

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

AUGUST 18TH-19TH, 2018 // JUDE: PROTECTING THE TRUTH

A DARK ROAD (JUDE 1-4)

THE BROTHER OF JESUS WARNS THE CHURCH

Jude was a brother of Jesus and leader in the Jerusalem church who wrote to early Christians in 67-80 A.D. about false teachers. He also encouraged believers to defend their faith and stay strong in Jesus' teachings.

- Jude was not a Christian until after the resurrection, but here we clearly see that he adamantly defended the faith.

THIS WAS INTENDED TO BE PLEASANT

Jude wished "mercy, peace, and love" on the recipients of the letter, but because of the severity of what was taking place in the church, the letter gets quite intense at times.

- **Salvation was at stake, and Jude cared more about the truth and warning those he cared for than he did about offending them.**

"UNGODLY" PEOPLE HAD SLIPPED IN

Godless people had crept into influential positions in the church. Not always formal positions, but they had theological influence. These were forerunners of the **Gnostic**.

- Gnosis means knowledge. This group thought the flesh was not created by God so one could do whatever they wanted in the flesh.

SOUNDS ODDLY FAMILIAR

Jude warned the church about people that were "turning the grace of God into sensuality." Basically, so called Christians were saying people could do whatever they wanted sexually because it doesn't affect the soul.

- **Just for clarity, sex is deeply spiritual! Culture is animalizing humans, and humanizing animals.**

THE 2 ISSUES OF OUR AGE

- **Human Sexuality**
- **Universalism**

FALSE TEACHERS (JUDE 5-11)

EXAMPLES FROM THE PAST

Jude brings up 3 examples from Israel's past where they defected from the faith.

1. Moses leading the Jews out of Egypt. As a result of their disobedience, they didn't see the promised land.
2. Angels rebelling against God and God confining them to darkness.
3. Sodom and Gomorrah destroyed.

DESCRIBING THE "GODLESS" FALSE TEACHERS

First, Jude says they "rely on their dreams" for guidance. This means that **they conjured up their own views of spirituality**. They "defiled their flesh" meaning **they did sexually perverse acts**. They also **rejected authority** and "**slandered glorious ones**."

- Jude says they're like **irrational animals that do whatever they want**.

THEIR WAY LEADS TO DESTRUCTION

v10 says, "by these things they are destroyed." This means selfishness and false teaching will inevitably lead to eternal damnation. It also destroys our lives in the present.

- One just needs to study history: the Romans, Greeks, Persians, Assyrians, and all self-serving empires have fallen. **We are on a similar path today.**

A GROUP OF NOT SO GREAT GUYS

Jude compares false teachers to Cain, Balaam, and Korah. These men were known for deception, hatred, greed, and rebellion.

- **Are we a people that chart our own course and beliefs? Are we envious and in love with money? Do we glorify violence and rebellion? How long will God put up with this?**

FALSE TEACHERS (JUDE 12-16)

DESCRIBING THE "GODLESS" FALSE TEACHERS

In the early days of Christianity, Christians would gather and spend hours eating and communing about Jesus. These intimate communion times were called "love feasts."

- False teachers were creeping into the communion time and **not taking the Lord's Supper with reverence**. 1Cor. 11 says **this brings condemnation**.

"ONLY LOOK AFTER THEMSELVES"

Jude says these people are "shepherds," but they only care about themselves. They are "waterless clouds," "fruitless," and "wild waves foaming up their shameful deeds."

- **Interestingly, if you look at the "fruit" of the philosophy of the world, it condemns itself. Oddly enough, people arrogantly promote it.**

WANDERING STARS

The imagery of this particular criticism is striking. Jude says these false teachers are stars destined to end up in darkness forever.

- **Think of the people we idolize now.** Stars that we aspire to be like, but if we stick to the Word, we know that their lifestyles only end in darkness.

THEY ARE "DISCONTENTED GRUMBLERS"

Doesn't it feel like Jude is living in present day America? He says God will deal with people that are constantly complaining and never satisfied, people that are "living according to their own desires," and use people for their advantage.

- Jude says **people like this do not have the Spirit of God.**

DEFENSE (JUDE 17-25)

ENDING WITH A BANG

Though evil people had slipped into the church and some had fallen prey to deceptive teachings, Jude reminds the believers how they can stay firm in their faith.

- Jude says we are to build up our faith **by "praying in the Holy Spirit," keeping ourselves in the "love of God," and "waiting on the mercy" of God.**

THIS MEANS WE HAVE RESPONSIBILITY

I know "nothing can separate us from the love of God," but that doesn't mean that we can live however we choose and still be saved. Jude reminds us that **we need to be intentional about letting God protect us from evil.**

- **This means church, prayer, study, and being mindful of who we're with and where we are.**

WE MUST ALSO KEEP THE COMMANDS OF GOD

Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commands" in Jn. 14:15. So, to "keep ourselves in God's love" means to do the things He has told us to do.

- **When we claim to follow Jesus but don't do what He says, we are deceiving ourselves and are actually abusing grace.**

"HAVE MERCY ON THOSE THAT WAVER"

v22 is a great example of how we fail to balance the scripture. Jude tells us that when people struggle or fail, we are to show them grace and mercy.

- **Unfortunately, we tend to go to extremes. We either turn a blind eye to sin, or we condemn and damage people when they make mistakes.**

HATE THE SIN, LOVE THE SINNER?

This phrase is not scripture, but the idea is supported in v23. Jude says we are to show love and mercy while also hating the sin that put people in the terrible situations God, and ourselves, are helping them out of.

A BEAUTIFUL DOXOLOGY (V24-25)

A doxology is a formula of praise. Jude ends his contribution to the bible with a practical and powerful encouragement to the church.

- Jude says God can "**protect us from stumbling**," keep us **pure** and give us "**great joy**," **but we must be in the "majesty, power, and authority" of Jesus Christ.**

HELP IN CONFUSING TIMES

- **We live in remarkably confusing times**, and though this isn't the first time humanity has derailed morally, the avenues we have to spread confusion are unprecedented.
- From every angle we have manipulation, a blurring of lines, selfishness, and "wolves in sheep's clothing."
- To ensure we don't get sucked into destructive lies and lifestyles, **we must intentionally take steps to be close to God.**
- We must also **look out for each other, hold firm to biblical truths, and show love to those around us who've fallen or have never had a relationship with Jesus.**