

The Biggest Loser

Part I

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2Peter 2:20-22

20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

21 For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.

22 But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

From the first chapter of II Peter, over a period of several weeks, the Lord sent us three messages on the subject of “How to Never Fall.”

2Peter 1:10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

The Lord has taught us, not only how to be sure we are saved, but how to never fall from our steadfastness and our fruitfulness; which

is, of course as Peter states in Chapter 3, all a real believer can fall from.

2Peter 3:17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

In spite of a very thorough education in these matters that we have received from the Lord; there still remains; as we are warned in Chapter 2, those who are deceived, those who are still unsaved, those who are taken captive by Satan and are being used as subtle false teachers and disruptors and destroyers of the harmony that should always exist in the house of the Lord.

2Peter 2:1-2

1 But there were false prophets also among the people, **even as there shall be false teachers among you**, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

2 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

Are there really lost Church members here in Lighthouse who are being used by the Devil to disrupt and destroy? God says there are; and as much as we do not like to think this, we know that the Lord is always right.

So, what do we do? Do we figure out who they are and throw them out? Do we pray against them? Do we ask God to send down fire?

God says we need to help them. The Apostle Paul, writes to us:

2Timothy 2:24-26

24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient,

25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

26 And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

Lisa's favorite TV show is coming back for a new season; it is called 'The Biggest Loser.'

She likes watching the underdog and the defeated being turned into overcomers and winners. On that show the biggest losers are really the biggest winners.

People who are in a Church like Lighthouse, who hear the truth week in and week out yet; who know that Jesus is the only way but they still refuse to trust Jesus and Him alone to save them; they are truly the biggest losers that will ever be! Their fate, their future is so dark and bleak I cannot even begin to describe it. God speaks directly of this person/persons in vs. 3 and 4: **whose judgment now of a long time**

lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

4 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast *them* down to hell, and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

The implication is obvious; what do you suppose God will do with you?

Our prayer and our desire today is that you who are this person or persons will be transformed today into the biggest winner; that you may recover yourself out of Satan's hand once and for all.

I believe God is going to reveal today who you are. He is going to show you; and perhaps even some of the rest of us, who you are and what you need to do. Let us pray that God will do this today and that those who Satan has deceived will not only see it, but will come to the Light this very day.

Chapter 2 of 2Peter is for many a difficult passage of scripture to rightly divide. This chapter is 22 verses long and often small sections of it are used to make this point or that as we did in our introduction by reading verses 20, 21 and 22. One must, however go all the way back to Verse 1 to understand whose future this is talking about.

In today's message we are going to dissect this passage beginning with:

I. The character under consideration.

A. *The false teacher(s).*

1. We see first the big scary term 'false prophets'; but that is simply a comparison.

2Peter 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, **even as there shall be false teachers among you**, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

2. The false teacher is the subject of this chapter.

B. *Every application in the text refers back to this subject:*

1. 'who shall bring in' , vs. 1.
2. 'their pernicious ways', vs. 2.
3. 'they' vs. 3.; 'whose', vs. 3.
4. 'them', vs. 10.
5. 'these' and 'their', vs. 12.
6. 'they and their', vs. 13
7. And so on all the way through Verse 22.

8. So, we are not reading about Christians who lost their salvation or Christians who anything; we are reading about those who are here in the Church, acting like us, looking like us, appearing to be one of us; who have not trusted Jesus to save them and are being used by Satan to divide and disrupt.

Next we see:

II. The covert nature of their presence.

A. Satan has always operated covertly.

1. Paul writes to the Corinthians:

2Corinthians 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

2. 'there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in'.

3. 'privily' means *surreptitiously or in secret*.

4. Verse 13: 'sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you'.

5. Even their false teaching is so subtle you often don't realize it is going on.

B. This operation is so covert, they themselves often do not even realize who they are and what they are doing.

1. I certainly am not smart enough to tell.
2. You, likewise, are not smart enough to tell.
3. It is the Word and the Wisdom of God that will reveal who these are.

Next we see:

III. The characteristics of this false teacher.

There are recognizable characteristics of these false teachers:

A. They are sowers of discord.

1. They bring in damnable heresies. This is the Greek word itself and it means 'disunion'.

2. Proverb 6:16-19

16 These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him:

17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

18 A heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

19 A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and **he that soweth discord among brethren.**

3. This is that seventh thing on God's Proverbs Chapter 6 list of abominations.

4. Six of these God hates; the first 6 are 'things', the seventh is a person. God hates the sins but He still loves and wants to save you!

5. Do you ever find yourself sowing discord in the Church? 'Well, he said this and she said that and can you believe what she said about her...'

B. They plant seeds of doubt.

1. Vs. 1, 'denying the Lord that bought them.'

2. First, understand that Jesus having bought you doesn't mean that you are saved; Jesus bought us all; He paid the debt for all men.

3. **2 Peter 2:2** And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

[pernicious or destructive ways.]

4. "I just don't believe that once saved always saved"...or:

5. 'I thought Jesus was the Son of God, not God'...

6. Or an many cases talking about anything and everything except the Lord.

C. They use others.

1. **2 Peter 2:3** And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: ...

2. You are good for what you can do for them or what they can get from you.

C. They are in it for themselves.

1. **2 Peter 2:10** But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous *are they*, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

2. This 'government' is talking primarily about the ruling leadership in the Church.

3. These 'dignities' are those who are to be held in high esteem; such as your pastor and your elders and their wives.

4. Are you not afraid to speak evil of your pastor or his wife?

5. Maybe you should be:

2 Peter 2:12 But these, as [like] natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;

D. They are not loyal or faithful.

1. **2 Peter 2:13** And shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots *they are* and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you;

2. **2 Peter 2:14-15**

14 Having eyes full of adultery, [physical or spiritual] and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: a heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children:

15 Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam *the son of Bosor*, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

E. They have lots of empty words.

1. **2 Peter 2:17-18**

17 These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest: to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever.

18 For when they speak great swelling *words* of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, *through much* wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

2. **2 Peter 2:19** While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

In Conclusion:

The Lord paints quite an accurate portrait of these whom Satan is using. Do you see yourself in this picture?

Do we know from the scriptures that there are degrees of punishment in hell? Jesus said in

Matthew 23:14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

I am sure that Hitler and Saddam and others like them have a special hot place; but that one who knew about Jesus, who heard about Jesus every week, who pretended yet still rejected Him is without doubt going to be living in that same neighborhood for all eternity!

Hanging on to your old religion in your heart and pretending to be one of us who simply trust Jesus and Him alone to save us; is going to get you somewhere you do not want to be!

Claiming to have trusted Jesus to save you when you know you did not; is going to get you somewhere you do not want to be.

Twice, in Verse 19 and also in Verse 20, this text speaks of these having been overcome.

Lord willing, next week, I am going to lay out for you how that you; even if Satan has been playing you like a fiddle, can be an overcomer in Jesus Christ.