

**Theme:** Faith in Exile – I Peter 1:17-19

**Title:** The Emptiness of False Teachers – II Peter 2:17-22

**Aim:** The deceptive claims of false teachers are empty.

**Intro:** Talking again today about false teachers/teachings. The basis of every false teaching is the denial of God or God's word. The question Satan thru the serpent asked Eve, "Did God really say...?" is still the question false teachers are asking. In Peter's day the early Church faced several false teachings. Judaism basically said you had to keep the law of Moses along w/faith in Christ to be saved. Gnosticism said that the material world wasn't real & didn't matter, only the spiritual mattered. The Gnostic made claims that Jesus didn't come in the flesh & that it didn't matter what one did in the flesh – anything goes – because only the spiritual mattered. Or one needed to restrain the flesh to extreme, that it might not reflect poorly on the spiritual – asceticism. There were false teachers also who denied that Jesus was God the Son, denied the resurrection, taught that the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ was bogus or that it had already happened. False teaching has continued throughout history & flourished at times, w/the false church espousing its various & sundry tenets – denying God, Christ, our need of salvation, the means of salvation, etc. False teaching continues today, flourishing as much or more than ever. These same teachings have continued w/various changes, but the number of false teachings have multiplied exponentially. And the false church gives credence to them all. Theme: Faith in Exile – As believers/followers of Christ we are indeed exiles in a world that's not our home. We live in a world that's anti-God, anti-Scripture, anti-Church, anti-Biblical morality & anti-truth. Today, more than ever, what's being espoused as truth is absolute idiocracy, total lunacy; yet if we don't accept it, we're called the hateful, nearsighted, ignorant ones. To deal w/these false teachings all around us we must know the truth of Scripture – never more important. Peter addressed

the emptiness of false teaching in our text this morning, which could have been written this morning instead of almost 2000 years ago. II Peter 2:17-22 [READ]. Consider Peter's description of these false teachers & their deceptions & on this communion Sunday compare them to truths of Scripture concerning our Savior Jesus Christ & life in Him. 1) **They are empty & useless**. This is a picture of what looks like a refreshing stream/spring. Water would most likely be wonderful to drink (like family had when I was a kid). On the other hand, this is a dried-up spring/stream. Waterless – the little water there would be worthless to drink. Mists driven by a storm don't soak into the ground to give water to plants. They are useless. False teaching is also useless, adding nothing to the lives of those who espouse or believe it. Rather it takes away from the lives of those who unfortunately accept it. Therefore God is reserving judgment for false teachers. They speak "loud boasts of folly." The loudest voice gets heard, it seems, whether or not what is spoken is true. Listen, it is absolute folly that the unborn are not precious lives to be protected. It is absolute folly that there are more than 2 genders! Children, understand, you do not have to choose a pronoun. Who you are is who God made you, male or female. It is absolute folly that mankind has evolved over millions/billions of years. All of that is denial of God, His creation & His order. And the false church is espousing these lies as truth. These false teachings entice others who are weak & looking for answers in the wrong places. They promise freedom, but have none to give, being slaves of corruption themselves, overcome by their own lies. Tell a lie enough times & you start to believe it. There is no freedom in the folly of the world. Foolishness leads to enslavement: "Whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved." That can even be true of a believer who has not fully put off the flesh/old man. Beware of being entangled again in a yoke of bondage. But bro/sis, our children are in grave danger. There

was a quote repeated in recent months: “We’re here, we’re queer, & we’re coming after your children.” It was later claimed to be a joke, but it’s not at all funny because it’s true. Let us protect our children, let us pray for our children, let us teach our children well, which means we need to know & stand upon the truth. You might ask, what does this have to do w/the Church & Christian doctrine? When you have denied God & the truth of Scripture, the possibilities of deception are widened ad infinity. II) **Many who espouse the lies of false teaching profess faith in Christ** (or did at one time). This was true in Peter’s day as well as throughout history & today. Unfortunately, many of us know those who have “escaped the defilements of the world” for a time, “through the knowledge of our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ,” those who have supposedly come to faith in Christ. Their lives have actually changed for a time but then they become “entangled” again in those very defilements & their lives become “worse for them than the 1<sup>st</sup>.” Peter said “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,” which is simply, “***believe in the Lord Jesus Christ & you will be saved***” (Acts 16:31). It's the obedience of faith in Christ – faith that surrenders to His Lordship. Such ones have not lost their salvation; rather, they never had it. They only tasted the truth & instead of feasting on the bread of life & enjoying the cleansing God provides in Christ, they have turned back to the vomit of lies they supposedly got rid of & the mud of sin in which they had formerly wallowed. Again, Peter doesn’t mince words. III) **Compare the false teachings of the world w/the truth of Christ**. Jesus is indeed the Son of God & Son of Man who is the mediator between God & man. He came to show us the Father, lived a perfect life of obedience, which counts for us who believe/embrace Him by faith, took on our sins on the cross to pay the penalty in our place, so that through Him we are forgiven. He rose

again as conqueror of sin & death for us, so that through Him we might have new life & eternal life. We who are in Christ are considered the fools by many, but Jesus said that listening to His teaching & following it would be like building your house upon the rock, a solid foundation which will be able to withstand the storms of life (Matthew 7:24-25). He also said in John 8:31-32, ***“If you abide in My Word, you are truly My disciples, & you will know the truth, & the truth will set you free.”*** When many left from following Jesus because of His difficult teaching, Jesus asked His disciples, “Do you want to go away as well?” This same Peter replied on behalf of all the disciples, ***“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, & we have believed & have come to know, that You are the Holy One of God”*** (John 6:68-69). There’s so much clamor swirling around us, religious clamor, moral clamor, political clamor, existential clamor. The truth is in Christ, in Scripture. If we’re going to live as exiles in this world, we must hold to the truth. Know the truth, live the truth, & don’t compromise the truth. That will lead to the best of life, in communion w/God & those of like precious faith. It will take much faith – faith in exile.