

Wheelersburg Baptist Church 1/19/92  
Jude 17-19 "Dealing with Danger in the Church"

**Intro:** Great things come in small packages sometimes!

Such is the case with the book of Jude. Jude never intended to write this letter  
(3). It was not a pleasant project, not a particularly enjoyable task. Why did he do it?  
v 3 "it was needful for me to write. . ."  
Jude warns the church.

Q: What are apostates like on the contemporary scene?

A: Jude describes them in vv 8-16.

1. Jude describes their Crime (8-13).
2. Jude describes their Condemnation (14-16).

Last Week: Jude taught us 3 truths about Condemnation in Jude 14-16.

I. The Prediction (14)

- A. The Lord will return.
- B. The Lord will return with His Saints.

II. The Purpose (15)

- A. He will execute Judgment upon all people.
- B. He will convict the Ungodly.

III. The People (16)

- A. Murmurers
- B. Complainers
- C. Sensual
- D. Smooth Talkers
- E. Status Conscious

Tran: A new section begins in v 17.

V 17 "But beloved remember ye"

You! Since v 8 Jude has been describing THEM, the apostates that plagued the church. He told us what they looked like, and what was in store for them. Now he becomes personal with his beloved cohorts in Christ. And obviously he must begin with the strong conjunction, "But." You are not like them.

Q: How do you deal with danger in the church?

For the rest of his letter, Jude is going to tell us. He will be very practical and up front (as he has been).

Caution: Some people say, "Jesus said, 'Don't judge people.' That's right. Mt 7:1, "Judge not that ye be not judged." Remember the context? It has to do with personal relationships. Jesus is telling us that if we are His disciple, we must not be vengeful and caustic and pseudo-spiritual with other people.

Mt 7:3 "And why beholdest thou the mote in your brothers eye. . ."

Mt 7:5 "Thou hypocrite, first cast the beam out of thine own eye. . ."

Then what? v 5b "then thou shalt see clearly to cast the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Key: Jesus is telling us how brothers are to relate to each other. He doesn't tell us to live with the attitude, "What I do in my life is my business, and what you do in yours is your business." Nor does He say, "Mind your own business. You don't have any right to point out faults in your brothers life." No. Our Lord said, "Just make sure you're not being a hypocrite about it. You don't have to be perfect. You just need to make sure if you have flaws in your own life, you're dealing with them."

But that's not all. Just a few verses later, Jesus said this.

Mt 7:15-20 "Beware of false prophets. . . Ye shall know them by their fruits."

Jesus calls us to be fruit inspectors. Listen. Fruit inspecting is not a violation of Mt 7:1. Fruit inspecting is not judging. In fact, Jesus told us to do both.

Illust: What happens when you leave a spoiled apple in the basket?

Now let's plug into Jude's admonition. We live in the last days. Perhaps the latter part of the last days. Jesus warned us that dangerous apostates would threaten the church.

Q: How should we deal with danger in the church?

That's the question Jude answers.

#### Overview of vv 17-25:

MacArthur's Outline--Jude provides us with 4 key principles:

1. Remember (17-19)
2. Remain (20-21)
3. Reach Out (22-23)
4. Rest (24-25)

Our first responsibility is to "remember."

V 17 "But beloved, remember ye. . ."

Remember. It's a command. There's value in remembering. In fact, there's protection. We need to constantly be reminded of what we already know!

Observation: Much of Bible study is not to obtain "new" truth. It's to reminded of what you already learned. Not new pieces to the puzzle, but guidance on how the pieces relate and how to put them together.

Dealing with danger in the church starts here. We need to remember.

Context: Look at v 5

Jude 5 "I will therefore put you in remembrance though you once knew this. . ."

Q: What do we need to remember?

**Proposition: According to Jude 17-19, if we are to deal with danger in the church, we must take a close look at 3 things.**

- I. Our Authority (17)
- II. Their Antics (18)

- A. Who?
- B. When?
- C. What?

III. Their Alienation (19)

- A. Separatists
- B. Sensual
- C. Spirit-less

I. Our Authority (17)

Q: What did Jude want his readers to remember?

A: V 17 "The Word which were spoken before"

Remember the Words. What words?

"spoken before by the apostles"--When Christ left the earth, He promised to send the Counselor, the Holy Spirit. He was sent to indwell every believer. But He was sent to accomplish a specific ministry with the apostles. What?

See John 16:11-15

Jesus Christ revealed His authoritative Word to the church through the representatives He selected. In the OT era, that was through the prophets. The NT was given to us through the apostles and in a few cases their associates (eg--Mark, Luke, Jude, James).

That's why Peter could say in II Pt 1:19, "We have a more sure word of prophecy."

How can we deal with danger in the church?

Jude says, "Remember your authority!" And what is our authority? Our opinions? No. The Word of God. That's where we must go when we want to know how to deal with danger in the church. That's where we must go in every situation!

This is critical. This church has been, is now, and must always be committed to the careful teaching of God's inspired and authoritative Word. We are not a club. We are not here to entertain. We are a place to grow!

In a world that has forgotten what God has said, this church must be a place where people can come and be reminded of His Words. Why? Because even Christians are prone to forget!

Jude's not the only one to say that.

1. Peter

II Pt 1:15 (parallel to Jude) "Moreover I endeavor that ye may be able. .remembrance"  
II Pt 3:1-3

2. Paul

I Tim 4:1 "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly. . ."

So what was Timothy to do?

I Tim 4:6 "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things. . . good minister"  
How was Tim to do that?

I Tim 4:11-16 "These things command and teach. Let no man despise thy youth. . ."

We must remember our authority. Why is that critical? If we didn't have an absolute authority, every time we had a disagreement it would turn into this, "Well I think this. . ." "Well I don't care what you think. I think this."

Listen. The bottom line is this--not what I think, or you think, but what our Lord thinks. And He has told us once and for all. We have an authority.

Illust:

Tran: If we are to deal with danger in the church, Jude says we must take a close look at 3 things. First and foremost, our authority.

## **II. Their Antics (18)**

V 18 "How they told you there should be. . ."

Jude says we must remember their antics. The apostles foretold us about their antics. That raises three questions.

### A. Who?

V 18 "there should be mockers"

Jude reminded his readers that the apostles said apostates would plague the church. Long before it happened, they predicted it.

Acts 20:29-30

II Tim 4:3

I Jn 2:18-19

Jude says, "Don't be surprised at what you're seeing happen in your church. The apostles told us they'd come."

Who were the ones Jude had in mind? Notice what he calls them. . .

"mockers"--same word in II Pt 3:3 "scoffers"

What's true of mockers/scoffers? Look at II Pt 3:5. This is key.

II Pt 3:5 "For this they willingly are ignorant of. . ."

A mocker is someone who knows the Word of God and willfully rejects it.

Quote: MacArthur, "They have read it and understood it, yet they deliberately reject it, holding it in mockery."

Illust: I've heard people say to my face, "I know that's what the Bible says, but I can't buy it. I don't care. I don't think it's right."

That's Who. Second question about the antics of apostates.

### B. When?

V 18 "in the last time"

When is the last time?

Key: The apostles believed they lived in the last time 2000 years ago.

Heb 1:2 "God hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son"

I Jn 2:18 "Little children, it is the last time. . . by which we know it is the last time"

II Tim 3:1-2 "This know that in the last days perilous times shall come. . ."

I Pt 4:7 "But the end of all things is at hand"

How could this be? Listen. When Jesus Christ entered history 2000 years ago, He initiated the last times. His arrival was predicted by the OT prophets. The Jews didn't realize that the prophets foretold of TWO comings. We are living in the interum. We live between the two comings. When He came the first time, He promised He would come again. He didn't say when. He said, Be ready.

Key: The entire interum is the "last time."

But listen. It seems we're living in the last of the last times!

Illust:

Which brings us to question #3 concerning their antics--Who, When. . .

### C. What?

What do apostates do? Who do people for reject the authority of God's Word do?

V 18 "Who should walk after their own ungodly lusts"

Once a person rejects God's truth, there's no way for him to control his lusts. Wrong thinking leads to wrong living.

Key word: "ungodly" (see v 15) = irreverent (living w/o God in your life)

Illust:

Tran: How should we deal with danger in the church? Jude tells us to take a close look at our Authority, and their Antics. And thirdly. . .

### **III. Their Alienation (19)**

#### Background: Pre-agnostics

A group of people that plagued the church in the second century was the gnostics. Their ancestors were around in Jude's day. What did they believe?

1. The body is evil.
2. It doesn't make any difference what you do with the body.

All God cares about is your spirit.

Note: This teaching is still around (eg--we talk about "souls" saved)

Jude's opponents loved to talk about their "freedom" as Christians. They claimed that the salvation of the soul is what matters, and that what a man does with his body is immaterial. They loved to talk about grace, grace that liberated them so they could do whatever they wanted to do with their bodies. They laughed at those who refused to follow them. They accused them of being old-fashioned, and outdated. They claimed that they were so Spirit-filled they didn't need any standards. They asserted that they were enlightened and advanced thinkers.

What does Jude want us to do? Look at their Alienation. In 3 characteristics:

#### A. Separatists

V 19 "These are they who separate themselves. . ."

Jude says, "They accuse you of being narrow minded. But listen. They are the ones who have isolated themselves. They've abandoned the Christian heritage. They have "separated" themselves."

"separate"--the term is found only once in Scripture; It refers to people who think that they are superior. They promote themselves as the spiritual elite of the church. In Jude's day, they apparently formed a clique with the rich and educated Christians.

They were just like the Pharisees (a name that can mean "separated"). Christian Pharisees. How does Jude deal with them? The same way Jesus dealt with the Jewish Pharisees! Jude told them they were separated, not like they thought however. They thought they were separated from the rest of the church because they were spiritually elite. Jude told them they were separated FROM GOD.

Apostates are troublemakers. They divide the church. They hang around in cliques. They're exclusive.

Illust: Theological Liberals--accuse us, "Are you one of those outdated people who believe the Bible? Get with it!"

#### B. Sensual

V 19 "sensual"

The greek word for sensual is "psuchikoi." We get our English word "soul" from it (eg--"psychology"). It refers to physical life.

Jude is blunt here. He says, "The troublemakers think they are SPIRITUAL. They're not. They're just the opposite. They're purely physical. They are sensual."

Quote: One commentator said (MacArthur), "There are still people like that. Religious liberals believe that sin is only a prenatal predilection. According to them, it might as well be an idiosyncrasy of individuality as the result of poor secretion of the endocrine glands."

#### C. Spirit-less

V 19 "having not the Spirit" (= Holy Spirit)

What a bold statement! If you don't have the Spirit, you don't have Christ! If you don't have the Spirit, you don't have spiritual life. If you don't have the Spirit, you are spiritually dead! If you don't have the Spirit, you are a counterfeit Christian!

Wow Jude, you're being judgmental.

To which Jude says, "I'm saying what I'm saying because I love you. I love the church, and I don't want you to be duped into following the apostates. And I love the troublemakers plaguing the church, and I plead with you to wake up, repent, place yourself in submission to God's Word. . . now, before it's eternally too late."