't question the Lord on that. And so, Lord, we're working so hard to be faithful to your word.

We're working so hard to be right with you, to walk a narrow road, to live a life of holiness, a life of dedication and commitment. And yet, Lord, we're struggling to even meet the 25% limitation on the building capacity sometimes. But the Lord says, for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

This is, I believe, what Peter is doing, is he's referring to the book of Psalms, where it says that the Lord doesn't slumber nor sleep. But he's speaking about judgment. God is not sleeping, and his judgment is not sleeping, but it is coming.

Paul puts it this way in the book of Romans. He speaks about the fact that you are storing up those who presume upon the grace of God, are storing up for themselves wrath against the day of judgment. And

really what he is speaking about is that these people and sinners who continue in their sin, and they say, well, I've gotten away with it all these years.

Everything's fine. I can keep doing it, keep doing it. His judgment is slumbering.

God is asleep. God doesn't see. God doesn't know.

What Paul is saying is you're storing up, you're treasuring up. In other words, the judgment, the meter is running. You understand? If you get into a taxi—nobody uses taxis anymore, I don't think—but you had the meter.

And you say, well, just wait, Judge, I'm going to get something in the store. Well, while you're waiting, the meter is running, and the bill's adding up, adding up, adding up. And that's what Paul is saying.

Your meter is running. You're storing up, you're treasuring up wrath. God is keeping a record, and the account is getting higher and higher and higher.

And unless such a person comes to the Lord Jesus and finds forgiveness, which obviously is available, all of the years that they thought they were getting away with it, all of that is accumulated and poured out upon them in God's wrath at the end of time. And then Paul is going to go down, and he's now going to give evidence, proof of this, from the Old Testament. Look, here is—and obviously this thing cuts two ways.

First of all, it cuts to us personally, and saying, well, you know, there are things in my life that I've gotten away with so far, whatever it is, maybe something big, maybe small, maybe just something in your mind, just something that you think that you shouldn't be thinking. But I get away with it. I'll keep doing it.

God's judgment is not idle. God knows, and God sees. And then for those who feel that God is somehow unfair—forgotten now is that the psalmist who says, why—yes, it's the psalmist—why do the wicked prosper? Don't worry about it.

God's keeping a record. One day the books will be opened, and everything will be revealed. And so really, how can we sum this all up? And I'm obviously coming to an end.

How do we sum these three verses up? Well, obviously we can focus and say, well, yeah, that's what's happening out there, all these false teachers, and all of these things. But really, I believe that these three verses are summed up in this idea. The Lord is going to call each one to give an account.

Therefore, I need to serve him with reverence and with godly fear. Now, I'm not denying that his goodness, and his grace, and his kindness, and his love towards us, and his compassion towards us—all of those things are true. But at the same time, he is an awesome God, and he is testing the hearts of men and women today to reveal what's in our hearts.

I do believe that the judgment that he's speaking about here, it can be death. We can be referring, obviously, because those who, when we die, we face the Lord. But I think that he's particularly referring to the second coming, because that's where he ends up in third Peter.

And so the Lord is coming, and I believe his coming is very, very close. And I want to stand before him on that day not being ashamed. I want to hear those words, well done, good and faithful servant.

I want when those books to be revealed, thank God for his blood that cleanses us of all sin. And that when those books are opened, there is nothing against us. There is nothing that is unsettled between us and him.

But in fact, there is that which we receive a reward because we've been faithful, well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of the Lord. Father, we thank you for your word. Lord, these are sobering and hard verses to preach on.

They're hard verses to look at. And yet Lord, they are there for a purpose that we might be warned on the one hand concerning our own walk with you. But Lord, that also we may be comforted to know that while the wicked do seem to prosper, the day of judgment is coming.

And so Lord, I pray that you would help us to have, to not be so concerned about what others are doing, but Lord, to be concerned about our own walk and our own life before you. Lord, I pray that we may be those who are, as we've been speaking on Sundays, not hypocrites, but Lord, that we may be the real deal on the inside as much as we are on the outside. Help us, we pray.

We pray Lord for our friends and for family members and for others that we know who are caught up in false teaching, who are caught up in licentious lifestyles, believing that it's okay because there's grace. Lord, I pray that you would rescue them, bring them to repentance, bring them to the cross, I pray in Jesus' name. So Lord, I pray that you'd go with us now, keep us and protect us, bring us together again safely on Sunday, I pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/4lfdwq5AR4o.mp4>

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