

Heretics and Heresies

Tit. 3:10; 2 Pet. 1:1; 1 Cor. 11:19

Introduction:

- A. The root meaning is to choose, hence to choose sides or divide.
 - 1. Heretics are one who cause division.
 - 2. Heresies are things which cause division.
- B. Heretics and heresies are expected by Bible students. (1 Cor. 11:19; Acts 20:29, 30; Pet. 1:1)
- C. Characteristics of most heretics and heresies are described in 2 Pet. 2:

Discussion:

I. They Begin in Private (2 Pet. 2:1; Gal. 4:5)

- A. Quietly gain sympathy and confidence of untaught, unstable, and unhappy. (cf. Pet. 2:14)
- B. Later, go public when have gained enough support.

II. They Conceal Their Nature (2 Pet. 2:3, 18)

- A. By words
 - 1. “Feigned” from *plastos*, carefully molded – if challenged cry misunderstood.
 - 2. “Good words and fair speeches” (Rom 6:17) – talk a good game.
- B. By appearance.
 - 1. Appear humble and pious (cf. Col. 2:23) – Put on mask of spirituality.
 - 2. Appear so innocent (Mt. 7:15) – close look at fruits will reveal character.

III. They Exploit Human Weaknesses

- A. Best of brethren are vulnerable.
 - 1. Samuel’s age and unfaithful sons (1 Sam 8:5).
 - 2. Paul’s speech (2 Cor. 10:10).
- B. Best of congregations have short-comings.
 - 1. Heretics exploit the to their advantage.
 - 2. “Not enough” is fertile ground:
 - a. Members not friendly enough
 - b. Lessons not deep enough or simple enough
 - c. Performance of worship not good enough.

IV. They Despise Authority (2 Pet. 2:10).

- A. Resent having to submit to anyone (cf. 1 Pet. 5:5)
- B. Resent being told what to do – by preachers, elders. or even God.
- C. Refuse to have their “rights” restricted (cf. 1 Cor 6:12; 9:19-22; 10:23-24).

V. They Abuse Freedom (2 Pet. 2:19).

- A. Foment strife and/or apostasy in name of liberty.
- B. Become slaves to corruption, self-will and anarchy.
 - 1. Liberties that add nothing to scripturalness, spirituality or edification.
 - 2. Robs Christians of real freedom in Christ (cf. John 8:31, 32).

Conclusion:

- A. Truth lovers can afford to be open, honest and above board – have nothing to conceal.
- B. Truth frees and unites in Christ – Heretics and heresy to be rejected.