

Wheelersburg Baptist Church 11/10/91
Jude 8-10 "A Cancer in the Church"

Intro: Our Society is growing increasingly secular. Men are seeking to tear God from the pages of their lives.

Eg--article by Chuck Colson about speaking at Harvard Univ.

The book of Jude is a book of warning. Jude, the half-brother of Jesus, and leader in the early church, saw in his day the threat of apostasy. Their presence threatened his Christian friends. So inspired by the Spirit, Jude wrote. We are indebted to his brief, yet powerful letter.

Jude answers some important questions for us.

Q: What is true of GENIUNE Christians?

A: Vv 1-2

Q: What is true of Apostates?

A: V 4 Jude gives us 6 characteristics of the apostates that plagued the church.

1. Certain Men
2. Subtle Men
3. Predicted Men
4. Ungodly Men
5. Grace-perverting Men
6. Lordship-denying Men

Q: What happens to apostates?

A: Jude 5-7 Three dreadful examples from the past

1. The Unbelieving Israelites
2. The Fallen Angels
3. The Immoral Cities of the Plain

Tran: That's where we left off two weeks ago. Tonight we must wrestle with this pressing question.

Illust:

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).

Observations about Jude:

--Jude has a unique style.

His vocabulary is his own. He doesn't sound like Paul, or John. He resembles Peter somewhat. His style is very abrupt and to the point. Jude is not a cautious diplomat. He's an Emergency Room Dr. He examines the problem, and takes quick action to

remove the problem. He doesn't pull any punches with his words. He can't afford to. The threat of apostatacy is a life and death matter.

--Jude has a repetitive style.

You're going to notice something about Jude. He repeats himself. Like a drumbeat, over and over. Like a concerned parent, warning his/her teen to be careful when driving the car.

Q: What are apostates like?

Proposition: Tonight from Jude 8-10, we're going to see 4 crimes that apostates commit.

- I. Apostates are Polluters (8).
- II. Apostates are Proud (8).
- III. Apostates are Poisonous (8-9).
- IV. Apostates are Presumptuous (10).

I. Apostates are Polluters (8).

V 8 "In like manner also"

Like what? Like the 3 examples from vv 5-7. V 8 acts like a bride. V 8 brings us from the history books to last weeks issue of US News. In v 8 reminds Jude reminds his readers that the problem of apostacy was not only Moses' problem. It was theirs too! And v 8 bridges the message of Jude to us as well!

In like manner. Apostacy is a contemporary problem.

What's their first crime Jude identifies? Apostates are polluters.

V 8 "these dreamers defile the flesh"

The greek manuscripts do not have the adjective "filthy". It was added by translators to clarify what was meant. The word "dreamers" means "to dream, or to see delusions." False teachers do not see the truth. They see delusions. They think they have the truth. They think and tell everybody they are "enlightened", but that's only because of what? Satan has blinded their minds. The truth is they are out of touch with reality.

Illust: Have you ever had a dream that was so vivid you thought it was real? That's the way it is with these dreamers.

Notice what they do.

V 8 "defile the flesh"

Sooner or later false teachers show their true colors. How? By exhibiting a polluted, immoral lifestyle.

"defile" = "to spot or stain"; when connected with the word "flesh" it denotes sexual immorality.

They may hide it for awhile. But not forever. Why can't they hide their corrupt lifestyle? Because they have corrupt hearts.

Key: Only the Holy Spirit can control fleshly desires.

Objection: "But I know unsaved people who aren't immoral."

There are exceptions sometimes. Sometimes Satan may keep an individual morally clean to accomplish his destructive plan. Satan may allow a teacher to be morally upright for awhile, in order to give him credibility, and gain a following. Satan may allow an individual to be morally upright on the outside, in order to keep them morally corrupt on the inside. And condemned.

There's the first crime. Apostates are polluters. They can't deal with their flesh. They don't have the Spirit of God, so they turn the grace of God into lasciviousness (4).

Illust:

Tran: Notice their second crime.

II. Apostates are Proud (8).

V 8 "despise dominion"

The word "dominion" refers to "authority". The people attacking the church in Jude's day had a problem with authority. They "despised" it. The word means lit. "to do away with something that's been established." False teachers reject authority. Who's authority?

The greek root word behind the word "dominion" is the word "Lord". These false dreamers rejected authority--possibly human authority (civil or church), but ultimately divine authority. It boils down to this. Out of pride, false teachers reject the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

V 4 "denying the only Lord God. . ."

Wow! How outrageous! These men rejected Christ's authority to pursue their own fleshly desires.

Q: What do these apostates look like today, in 1991? Where would we look if we wanted to see the polluting and proud teachers Jude is describing?

--Liberal churches across this country

Illust:

--On TV

Q: What's the problem with Liberal churches and pastors? This. They don't believe the Scriptures are sufficient nor relevant. So what do they do? They promote their own ideas. In so doing they depreciate the God of the Bible. And they despise the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Tran: Crime #3.

III. Apostates are Poisonous (8-9).

V 8 "and speak evil of dignities"

"speak evil" = "blaspheme" (present tense--false teachers do it continually)

"dignities"

Who are dignities? The greek word is "doxas" (doxology). It lit. means "glories". Some think the word refers to "angels". That's possible perhaps. But the more likely option is (see MacArthur) that "dignities" refers to the "glories" of Christ.

Here's what an apostate does. He speaks evil of Christ. He rejects the deity of Jesus Christ. He blasphemes God.

Q: What's missing from the life of an apostate?

A: Reverence--He doesn't revere things he ought to revere! He has no fear of God. Reverence is missing from his life.

Q: Do you know anyone like that?

Illust:

That's foolish to live life w/o reverence! Jude illustrates in v 9.

V 9 "Yet Michael the archangel. . ."

Jude says, "Just think of it! These proud apostates speak evil of dignities. Why even Michael, the most powerful angel, had respect for a "dignity". When confronted with Satan, Michael depended on the Lord and his authority. He demonstrated great meekness, great power under control.

Not so apostates. They brashly set themselves up as authorities.

Imagine this. Michael was a super angel. Yet he didn't speak a word against Satan. Yet false teachers proudly speak words against God!

What's going on in v 9?

Jude borrows an illustration taken from the apocryphal book, "Assumption of Moses" (acc to Origen, Clement, and Didymus). It's a story about what happened to the body of Moses after he died.

When Moses died, he was all alone on a mountain overlooking the Promised Land. Since no one else was there, apparently God sent Michael to bury Moses' body. But when the archangel arrived, the devil said, "Hold it Michael. You're not going to get that body!" Satan started to argue with Michael. He claimed to have the rights to the body. Possibly he reminded Michael that Moses had been a murderer (Ex 2:12), that Moses had disobeyed God by hitting a rock when he was instructed by God to speak to it (Num 20).

You say, "Why would the devil want Moses' body?" MacArthur poses a viable reason. Moses was one of the most venerated men that ever lived. The devil may have schemed that if he could get Moses' body, and display it, he could captivate people with some kind of idolatry.

Illust: Satan has used that trickery throughout history. He manipulates people to worship icons and other religious relics. Just think of all the people who claim to have pieces of Jesus' cross, or His shroud, etc.

The devil wanted Moses' body. So what did Michael do?

v 9 "dared not bring against him a railing accusation"

v 9 "but said, The Lord rebuke you."

That's all it took. Michael didn't slander the devil. He didn't start a fight with the devil. He didn't make one accusation against him. He merely yet confidently appealed to the sovereign authority of his Maker. And that settled it.

Rom 12:19 "Vengeance is mine. I will repay."

Apostates are poisonous. They use their tongues like vipers to destroy. They speak evil of Christ. They assault His deity, His virgin birth, His miracles, His atoning death, His resurrection, His second coming.

Yet Michael pronounced not one judgmental word to Satan. He left that up to God.

Illust: MacArthur, Sufficiency of Christ, 221

Tran: False teachers are always criticizing what they don't understand. Which leads to crime #4.

IV. Apostates are Presumptuous (10).

V 10 "But {unlike Michael} these speak evil of those things which they know not."

Q: Have you ever been around someone who talked about things they knew nothing about? When that's the case usually the person talks louder and louder, and repeats himself (to convince himself that he's right)

Illust:

That's the way it was with Jude's opponents. They were presumptuous.

Is 1:28 ". . . they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed."

Jer 17:5 "Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man. . . whose heart departeth from the Lord."

Jn 6:66 "Many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him."

Jn 15:6 "If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

Apostates are presumptuous. Jude mentions one particular way at the end of v 10.

V 10 "they corrupt themselves"

Key Problem of Apostates: Physical Immorality

See in Jude:

v 4 lasciviousness

v 7 fornication

v 8 defile flesh

v 10 corrupt themselves

v 16 lusts

v 18 ungodly lusts

v 19 sensual

Look out! False teachers abound. They presumptuously corrupt themselves.

Illust:

Contrast:

Gal 5 "Walk in the Spirit and you won't fulfill the lusts of the flesh."

I Tim 4:16 **Marks of a Minister approved by God

Listen. A minister God commends is not one who tries to be clever and innovative. But one who preaches what? The "doctrine". The whole counsel of God as revealed in Scripture.

Illust:

Quote: Michael Green put it this way in describing false teachers, "Physically, they became immoral. Intellectually, they became arrogant. Spiritually, they became disobedient to the Lord. 'Progressive morality' and 'progressive thinking' often go hand in hand with progressive deafness to the voice of God. To live like that is to inhabit a dream world, acc to Jude." (170)