

2 Peter 2 – Springs without Water

At this time in the life of the early church, Peter was extremely concerned about the influence of certain 'false teachers' who were drawing new believers away from the costly true gospel of hope to one that seemed to offer these vulnerable people a more enticing lifestyle. He speaks about their immoral life, how they often used this 'false gospel' to draw new converts after themselves, to abuse them; for both financial and sexual purposes.

He says this about their motives:

They “¹⁸ entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error. ¹⁹ They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity.” (vv. 18, 19) and they are “blots and blemishes...with eyes full of adultery they seduce the unstable and never stop sinning” (vv. 13, 14)

Regarding their message, he says they are “Springs without water and mists driven by the wind” (v. 17). Their teaching seemed to offer hope – for the drowning man it seemed to offer a salvation – but in reality their promises were hollow, it left the people with nothing. Of course this is devastating as it is, but also their hollow message actually alienated these truth-seekers from the real gospel that the true apostles were teaching.

Peter finishes this chapter by saying one of the most damning phrases in the Bible: “If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and are overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness...” (vv 20, 21).

Sadly, we have very similar issues facing the church today. There are still unscrupulous leaders who realise that they can gain financial wealth, power and even exploit the lost for their own carnal lusts. Bad enough in the world, but in the church, using a distorted version of the true gospel of hope for their own ends is a travesty!

Questions

- 1) What things do you think we can do to ensure this doesn't happen for us in King's ? Matthew laid out a number of things that he saw we could practice creating a healthy environment of transparency and sound teaching.**
- 2) Have you personally ever encountered such false teaching yourself?**
- 3) Finish by praying for the (A) the teachers at King's and (B) wider afield, for solid teaching and communities that offer real hope for the lost without compromise.**