

Apostasy: What You Need to Know

August 25, 2019



Open: What is something you believed to be true at one point in time but no longer believe?

Read: 2 Peter 2:20-22

Discuss:

1. In Peter's closing description of false teachers who were influencing his readers, he indicates their spiritual situation is dire. Why do you think their "last state has become worse for them than the first" (v. 20) and that it is "better for them never to have known the way of righteousness" (v. 21)? How do passages like Matthew 11:21-22 and Luke 12:47-48 help explain Peter's words?
2. In regard to these false teachers, list the different ways Peter speaks of their apparent spiritual progress and relationship with Jesus. How do you think it might be possible for these statements to be true of someone who is not truly a believer? How does Jesus' explanation of the parable of the sower in Mark 4:14-20 shed light on this passage? Have you ever encountered people who fit the categories of Peter or Jesus in these texts? Explain.
3. Peter uses a proverb to clarify what has happened to these teachers in their radical change from apparent belief to rejection of biblical truth. How would you summarize the point of this saying? How does it confirm the idea that they were never true believers?
4. Have you ever doubted the security of your salvation? What do passages like 1 Peter 1:3-5, John 6:37-44; 10:28-29 or Romans 8:38-39 tell us about the security of our relationship with God through Jesus Christ? How do such passages encourage you? How would you advise someone who is struggling with assurance of their salvation?
5. How do verses 20-22 give you tools to help others deal with the reports of people who claimed to have believed the Gospel but now have rejected it for a more "enlightened" view?

Apply: What can we do better to protect ourselves against the danger of becoming false teachers or coming under the influence of false teaching?

Pray: Spend some time praying that the hearts and motives of the people in Christ's Church would be pure and rooted in the authentic Gospel of Jesus Christ.

2 Peter 2:20-22

²⁰ 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. ²¹ 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. ²² 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." (ESV)