

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: The Character of a Counterfeit

SERMON REFERENCE: 2 Peter 2:9-15

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1621

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Counterfeit Christians are not new.
 - i) There were counterfeit Christians in Peter's time.
 - (1) 2 Peter 2:1
 - (a) The word "false" in this passage is the word "pseudo" in the Greek language.
 - (2) 2 Peter 2:3
 - (a) The word "feigned" here is the word from which we get our English word "plastic."
 - ii) There have always been and there will always be counterfeit Christians.
- b) When we learn of counterfeit money, we do not throw away all of our money.
 - i) The counterfeit proves the worthwhileness and the validity of that which we have.
- c) Counterfeit Christians prove the worthwhileness, validity, and the reality of that which they are counterfeiting.
 - i) Never let a hypocrite keep you away from the true riches of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (1) It would be far better to spend a few days with some hypocrites than to spend eternity with all hypocrites in Hell.
- d) When Peter was writing about counterfeit Christians, he was not writing about people who were merely mistaken.
 - i) There are a lot of people who are wrong about Christianity, but they are not hypocrites.
 - (1) They just never have come to believe.
 - (2) There are some who are wrong in their doctrine.
 - ii) Peter was talking about those who are willfully wicked.
 - (1) They were merchandising religion.
 - (2) These are false prophets with pseudo words making merchandise of us.
- e) 2 Peter 2:9-15
 - i) There is a judgment day coming.
 - ii) God's wrath chiefly burns against religious charlatans and pseudo apostles, those with plastic words.
- f) Beyond and behind every counterfeit's bad theology is a rotten character.
 - i) In today's Scripture, Peter describes their theology and character.
- g) In today's message, we will look at the three marks that Peter uses to describe the character of a counterfeit Christian.

2) THEIR PROUD PRESUMPTION

- a) 2 Peter 2:10
- b) One of the marks of these pseudo prophets and merchandisers of religion is that they are proud, stubborn, reckless, daring, bold, brash, and arrogant.
 - i) Peter says that they are presumptuous.
- c) The root of their presumption:

- i) They walk after the flesh.
 - (1) 2 Peter 2:10
 - (2) The flesh is the old nature that we inherited from Adam.
 - (3) The flesh is the predisposition to sin.
 - (a) It is the original sin that is in all of us.
 - ii) The old nature is so presumptuous, proud, and arrogant that it rebels against God.
 - (1) Romans 8:7-8
 - (a) The “carnal” mind means the “fleshly” mind.
 - (b) “Enmity against God” in this passage means “warfare against God.”
 - iii) There is in each of us this principle called the flesh.
 - (1) The “flesh” is not skin, bones, hide, hair, etc.
 - (2) It is the old desire to sin that is in all of us.
 - (a) We are born with it.
 - (b) We cannot say that the devil made us do it.
 - (i) If the devil were to be obliterated, we would go on sinning.
 - iv) If we do not have the anchor of the Word of God and the power of the Spirit of God, then our flesh will lead us to do the same things that the flesh does in false teachers.
- d) It results in rebellion.
- i) 2 Peter 2:10
 - (1) They despise government.
 - ii) A false teacher does not want anyone to set parameters on him or to tell him that he must live by the Word of God.
 - iii) They rebel against all authority.
 - (1) They despise government.
 - (2) They despise the Word of God.
 - (3) They are so proud that they do not want anyone telling them what to do.
 - iv) The reason why some theologians today cannot simply believe the Word of God is because even a little child can believe the Word of God, too.
 - (1) They want something that sets them apart.
 - (2) They want something to show how learned they are and how spectacular their investigation is.
 - v) 1 Timothy 6:3-4
 - (1) All liberalism and cultism come from pride.
 - vi) If parents want to keep their children from becoming apostates, then they should watch that there’s no spirit of rebellion in those children.
 - (1) They should teach their children true humility.
 - vii) Apostasy and anarchy are linked together.
- e) The revelation of that presumption:
- i) 2 Peter 2:10
 - (1) They are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.

- (2) The word for “dignities” here is the word we get our word “doxology” from.
 - (a) It literally means “glories.”
- (3) Counterfeit Christians are so full of the flesh that they don’t even tremble to say blasphemous things about holy persons and glories.
 - (a) They just talk; there is no restraint.
- (4) When Peter was talking about dignities in this passage, he was likely talking about angels and angelic beings.
 - (a) Perhaps, he was talking about fallen angels.
- ii) 2 Peter 2:11
 - (1) When Satan fell, there were about one-third of the angels that fell with him.
 - (a) This means that thousands, perhaps even millions or billions, of demon spirits are in the universe (fallen angels).
 - (b) They are headed up by one chief fallen angel whose name is Lucifer, or Satan.
- iii) One day, Michael the Archangel and Satan were having a dispute over the body of Moses.
 - (1) Jude 9
 - (2) Michael, the most glorious of all the angels, did not dare to bring a railing accusation against Satan.
 - (a) But he said to Satan, “The Lord rebuke you.”
- iv) Simon Peter is saying that these false teachers are so presumptuous and arrogant that they shoot off the lip at holy things when even Michael the Archangel would not do that to Satan.
 - (1) Satan was the highest of the created beings of God before he fell.
 - (2) Just as in fallen man there remains the image of the God who created him, there is a certain dignity that remains in Satan.
 - (a) This is not bragging on Satan.
 - (b) Satan is unspeakably wicked and immoral, yet the Lord Jesus called him the god of this age and the prince of the power of the air.
 - (i) Ephesians 2:2
- v) We should not speak flippantly and carelessly about what God takes very seriously.
 - (1) We may joke about the devil, but God does not.
 - (a) This teaches a light conception of a malevolent being who is extremely powerful and horribly wicked.
- vi) We should never fail to have a humility before God.
- vii) False teachers are not afraid to do what holy angels are afraid to do.
- viii) False teachers will revile holy things when holy angels would not even revile Satan himself.

3) THEIR BEASTLY BEHAVIOR (2 PETER 2:12-14)

- a) 2 Peter 2:12

- i) They act like animals.
 - (1) They have beastly behavior and animal attitudes.
- b) Man was created in the image of God, but man has been moving Heaven and Earth to prove through evolution that he is an orphan of the apes.
 - i) The fruit of this is the animal rights movement.
- c) Those in the animal rights movement have taken evolution and carried it out to its logical conclusion.
 - i) It always ends up in beastly behavior.
- d) The animal rights movement does not elevate the animals.
 - i) What it does is degrade man to mere animal, and the behavior of an animal is a brute beast.
- e) Animals live for three things:
 - i) Self-gratification
 - ii) Self-preservation
 - iii) Self-propagation
 - (1) The majority of the people in this world are living for these three things, as well.
- f) There is a difference between men and animals.
 - i) An animal is physical and material.
 - (1) All of the living organisms in the material world are part of the food chain.
 - (a) Apart from God, that is all that we are.
 - ii) When God made man, He made man in His own image.
 - (1) God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life.
 - (2) Man became a living soul made in the image of God.
 - (a) This is the difference between man and the animals.
 - iii) That difference is being blurred by the New Age.
 - (1) The New Age is not new, and it is rooted in Eastern religions, especially Hinduism.
 - (2) This teaches that God is impersonal.
 - (3) The emphasis on animal rights is not incidental, nor is it merely coincidental.
 - (a) It is fundamental to a way of thinking that has pervaded the Western world.
 - (b) This thinking is rooted in reincarnation.
 - (i) This has the belief that animals and humans are all related, and they can go from one form to another.
 - (ii) A person may ascend to some higher being, or he may regress to a lower being.
 - (4) There is the belief that God is everything and everything is God.
 - (a) If so, then there can't be any good or any evil.
 - (i) If everything is God, then you don't have a real system of good and evil.

- (ii) So, we have a world today that is devoid of true morality with no fixed right or wrong.
 - (b) To say that God is in everything and that everything is God does not elevate man.
 - (i) It just makes man equal with dirt.
 - (ii) It brings man down to the level of the animals.
- (5) The animal rights phenomenon is a synthesis of humanism, Hinduism, evolution, and New Age mysticism.
 - (a) False prophets have always bought into this.
 - (i) When they buy into it, they begin to behave like it.
 - (b) 2 Peter 2:12
 - (i) “Speak evil of the things that they understand not.”
 - 1. They don’t know what they’re talking about.
 - (c) There are some who believe that we have no authority over the animals.
 - (d) Others believe that there is no clear distinction between us and animals.
 - (i) But no animal has a spirit.
 - (ii) Man is made in the image of God.
- (6) Spurred on by evolution, New Age thoughts, and counterfeit Christianity, people begin to behave like natural brute beasts.
 - (a) Finally, civilization will end up with a man that the Bible calls the Beast.
 - (i) This is the Antichrist.
 - (b) We see this beastly behavior in 2 Peter 2:12.
- g) The different marks of beastly behavior:
 - i) Beastly ignorance.
 - (1) They speak of things they do not understand.
 - (a) They can’t understand because they don’t have the Spirit of God in them.
 - (2) 2 Peter 2:12
 - ii) Beastly immorality.
 - (1) 2 Peter 2:13
 - (a) “Riot in the daytime” means “daylight debauchery.”
 - (i) They can’t wait until the night to get into sin.
 - (ii) They are out of control.
 - (iii) They riot in the day.
 - (b) The word “spots” in this verse has the idea of filth and dirt, and “the word “blemish” is the word for a scab.
 - (i) Peter was saying, “The filthy scabs.”
 - (c) They pollute the fellowship.
 - (2) 2 Peter 2:14
 - (a) In the Greek language, “having eyes full of adultery” literally means, “They have eyes full of an adulteress.”

- (i) They are so full of the flesh that they cannot even look on a woman without lust.
 - (3) They are never satisfied; always lusting.
 - (a) How like animals they are!
 - (4) Jeremiah 5:7-8
 - iii) Beastly influence.
 - (1) 2 Peter 2:14
 - (a) The word “beguile” in this verse has the idea of a fishing lure or something with a hook in it.
 - (2) They know how to bait the hook for unstable souls.
 - (a) We need to stabilize our kids and ourselves because there is someone out there fishing for us.
 - (3) These beasts want to run in packs.
 - (a) They are not content just to believe what they believe and practice what they practice.
 - (b) They want to make merchandise of us and “beguile unstable souls.”
- 4) THEIR GODLESS GREED (2 PETER 2:14-15, 21)
 - a) 2 Peter 2:14
 - i) The word “exercise” in this verse is the word that we get our word “gymnasium” from.
 - ii) They are trained in covetousness like an athlete trains himself.
 - (1) 2 Peter 2:3
 - b) They have exercised themselves with covetous practices.
 - i) They never get enough.
 - ii) They are greedy.
 - c) A false prophet is not just someone who is mistaken or has not learned the Bible correctly.
 - i) We all make mistakes, but false prophets are people who have a rotten character.
 - ii) They are not merely mistaken; they are willfully wicked.
 - iii) Every one of them is someone who once knew the truth.
 - (1) 2 Peter 2:15
 - (2) It is not that they have never known or that they have been mistaken.
 - (3) It is that they have willfully and deliberately forsaken the right way.
 - d) 2 Peter 2:21
 - i) They know what is right, and they refuse it.
 - ii) They have never been saved.
 - (1) They are not people who had salvation and lost it.
 - (a) They never did have it.
 - e) They willfully prostitute the Gospel of Jesus Christ for gain.
 - i) Peter gave us an example of this in 2 Peter 2:15.
 - (1) Balaam was a false prophet.
 - (a) His story is found in Numbers 22-25.

- (b) The king of Moab was afraid of the Jewish people, and he wanted Balaam to pronounce a curse on them.
 - (i) He offered to pay Balaam if he would curse the people.
 - (c) Balaam said that he couldn't curse them but explained a way in which they could get the people to live immorally so that God would curse them.
 - (i) Then, Balaam would not have to curse them; the people would curse themselves.
 - (ii) There are people today who don't like the Gospel we preach or the stands that we take, and they would like to put a curse upon us.
 1. But we can curse ourselves by immorality and sin.
 2. We can let sin and immorality come into our churches and bring the curse of God because of that sin.
- (2) Balaam is a classic example of a prophet for profit.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) Peter is warning people not to go to Hell because of some hypocrite.
- b) There have been and will be false prophets.
 - i) They are marked by a proud presumption, a beastly behavior, and a Godless greed.
 - ii) Instead of this causing you to lose your faith, it should strengthen your faith because God has told us about them in His Word.
- c) Make certain you know what the truth is and that you teach your children the truth.
- d) Don't let a counterfeit Christian keep you away from the true riches that are in the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - i) The only reason that counterfeits counterfeit anything is because of the worthwhileness and the validity of the real.
- e) John 11:26
- f) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- g) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16