

2 Peter 2:20

by John Gill

The sermon explores the dangers of superficial faith and the consequences of returning to worldly sin after experiencing the truth of the Gospel.

Scripture: 2 Peter 2:20

Topics: "True Transformation", "False Security"

Description

John Gill expounds on 2 Peter 2:20, emphasizing that individuals may escape the corruptions of the world and exhibit outward reformation without possessing true grace. He warns that a mere acknowledgment of Christ, devoid of genuine spiritual experience, can lead to a superficial faith that ultimately results in a worse state than before. Gill illustrates that those who return to worldly sins after such a reformation face greater condemnation due to their prior knowledge and profession of faith. The sermon highlights the dangers of false security in external righteousness and the necessity of true transformation through Christ.

Transcript

Ver. 20. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world,.... The sins of it, the governing vices of it, which the men of the world are addicted to, and immersed in; for the whole world lies in wickedness, and which are of a defiling nature: the phrase is Rabbinical; it is said {q},

"he that studies not in the law in this world, but is defiled amle ypnwjb, "with the pollutions of the world", what is written of him? and they took him, and cast him without:"

these, men may escape, abstain from, and outwardly reform, with respect unto, and yet be destitute of the grace of God; so that this can be no instance of the final and total apostasy of real saints; for the house may be swept and garnished with an external reformation; persons may be outwardly righteous before men, have a form of godliness and a name to live, and yet be dead in trespasses and sins; all which they may have

through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read, our Lord, and the latter leave out, "and Saviour"; by which "knowledge" is meant, not a spiritual experimental knowledge of Christ, for that is eternal life, the beginning, pledge, and earnest of it; but a notional knowledge of Christ, or a profession of knowledge of him, for it may be rendered "acknowledgment"; or rather the Gospel of Christ, which, being only notionally received, may have such an effect on men, as outwardly to reform their lives, at least in some instances, and for a while, in whose

hearts it has no place. Now if, after all this knowledge and reformation,

they are again entangled therein; in the pollutions of the world, in worldly lusts, which are as gins, pits and snares:

and overcome; by them, so as to be laden with them, and led away, and entirely governed and influenced by them:

the latter end, or state,

is worse with them than the beginning; see Mt 12:45. Their beginning, or first estate, was that in which they were born, a state of darkness, ignorance, and sin, and in which they were brought up, and was either the state of Judaism, or of Gentilism; their next estate was an outward deliverance and escape from the error of the one, or of the other, and an embracing and professing the truth of the Christian religion, joined with a becoming external conversation; and this their last estate was an apostasy from the truth of the Gospel they had professed, a reception of error and heresy, and a relapse into sin and immorality, which made their case worse than it was at first; for, generally, such persons are more extravagant in sinning; are like raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; and are seldom, or ever, recovered; and by their light, knowledge, and profession, their punishment will be more aggravated, and become intolerable.

{q} Zohar in Gen. fol. 104. 3. Vid. Bechinot Olam, p. 178.

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