

07. The Book of Jude—1:10-11

A message by Pastor Phil Ballmaier

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Good evening everyone and thank you for joining our study in the Book of Jude. As we have said in previous studies—the theme of Jude’s epistle is a call to Christians everywhere to: **“earnestly contend for the faith” (v.3)**

I. A Call to Action Against Apostasy—v.3-19

If Christians are going to obey this admonition to earnestly contend for the faith against apostates, then it stands to reason that we must—understand who these apostates are and what they are like.

The Apostate—John Phillips

“Apostasy corrupts not only public standards but also personal standards. Jude exposes the foolish nonsense of the apostates: *“But these speak evil of those things which they know not”* (Jude 10). What characterizes the apostate is his colossal ignorance of spiritual things. He might be a seminary professor or the pastor of a big-name society church. He might have after his name degrees conferred by Ivy League colleges in token of his scholarship. He might pontificate in the classroom and the pulpit about the Bible, Christian belief, and matters of eternal significance—but a godly chimney sweep who knows God knows more than he does about the things of the Spirit of God!

These men can be crafty. Often, they are men of great personal charisma and charm. They can be witty, polished, and suave, and they often project an aura of learning and scholarship. They claim to be custodians of divine mysteries. Their eager and unsuspecting students look to them for spiritual enlightenment—instead of bread, however, they give the students stones. They are ministers of the deep things of Satan, wolves in sheep’s clothing, and false apostles masquerading as ministers of light. Little do their respectful audiences know that to these apostates the chief doctrines of Christianity are childish and even repulsive. Several years ago, one of their number called hymns that mention the blood *“revolting and horrible.”*

The doctrines that we cherish they reject utterly, declaring them to be childish. They are modern Gnostics. They are careful at first, until they have tenure in the classroom or command of the pulpit, pew, and presbytery in the church—then they become increasingly open in their attack on all that the church has held dear for the past two thousand years.

According to them, the Pentateuch was not written by Moses...According to them, the man Moses was a myth...The creation myth was borrowed from the Babylonians; there was no such person as Adam; and there was no Eve, no serpent, and no Fall. There was no flood, no ark, and no Noah—such Bible stories were derived from Babylonian epics. There was no tower of Babel. The story of Samson was Hebrew folklore. The Hebrews themselves were a coalition of nomads from here and there. To the apostates, the story of Jonah is a fairy tale. The great prophetic sections of the book of Daniel are not prophecy after all but history, written long after the prophesied events actually happened. The prophets were simply poets who were given to flights of fancy.

The apostates tell us that Jesus was not virgin born. All of His supposed miracles have logical explanations. He did not feed the five thousand with a little lad's lunch; the lad produced his lunch and offered to share it. Then, inspired by his example, all kinds of people produced hidden lunches, and it was share and share alike. Jesus did not walk upon the water; it just looked as though He did—actually, He walked on a hidden ridge beneath the waves. He did not die an atoning death; He was a man who lived before His time, a martyr to a cause. And, of course, there was no resurrection—that was just a convenient rumor spread by His disciples.

Christianity, as described in the Epistles, was the brainchild of an erratic Jew named Saul whose teachings were far different than the primitive teachings of Jesus. According to the apostates, the Apocalypse has no prophetic value...Much of the Bible, they tell us, came from apocryphal sources. They decry as ridiculous the whole notion of the plenary and verbal inspiration of the Scriptures and the claim to inerrancy. They believe that so-called "higher criticism" has exploded these myths.

This is the kind of "scholarship" propagated by apostates who, having no faith themselves, seek to destroy the faith of others. They are spiritually dead, blind leaders of the blind, proclaimers of a social gospel, and warm supporters of leftist causes...

What do they know of the new birth or of the baptism, indwelling, filling, and anointing of the Holy Spirit? What do they know of the Word of God? After all, *"the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned"* (1 Cor. 2:14)...

An apostate is a person who was once acquainted with biblical truths and, indeed, might have had considerable head knowledge of them. However, he has turned his back on them and is doubly blind. As an unregenerated person, he is held in bondage to his natural spiritual blindness... A person in that condition is in dire peril...

No matter how well educated, cultured, and polished he might be, he is still only a natural man, utterly devoid of the higher life of the Spirit and totally incapable of comprehending spiritual things. All he has is a corrupt fallen nature derived from that very man Adam whom he so foolishly denies as having ever existed. Far from being the godly man he pretends to be, the apostate is—whether in the classroom, podium, or the society church pulpit—a lost man, controlled by a fallen human nature...Thus, Jude summarizes the end result of the life, teaching, and influence of such men. Robed and regarded as ministers of the gospel, they are nevertheless enemies of the gospel.

Verse 10 portrays the apostate as one who rails at truths about which he really knows nothing...In the end, his own inborn, natural corruption will prove to be his own eternal undoing."

C. Christians—understand the characteristics of apostates—v.8-13, 16-19

- 1. They're dreamers—v.8a**
- 2. They defile the flesh—v.8a**
- 3. They reject authority—v.8b**
- 4. They speak evil of dignitaries—v.8c-10**

The word ‘**dignitaries**’ literally means “*glorious ones*”—a term that could apply to *earthly* leaders in places of authority in human government (Romans 13:1-2)—apostates are often rebellious against civil authorities (even to the point of being anarchists).

However, Jude and Peter could have in mind *spiritual* authorities—which I believe is the correct interpretation since Jude follows “[apostates] **speak evil of dignitaries**” with—

Jude 1:9 (NKJV)

⁹ Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses...

What Jude says, almost in passing, in verse 9 has caused a great deal of confusion and controversy (listen to last week’s study online)!

Putting aside the mystery behind this dispute between Michael and Lucifer over Moses’ body—the point Jude was making is clear when he said:

Jude 1:9 (NKJV)

⁹ Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, **dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"**

Jude’s purpose in bringing that incident up was to point out how that godliness respects the authority God has ordained—even if that authority becomes corrupt as was the case with Lucifer—we still respect the ‘office’.

As we said last time—if Michael dared not bring a reviling accusation against the devil—how much more should these “certain men” (apostates or any of us) not speak evil of dignitaries.

Jude 1:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves.

Jude here echoes what Peter said along the same lines—

2 Peter 2:12 (NKJV)

¹² But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption,

Peter here likens the unsaved person (especially false teachers who espouse rebellion against God) as “**natural brute beasts**”.

(Explain how the fall of man reduced him to a two-dimensional creature like the animal kingdom) [Spirit — Soul — Body]

When Peter and Jude talk about apostates calling them “*unsaved rebels*” who— “**speak evil of the things they do not understand**”—he primarily has in mind the ignorance of people who criticize and rail against God’s truth—the Bible.

Jude 1:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ Woe to them!...

In the Bible the word ‘**woe**’ is a word associated with the judgment of God (see Revelation Chapters 8-9, 11-12).

Jude 1:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

5. Gone in the way of Cain—v.11a

The “**way of Cain**” is the way of self-styled, do it yourself religion as a way to approach God, as opposed to those who seek to approach God by faith in obedience to what He has said—

Genesis 4:1-5 (NKJV)

¹ Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain...² Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. ³ And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. ⁴ Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, ⁵ but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

Here we have two brothers who are each trying to approach God—one (Abel) God accepted and the other (Cain) He rejected. There are many that feel *sorry* for Cain as if God capriciously and callously rejected him even though he was sincere in his attempt to come into God’s presence to worship Him. What’s obvious even though it isn’t stated is that God had specified to each man the proper way to approach Him. (Genesis 4:6-7)

And so, the issue wasn’t that God was being unfair to Cain or that He hadn’t made Himself clear about the proper way for Cain to come to Him—the issue here in Genesis 4 was that Cain knew the proper way to approach God—but he rejected God’s way and decided to approach God his own way. In that regard, he was seeking to approach God through a false religious system of his own making instead of approaching God on *His* terms.

Here, once again, the Holy Spirit is making a distinction between “*do it yourself*” religion and God directed righteousness—between the ‘*broad way*’ and the ‘*narrow way*’. (Matt.7:13-14)

We saw it earlier in the attempt by Adam and Eve to cover their guilt and shame through the works of their hands in sowing fig leaves together (Gen.3:7)—but how God rejected their ‘religion’ and instead covered them with animal skins (Gen.3:21).

This was to teach them (and all of us) right from the start that without the shedding of blood— there is no remission of sins. (Hebrews 9:22) This applies to everyone who thinks they can approach God and be accepted by Him because they’re a good person, go to church, light the candles, pray the rosary, help the poor...etc.

Titus 3:5 (NKJV)

⁵ not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

God has prescribed that there is only one way to approach Him and that is through His Son Jesus Christ (by faith in the gospel)—all other ways are worthless and unacceptable no matter how sincere and zealous the person might be—

Proverbs 14:12 (NKJV)

¹² There is a way *that seems* right to a man, But its end *is* the way of death.

Romans 10:1-4 (NKJV)

¹ Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. ² For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. ³ For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. ⁴ For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

There are really only two 'religions' in the world—the religion of *human achievement*, and the religion of *divine accomplishment*. Every religion and religious system in the world apart from Christianity falls under the category of human achievement—what we do for God to earn His favor. Only Christianity (which is not a religion but a relationship) falls under the category of divine accomplishment—what God has done for us.

Religion says “DO”—Christianity says “DONE” (as in “it is finished”—John 19:30).

Religion comes from man and is an expression of his pride (to show he's good enough to work and earn a place in heaven)—it is man-centered and works oriented. Christianity comes from God and is Christ centered and grace oriented (i.e. salvation isn't something we earn by works it is free gift we receive by faith—Eph.2:8-9).

Biblical faith—first and foremost, believes what God has said and comes to Him the way He has prescribed. (John 14:6)

Hebrews 11:4 (NKJV)

⁴ By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.

The story of Cain and Abel in Genesis 4 tells us that there is a right way and a wrong way to approach God—and sincerity and zeal having nothing to do with it, only faith in and obedience to what God has said!

Jude says that one of the characteristics of apostates is that they try to approach God **“the way of Cain”**. In other words, they offer God the works of their hands and a ‘faith system’ that comes from the imagination of their own corrupt, fallen hearts and think that—God should accept them into heaven on their terms.

So first of all apostates go the way of Cain (they're proud and arrogant wanting to ‘go their own way’ and ‘do their own thing’).

6. Run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit—v.11b

The word here translated **“run greedily”** means literally *“to be poured out”* or *“to stampede toward.”* It's a word that speaks of *passion*, of being *consumed* with a desire for something so strongly that it's all you can think about and so you rush toward it without considering the consequences.

The word for **“error”** is from a word meaning *“to make to wander”* or *“to lead astray”* from either doctrine or morals—or both. With that in mind, what Jude is describing about apostates is that—they are obsessed with a lust for money and they will pursue it at any cost to themselves and those they have to deceive and hurt to get it.

By saying this, Jude puts his finger on probably the number one characteristic of any false teacher including and especially apostates—they are greedy for money and are only “serving God” as a way to get rich.

Psalm 10:3 (NKJV)

³ For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire; He blesses the greedy *and* renounces the LORD.

Micah 3:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ Her heads judge for a bribe, Her priests teach for pay, And her prophets divine for money. Yet they lean on the LORD, and say, "Is not the LORD among us? No harm can come upon us."

1 Timothy 6:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all *kinds of* evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

2 Peter 2:3 (NKJV)

³ By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

With regard to these people, one pastor said—*"Unlike God's true shepherds (cf. 1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 5:2), these ministry mercenaries follow in the error of Balaam, rushing headlong into envy and greed."*

Balaam was a prophet of God, and so he *"worked for God"*—but he was a greedy man.

Author and pastor David Guzik encapsulates the story of Balaam:

1. The error of Balaam: Balaam's story is in Numbers 22 to 25 and 31. During the time of the Exodus, Israel advanced to the land of Moab, after defeating the Amorites. When the Israelites came near, King Balak of Moab sought the help of a prophet named Balaam.
 - a. The first delegation from King Balak arrived and God told Balaam to have nothing to do with them. God's initial words to Balaam were, "You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed" (Numbers 22:12).
 - b. After the first visit another, more prestigious delegation came with great riches. Balaam wanted to go with them and God allowed him to go. Balaam lusted after the riches and prestige offered to him and God gave him over to his own sin.
 - c. God warned Balaam to turn back when he was on the way to see Balak. Yet his heart was set on the rich reward King Balak promised and he continued on. Balaam even ignored a talking donkey, sent to warn him to turn back.
 - d. Balaam knew that he has done wrong. In Numbers 22:34, he said to God I have sinned ... Now therefore, if it displeases You, I will turn back. But he didn't turn back. He continued on, refusing to see that when God says no, we must take it as a no. Instead, God gave Balaam what his sinful heart desired.
 - e. After meeting with King Balak of Moab, Balaam prophesied over Israel four times. But as he spoke forth God's word, he did not curse Israel—instead he blessed her each time. When he was unsuccessful in cursing Israel, Balaam advised Balak on how to bring Israel under a curse. Instead of trying to have a prophet curse Israel, he should lead her into fornication and idolatry and then God would curse a disobedient Israel.

- f. Balak did just that, sending his young women into the camp of Israel to lead Israel into sexual immorality and idolatry. Because of the people's sin, God did curse Israel—He brought a plague of judgment upon Israel that killed 24,000. Therefore, Balaam was guilty of the greatest of sins: deliberately leading others into sin. Worse yet, he did it for money.
2. Greedily in the error of Balaam for profit: The greedy error of Balaam was that he was willing to compromise everything for money (1 Timothy 6:5). The certain men Jude warned about had the same heart.

One author said—

"Many Christians would never deny Jesus under persecution but might deny Him if offered a large sum of money. There is not a single sin that corrupt man will not commit for the sake of money. Covetousness is such a dangerous sin that it killed Jesus—30 pieces of silver helped put Jesus on the cross."

William MacDonald—

"The error of Balaam is the desire to become personally wealthy by making a business out of the service of God... Like Balaam, the false teachers of today are suave and convincing. They can speak out of both corners of their mouths at once. They suppress the truth in order to increase their income. The principal point is that they are greedy, seeking to make the house of God a house of merchandise."

If you would like to know more about what it means to be a Jesus-follower—please reach out to us. It would be our greatest privilege to lead you into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

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