

## Hold on to Hope (Part 2)

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[ 0 : 00 ] Last week we started working our way through Galatians chapter 5 verses 2-12 by making it through! Let's go ahead and read verses 2-12 of Galatians 5 now.

Look, I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law. You have fallen away from grace. For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. For in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love. You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion is not from him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is. But if I, brother, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case, the offense of the cross has been removed.

[ 1 : 24 ] I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves. Tonight's main idea is the same as last week. Paul lists the consequences for believers who turn to false teaching, and he summarizes the characteristics of false teachers. Paul lists the consequences for believers who turn to false teaching, and he summarizes the characteristics of false teachers.

We covered the first half of that main idea last time, so let's do some review before we get to the new material. Verses 2 through 6 showed us the consequences of the flawed message. Paul listed four consequences of following Jewish law. If people want to rely on the law for salvation or sanctification, they negate the benefit of Christ's atoning sacrifice, they obligate themselves to follow the whole law, they fall away from grace, and they lose their hope of righteousness. Verses 5 and 6 focused on the importance of faith. We saw from verse 5 that by faith, believers wait. We wait on the hope of righteousness that is guaranteed to us, and verse 6 showed us that what matters is faith. When a person is in Christ, nothing more is necessary. Nothing we do can improve our standing before God.

All that is necessary to be accepted with God is to be in Christ, and we are in Christ by faith. Faith manifests itself through love, and that's love for God and love for others.

True believers manifest their faith and demonstrate it by showing love. The person who lives by faith serves under the internal compulsion of love and does not need the outward compulsion of the law.

[ 3 : 23 ] That review leads to an obvious question. How do we keep ourselves from being led astray by false teachers like the Galatians had been led astray?

Well, the answer is easy to understand, but sometimes harder to do. And we need to know how to identify false teachers so that we can recognize those false teachers.

In verses 7 through 12, Paul shows us how to recognize those false teachers. And by recognizing those false teachers, we can prevent them from stealing our hope.

So we've seen the consequences of the flawed message, and now Paul moves to the second part of this passage. In verses 7 through 12, we see the characteristics of the false messengers.

So the characteristics of the false messengers. Let's read Galatians 5, 7 through 12 again.

[ 4 : 22 ] Paul said, You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion is not from him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump.

I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whomever he is. But if I, brothers, preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted?

In that case, the offense of the cross has been removed. I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves. In this text, Paul gives us five characteristics of false teachers.

And the first characteristic of false teachers is that those false teachers hinder others. Those false teachers hinder others. And we see that from verse 7.

Paul says, You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? A literal translation of verse 7 would be, You were running well.

[ 5 : 25 ] Who cut in on you so that you stopped obeying the truth? The term Paul uses for cutting in was often used at the ancient Greek races. Those races were not held on oval tracks, but they were held to a post and back.

They had rules against tripping, but sometimes it was possible to get away with a fair amount of interference, especially near the post where runners had to change directions. And one unsporting strategy for winning was to try to impede the progress of opponents by cutting in on them.

Paul loved to compare the Christian life to a race. To run well in the Christian race is more than to just believe the truth. It is to behave well also.

Running well includes obeying that truth. Earlier in the letter, Paul referred to what he called the truth of the gospel. And that truth is the good news of salvation from sin and death through the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

When he talks about obeying the truth, he could be referring to the truth of the gospel, the way by which men are saved, or he could be referring to the true way that saved people live out their redeemed lives in obedience to God's word.

[ 6 : 49 ] Paul seems to be using the phrase in both senses here. The legalism of the Judaizers was preventing the unsaved from coming to Christ in faith and was also preventing the saved from following Christ in faith.

For a proper standing before God regarding salvation, all we need to do is believe in Jesus Christ. We're justified by faith alone.

However, once we've been justified, we need to be sanctified. When Paul first came to the Galatians, they received him as an angel of God.

We saw that when we looked at verse 14 of chapter 4. The Galatians accepted the word, they trusted the Lord Jesus Christ, and received the Holy Spirit.

They had a deep joy that was evident to all, and they were willing to make any sacrifice to accommodate Paul. But now they were turning to the laws of Judaism, and the saved people's sanctification was being hindered.

[ 7 : 52 ] Paul phrased verse 7 as a question, but he knew who had hindered the Galatians. The teachers who were guilty of such poor sportsmanship were the Judaizers who wanted to add the law of Moses to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In the verses that follow, Paul tries to help the Galatians see where this legalism came from, what it was doing to their church, and where it would lead in the end. We'll see those things as we look at the remaining characteristics of false teachers.

The second characteristic of false teachers is that their message comes from a source other than God. Their message comes from a source other than God.

Look at verse 8 again. Paul simply said, This persuasion is not from him who called you. Way back in Galatians chapter 1, verses 3 through 6, we saw who called the Galatian believers.

So here are Galatians chapter 1, verses 3 through 6. Paul said there, Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever and ever.

[ 9 : 15 ] Amen. Then in verse 6 he said, I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel.

The Galatians were called by God's grace. We know that grace is unmerited favor. And God's grace is the gift of God's forgiveness for those who trust in Jesus Christ.

Because it involves forgiveness, the free gift of divine grace is available only for sinners. Think of the words of the old hymn, Softly and tenderly, Jesus is calling, calling for you and for me.

Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling, calling, O sinner, come home. The one who calls is God, and the one he calls are sinners.

And the way he calls them is by his grace. The father who called them in grace could never be the source of teaching that promotes works. Works-based theologies, false theologies based upon

legalism, like what the Judaizers were promoting, have a much different source.

[10:30] The message of legalism must come instead from the father of lies, who's the devil himself. If anyone wants us to trust in ourselves, it is Satan.

He knows that no matter how hard we work, we will never be able to work our way to heaven. Whenever we're persuaded to trust ourselves rather than to trust in Jesus, the persuasion is demonic.

The devil and his demons are good at trying to persuade us that we must do things to try to live up to God's grace, that someone like us could never be saved. Martin Luther had a good comment about how to respond to such feelings and teachings.

He wrote, in part, I can seek examples of holy life in Abraham, Isaiah, John the Baptist, Paul, and other saints, but they cannot forgive my sins.

They cannot deliver me from the power of the devil and from death. They cannot save me and give me everlasting life, for these things belong to Christ alone.

[11:39] True believers trust God's word as our source for truth rather than the false teachings of legalism that have Satan as the source for their lies. Moving to verse 9, Paul listed the third characteristic of false teachers, and Paul turned to a baking comparison to illustrate this characteristic.

Look at Galatians 5, 9 again. It says, A little leaven leavens the whole lump. The third characteristic of false teachers is that their message contaminates others by spreading quickly.

Their message contaminates others by spreading quickly. The error of the false teachers was spreading in the Christian community until the whole church in Galatia was being contaminated.

Paul used the same proverb in 1 Corinthians 5, 6. There he applied it to sin in the Christian community. Here in Galatians, he applied it to false teaching.

One of the most serious things about evil and error is that they both spread. Last week, Latricia was kind enough to bring us some homemade bread.

[12:51] Her bread recipe likely called for very little yeast, but that yeast affected the entire lump of dough. Similarly, a relatively small amount of false teaching can grow to have a significant impact on an entire church.

And that is why the Bible often uses the example of yeast as an illustration of how quickly something can be impacted by sin. Paul likely got the idea of using the example of leaven from Christ himself.

Jesus applied the same example to false teachers. We'll look at a couple of verses in Matthew chapter 16 to see that. In Matthew chapter 16, verse 6, listen to what Jesus said.

There he's speaking to his disciples, and the verse says, Jesus said to them, watch and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Then Matthew 16, 12 wraps up that portion of scripture by telling us how the disciples reacted to Jesus' words. Matthew 16, 12 says, Then they understood that he did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

[14:13] False teachers are problematic because they affect many people, and that is why Paul is so intense in this letter. Think about how a single cell of cancer can metastasize until it spreads throughout the physical body.

A single cell of false doctrine can multiply itself and spread throughout the body of believers as well. A great forest fire is often started by just one spark.

And remember what Benjamin Franklin once wrote, For want of a nail, the shoe was lost. For want of a shoe, the horse was lost. For want of a horse, the rider was lost.

And for want of a rider, the battle was lost. To add anything to grace is wrong. And listen to what Paul told the Romans in Romans chapter 11, verse 6.

Romans 11, 6 says, But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works. Otherwise, grace would no longer be grace. Charles Spurgeon wrote, One man's influence may mislead thousands.

[15:27] One piece of false doctrine may taint our whole creed. If you have a wrong ground of confidence, you are wrong altogether. A fourth characteristic of false teachers comes in Galatians 5, 10.

And the fourth characteristic of false teachers is that they will face God's judgment. They will face God's judgment. Check out verse 10 again.

Paul wrote, I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty whoever he is. Before we get to the judgment part of the verse, let's look at what Paul says at the beginning of the verse.

Paul reaffirms his belief that the Christians in Galatia really are true believers. Paul said, I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view.

Here Paul is distinguishing between the deceived and the deceivers. So far, Paul's been very hard on the Galatians, but now he expresses his confidence.

[16:40] Although he severely warned them, here he alleviates some pressure on them. He thinks better of them because he understands the power of sovereign grace. Paul has confidence that those who were truly in Christ will not be persuaded by the false message, and he believes that some of the Galatians will eventually detect the error and walk in the truth.

The destiny of believers is secure. They will not reject true salvation for a false one. They will both persevere and be preserved.

We read John 10, 27 through 30 last week, but those verses are worth reading again. Listen to what Jesus said in John 10, 27 through 30.

Jesus said, My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life and they will never perish and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

My Father who has given them to me is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.

[17:57] The false teacher's fate will be much different though unless those false teachers repent and turn to the true gospel. So now let's look at the second half of Galatians 5, 10.

That's where Paul said, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty whoever he is. This statement gives the impression that the Judaizers had a ringleader.

Paul may or may not have known who the man was, but one thing that Paul knew for sure was that one day the man would have to answer to God for causing trouble in the church.

Apparently, only one person had started causing the confusion among the Galatian church. If so, this proves Paul's earlier point about how quickly false teaching can spread.

When we look at verse 12, we'll see that more than one person had already joined in the false teaching. The words at the end of verse 10 should be comforting words for true believers, but they're scary words for any false teacher.

[19:02] Listen again to how definitely Paul stated those words. He said, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is. Jesus' words about the judgment of false teachers were even more direct.

Listen to what Jesus said in Matthew 18, verse 6. In Matthew 18, 6, Jesus said, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believes in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.

Jesus here is speaking of enticing, trapping, or influencing a believer in any way that leads the believer into sin or makes it easier for the believer to turn to sin.

A person who is responsible for causing a Christian to sin commits an offense against Christ himself as well as against the Christian. The heavy millstone refers to the large upper millstone that was turned in a grinding process by a donkey and that stone often weighed thousands of pounds. The Romans sometimes practiced this form of execution by tying the heavy stone around a criminal's neck and dropping him overboard in deep water. And such a pagan form of execution was unimaginably horrible to the Jews.

[20:30] perhaps in some respects even more fearful than crucifixion. Yet Jesus said that suffering such a terrifying death would be better than causing even one of his people to sin.

You can see from those verses and that example that God takes false teaching seriously. Paul knew that and Paul reminded the Galatians of that.

Other biblical authors taught the same thing. Listen to what Peter wrote in 2 Peter chapter 2 verses 1 through 3.

Here are 2 Peter chapter 2 verses 1 through 3. But false prophets also arose among the people just as there will be false teachers among you who will secretly bring in destructive heresies even denying the master who brought them bringing upon themselves swift destruction and many will follow their sensuality and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed and in their greed they will exploit you with false words.

Their condemnation from long ago is not idle and their destruction is not asleep. Jude also talked about the judgment of false teachers and the end of Jude verse 13 says that false teachers are wandering stars for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever.

[ 22 : 03 ] It sounds a little nicer there because Jude said it so poetically but listen to that again. They're wandering stars for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever.

False teachers are hypocritical deceivers, immoral sinners, materialistic hedonists and spiritual terrorists. They misrepresent the truth about the gospel of Christ and twist the teachings of scripture.

In contrast truth shepherds have an accurate understanding of the gospel and a right view of who Jesus is. They possess a humble submissive attitude to Christ's lordship and they understand the seriousness of the Lord's declaration.

Jesus said I am the way and the truth and the life no one comes to the Father except through me. And of course that is John 14 verse 6.

Paul shared in the disdain that all biblical authors had for false teachers and in verse 12 Paul expressed his desire about what should happen to false teachers.

[ 23 : 10 ] We're going to look at verse 12 now before going back to cover verse 11. Here's what Paul wrote in Galatians 5 12. I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves.

The ESV's translation makes the verse sound crude enough but Paul's original words were even more graphic and this verse is the verse that Todd Fisher referenced at the apologetics conference on Saturday when he said that the Galatians letter is perhaps the most PG-13 of all of Paul's letters. The word that the ESV translates as emasculate literally means to cut off especially a member of the body and that word was often used of castration and that's clearly Paul's meaning here. He's probably referring to the Code of Cybal a popular pagan goddess in Asia Minor during Paul's day. Many devout male worshippers in that cult castrated themselves and all the priests were made eunuchs and they made themselves eunuchs.

His point was that if the Judaizers are so insistent on circumcision as a means of pleasing God why don't they go all the way and castrate themselves as the supreme act of religious devotion?

[ 24 : 31 ] If like the pagans they believe human achievement can earn divine favor why don't they go to the pagan extremes of self mutilation? That is blunt enough but Paul's blunt words here may have a second meaning.

According to biblical law eunuchs were not allowed to enter the temple. You can read about that in Deuteronomy chapter 23 verse 1. When Paul told the troublemaking Judaizers to emasculate themselves he was saying that they should be cut off from the church.

Let's recap what we've seen so far in tonight's text. So far we've seen four characteristics of false teachers.

False teachers hinder others. False teachers have Satan rather than God as the source for their message. False teachers corruption contaminates the church quickly and broadly.

And false teachers face the certainty of divine judgment. Let's back up to verse 11 now and see what Paul lists as the fifth characteristic of false teachers.

[ 25 : 43 ] Here is Galatians 5.11. Paul wrote But if I brother still preach circumcision why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed.

The fifth characteristic of false teachers is that false teachers persecute true teachers false teachers persecute true teachers false religion always has been and will continue to be the most aggressive and dominant persecutor of the church.

Satan fights God and satanic religion fights the true faith. Listen to how Jesus warned his disciples in John 15 23 through 16 4.

We'll go ahead and read John 15 23 through 16 4. Jesus said there Whoever hates me hates my father also.

If I had not done among them the works that no one else did they would not be guilty of sin but now they have seen and hated both me and my father but the word that is written in their law must be fulfilled they hated me without a cause but when the helper comes whom I will send to you from the father the spirit of truth who proceeds from the father he will bear witness about me and you also will bear witness because you have been with me from the beginning.

[ 27 : 16 ] Those verses at the end of John 15 set up the beginning of John 16 even though our Bibles have a chapter break here the verses at the beginning of John 16 are the verses that

illustrate how false religion and false teachers will persecute the true church.

In John 16 1-4 Jesus continued I have said all these things to keep you from falling away they will put you out of the synagogues indeed the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God and they will do these things because they have not known the father nor me but I have said these things to you that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.

The apostle Paul was an example of how true teachers were persecuted. When Paul wrote the letter that we know as 2nd Corinthians Paul summarized some of the persecutions that he had faced.

These verses are 2nd Corinthians chapter 11 verses 24 through 27. Paul wrote in 2nd Corinthians 11 24 through 27 five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes lest one.

Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. A night and a day I was adrift at sea.

[ 28 : 50 ] On frequent journeys in danger from rivers danger from robbers danger from my own people danger from Gentiles danger in the city danger in the wilderness danger at sea danger from false brothers in toil and hardship through many a sleepless night in hunger and thirst often without food in cold and exposure.

At various times and various places including Galatia Paul had been beaten arrested imprisoned stoned and even left for dead.

So why did this keep happening to him? Do you think it was his looks his personality or his ethnic background? No he was persecuted because he was preaching salvation in Christ alone.

So let's look at Galatians 5.11 again. But if I brothers still preach circumcision why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed.

Paul's wording indicates that the Judaizers must have been promoting a lie about Paul and his then current teaching. The Judaizers must have been saying that Paul himself had started preaching circumcision.

[ 30 : 11 ] Paul used the question at the start of verse 11 to prove that the Judaizers were lying about Paul. If Paul had switched to preaching circumcision he no longer would have been persecuted.

The fact that Paul still was being persecuted should have been proof enough for the Galatians that Paul remained steadfast in preaching grace alone. If Paul had preached circumcision he was safe. If Paul maintained the ethnic and religious barrier between Jew and Gentile the Jews would have no reason to persecute him. But he was persecuted up and down Asia Minor because the Jews hated his gospel which was the true gospel of Christ.

The preaching of the cross stands against the preaching of circumcision. The cross is what Paul had preached to the Galatians from the beginning. He clearly portrayed to them Jesus Christ as crucified we saw that in the first verse of Galatians chapter 3.

In the words of James Denny the aim of the epistle to the Galatians is to show that all Christianity is contained in the cross. To preach the cross is to preach salvation in Christ alone.

[ 31 : 29 ] It is to preach that only Christ's sacrificial death is sufficient to atone for sin. It is to preach salvation by Christ's infinite worth rather than by our own unworthy merits.

There is nothing we can do to make things right with God on our own but God has made things right with us through the bloody death of his son. To add any human effort or act to God's gracious provision through the death of his son is to exchange the saving gospel of Jesus Christ for the damning falsehood of paganism.

Trust in Christ's atoning work for salvation alone. Find your righteousness in him. Resist anyone who points you somewhere other than to Christ alone.

Remember the main idea for Galatians 5 2-12. Paul lists the consequences for believers who turn to false teaching and he summarizes the characteristics of false teachers.

We focused on the second half of that main idea tonight. We need to know how to recognize false teachers to keep them from stealing our hope. The false teachers who were leading the Galatians astray were far from well-intentioned.

[ 32 : 48 ] Their purpose was to gain a following for themselves. We saw that when we looked at verse 17 of Galatians 4 and they also wanted to make a good showing in the flesh.

We'll see that when we get to Galatians 6-12. They were forerunners of all the self-promoting false teachers who have plagued the church throughout its history and will continue to do so until the Lord returns.

Peter warns there will be false teachers among you who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the master who brought them, bringing upon themselves swift destructions.

That is a verse we read earlier when we looked at 2 Peter 2-1. And Paul warns that the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared.

That is 1 Timothy 4-1-2. 2 Timothy 3-7-8 says they are always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.

[ 33 : 59 ] These men also oppose the truth, corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith. False teachers often have another characteristic that we've touched on a little bit tonight, but Paul didn't focus on much in his letter here.

This other characteristic is that false teachers deny the essential attributes of Christ. False teachers typically deny the essential attributes of Christ.

Listen to how Jude 4 describes false teachers. Jude 4 says, For certain people have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality, and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

False teachers refuse to honestly acknowledge the sovereign lordship of Christ. They will not submit to Jesus as divine master and Lord, nor will they give him the honor he singularly requires as God and savior of sinners.

Thus, they deny Christ his rightful position as God and as king. They also deny his position as Messiah. The Judaizers who bothered the Galatians initially might have appeared to be different than other false teachers who deny Christ.

[ 35 : 27 ] The Judaizers claimed to recognize Jesus' importance, but the Judaizers said that the Galatians needed Christ plus the works of the law to be saved and sanctified.

Here's the quote from John MacArthur that we heard last week. To trust in circumcision or any other personal effort as a means of grace is to supplement Christ's divine work with human work, and a supplemented Christ is a supplanted Christ.

To trust in human effort is to trust in law, which is totally incompatible with grace. Even though the Judaizers were acknowledging the need for Christ's atoning work, they still were denying his rightful position by claiming that Jesus' work needed to be supplemented with something else.

Throughout the letter to the Galatians, Paul repeatedly has mentioned how the Judaizers negate the sacrifice of Christ, and that effectively denies the rightful place of Christ by teaching the need for works.

We saw that, for example, in Galatians 5, 2, and perhaps that is why Paul omitted that characteristic from verses 7 through 12 of chapter 5.

[ 36 : 42 ] For another example of where Paul cited the significance of Christ's sacrifice, remember what we looked at when we looked at Galatians chapter 3, verses 23 through 26.

Here are Galatians 3, 23 through 26. Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed.

So then the law was our guardian until Christ came in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith.

Here's a long quote from John Stott that we will break into chunks. He wrote this several years ago, back in the 80s, but it still rings true today, perhaps even more so.

He said, ours is an age of tolerance. Men love to have the best of both worlds and hate to be forced to choose. It is commonly said that it does not matter what people believe so long as they are sincere, and that it is unwise to clarify issues too plainly or to focus them too sharply.

[ 38 : 06 ] Christianity will not allow us to sit on the fence or live in a haze. It urges us to be definite and decisive, and in particular to choose between Christ and circumcision.

Circumcision stands for a religion of human achievement, of what man can do by his own good works. Christ stands for a religion of divine achievement, of what God has done through the finished work of Christ.

Circumcision means law, works, and bondage. Christ means grace, faith, and freedom. Every man must choose. The one impossibility is what the Galatians were attempting, namely to add circumcision to Christ and have both.

Circumcision and Christ are mutually exclusive. Then he concluded this quote by saying, further, this choice has to be made by both the people and the ministers of the church, by those who practice and those who propagate religion.

It is either Christ or circumcision that the people receive, and either Christ or circumcision that the ministers preach. In principle, there is no third alternative, and behind our choice lurks our motive.

[ 39 : 29 ] It is when we are bent on flattering ourselves and others that we choose circumcision. Before the cross, we have to humble ourselves. Have you ever thought about that?

Before the cross, you have to humble yourself because you have to admit that you cannot save yourself on your own? We have to be on guard against false teachers, but we can take heart from what we've seen tonight as well, because we know that false teachers will be judged.

Listen to 2 Peter 2.9. 2 Peter 2.9 says, Then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for this reminder that we will continue to face false teachers until the day that your son comes again to claim his own.

We thank you that you've shown us how to recognize those false teachers, and we thank you even more that you have assured us that true believers won't fall victim to those false teachers, and if we do slip, you will bring us back.

[ 40 : 52 ] Be with us as we go through the rest of the week. Help us to be more willing to share your gospel with others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen.