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Beware of Good Liars Part Two
2 Peter 2:10-22

The hymn “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing” has these poignant lyrics: “Prone to wander, Lord I feel it. Prone to leave the God I love.” The apostle Peter verifies this statement in this passage. That’s why Christ called us to pray “lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” We need to cover our lives with prayer.

My biggest temptations are money, pride (fame-the desire to be known) and apathy. I have to set safeguards in place so that I am not tempted to wander. When I am tempted to hoard money, I need to give it away to those who need it. If I am tempted to covet fame, I remain in a church where there is accountability and where people are unimpressed with my notoriety. When I am tempted sexually, I put safeguards in place like never riding in a car or putting myself in a place of being alone with another woman. My secretary is 64 years old and 6’4. She keeps me in line!

My greatest temptation is to ignore some of the realities in this world. I want to pretend that no one is starving, that 17,000 kids will die of starvation every day. I want to pretend that there is no sexual trafficking and that there is no persecution in closed countries. I can look the other way. I want to pretend that no one goes to hell.

If I do that, then I can live for myself. I see the mission of God as a “downer.” But God does not want us to ignore Kingdom work.

In 2 Timothy 4, Paul warns that we can be led astray and lose our faith. We can leave sound doctrine and find teachers that will tell them what they want to hear. Often, these are not Christian leaders. The backslider will find friends who will tell them what they want to hear. They will tell them that there are no consequences for indulging in sexual sin or other impure lifestyle choices. In 2 Peter, Peter writes that there will always be people who will tell you what you want to hear.

Blasphemy occurs when false teachers profane the name of God by indulging in defiling passion. They will be severely punished. They despise authority and don’t tremble at the Word of God. We know better than to do that. Pride is accepted, even praised in our society. Mohammed Ali once cried “I am the greatest.” People were shocked at his arrogance back then. Now, people call arrogance a positive self-image.

Peter warns that even the fallen angels know better than that. Fallen angels, incredibly powerful beings, don’t dare to pronounce judgment, but fallen men don’t tremble or fear God. For example, a prideful person might say, “If your God thinks it is wrong to leave my husband, then your God can send me to hell!” Can you believe such arrogance?

Such backslidden folk are like irrational animals. What separates you from your dog? You have a conscience. An animal runs after whatever he thinks is good. He goes after it. If you indulge in your desires without conscience or self-control, you are no different than an animal. Peter also warns of those who revel in the daytime (Vegas!). People who will use and manipulate others are under judgment. They are described as having “eyes full of adultery.” You don’t have to have an affair to have “eyes filled with adultery.” You can have an impure imagination, harbor lust, internet porn addiction or other impurities can fill your life.

Peter says backsliders are trained in greed. They can’t stop thinking about themselves. They know they should give, but are always asking the question, “What about me?” They spend their time acquiring what they want rather than meeting the needs of others. Peter cites the story of Balaam the prophet, who sold out for gain and was reproved by his donkey! Can you imagine? God said to Balaam, “if you will not speak for Me, I can even make a donkey do it!”

It is so easy to be envious of the wicked. Psalm 73 describes the emotions of someone who is envious of the wicked, yet fails to see the imminent destruction they face. They are cursed by God. “Waterless springs” describe a fog that disappears. Their popularity and wealth are a mist.

Peter says the backslidden person is enslaved (addicted) to corruption. The only way to avoid such enslavement is to be enslaved to God. Therein lies true freedom. He commands us to lead a life of freedom. It is good to be right with God. A very clear picture of the person who has turned from God is like the person who grew up in a godly home. He has seen the real thing. Those who have heard the truth, it would have been better for them if they had been ignorant.

This passage is not talking about losing one's salvation. They never were transformed. It's like a pig who was washed only to return to his roots-wallowing in the mud. Peter says "don't go there." Live a transformed life and follow God. Are you confident you have been re-born and have truly given your heart to Christ? Today is the day to do it!