

8. The Book of Jude—1:11-12

(Part One)

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

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- C. Christians—understand the characteristics of apostates—verses 8-13, 16-19
 - 1. They're dreamers—v.8a
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 - 4. They speak evil of dignitaries—v.8c-10
 - 5. Gone in the way of Cain—v.11a
 - 6. Run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit—v.11b
 - 7. Perished in the rebellion of Korah—v.11c

Actually, Korah was the 'ringleader' in a rebellion that also included Dathan and Abiram.

Author David Guzik—

"Korah's story is found in Numbers 16. He was a prominent man in Israel, and one day came to Moses, saying, You take too much upon yourself, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them. Why then do you exalt yourself above the congregation of the Lord? (Numbers 16:3) Korah and his followers resented the authority God gave to Moses and Aaron.

i. When Korah said this, Moses fell on his face, knowing God's judgment would soon come. Moses then proposed a test: each group took censers (for burning incense) and came before the Lord. The Lord Himself would choose which man He wanted to represent Him: Moses or Korah.

ii. When they both came before God, the Lord told Moses to step away. Then, the ground opened up and swallowed Korah and his followers. After that, fire came down from heaven and burned up all of his supporters. They all perished.

b. Rebellion

Korah was a Levite, but not of the priestly family of Aaron. As a Levite, he had had his own God-appointed sphere of ministry, yet he was not content with it. He wanted the ministry and the authority of Moses.

i. *Korah needed to learn this essential lesson: we should work hard to fulfill everything God has called us to be. At the same time, we should never try to be what God has not called us to be.*

c. The Rebellion of Korah

This was also a rejection of God's appointed leaders, especially God's appointed Mediator. When the certain men rejected authority and spoke evil against dignitaries, they walked in the rebellion of Korah.

Warren Wiersbe—

"Cain rebelled against God's authority in salvation, for he refused to bring a blood sacrifice as God had commanded. Balaam rebelled against God's authority in separation, for he prostituted his gifts for money and led Israel to mix with the other nations. Korah rebelled against God's authority in service, denying that Moses was God's appointed servant and attempting to usurp his authority.

It is interesting to note the verbs that Jude used in this verse. The apostates "traveled on the road" of Cain, "gave themselves over to" the error of Balaam, and "perished" in the rebellion of Korah. The tragedy of rejecting authority!"

Jude's point in verses 8-11 is that godliness respects the authority that God has ordained while rebels (apostates) fight against it. As a general principle that is true—but there are exceptions, there are times when God accepts rebellion against authority—even commands it!

As we have already pointed out, the Bible has some pretty clear admonitions about respecting and obeying governing authority and being good citizens as Christians.

Romans 13:1-2 (NKJV)

¹ Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

1 Peter 2:13-15 (NKJV)

¹³ Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, ¹⁴ or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and *for the praise of those who do good.* ¹⁵ For this is the will of God...

In America, governmental laws and God's laws have often been in agreement—but more and more lately, in our country, they stand in opposition to each other.

The only time God allows us to disobey civil government is when the government passes laws that are in direct violation of God's laws— then, as Peter said, *"We must obey God rather than men."* (Acts 5:29)

I have been watching the news—as I'm sure you have been also.

During this Coronavirus outbreak, Christians have tried to be good citizens and obey our local and state authorities (mayors and governors) that have asked us to self-quarantine to "flatten the curve" of the virus to keep infection rates low so as not to overwhelm our hospitals and medical personnel.

But what started out as 'encouraging' Americans to practice common sense and stay at home as much as possible during this critical period—has, in many cases, become tyrannical overreach.

Some governors and mayors have turned this into 'Marshall Law' and have taken to ordering police to ticket and in some cases arrest people for simply being outdoors while they practice social distancing—turning their jurisdictions into something akin to 'North Korea' or 'Cuba'.

There was an article about a man who was paddle-boarding in the Pacific Ocean alone in March—

"A California paddle-boarder was arrested for violating the state's stay-at-home order," reads the text over an image of what looks like two sheriff deputies walking a man in handcuffs down a beach. "He was alone, in the ocean, when police violated social distancing protocols to arrest him, and potentially expose him to infection. This isn't about safety, it's about control!"

I read another article about 19-year-old Pennsylvania women who got cabin fever so bad after being stuck in her house for 2 or 3 weeks that she had to get out and take a drive alone in her car.

The Pennsylvania State Police pulled her over and gave her a \$200 fine for violating the state's stay-at-home order and ordered her back to her house.

Recently, a man in Colorado who was playing catch with his 6-year-old daughter on a near-empty softball field while his wife looked on, was approached and arrested by the Colorado State Police who handcuffed the man in front of his wife and daughter and took him away for violating the state's social distancing rules (even though the rule said no more than six people could congregate and the man, wife and daughter were only 3 and they were practicing safe-distancing with one another).

"We're just having a good time, not near anybody else. The next closest person is at least 15 feet away from me and my daughter at this point," He told ABC News. The department apologized Tuesday afternoon, calling the incident an "overreach by our police officers."

Many of these governors have classified businesses into 'essential' and 'non-essential', allowing the essential businesses to remain open and mandating that non-essential businesses be closed.

The problem is that many of these liberal governors have classified abortion clinics and liquor stores and pot shops as *essential* allowing them to remain open—while classifying churches as *non-essential* and ordering them to be closed.

Governors in these states have threatened to arrest and fine pastors and their congregations for violating their Executive Orders if they chose to meet for church services—even claiming that they have the authority to 'suspend' their constitutional rights during this emergency.

Some churches such as the Maryville Baptist Church in Kentucky said they were going to obey God rather than men and announced they would have Easter Sunday Services regardless of what the Governor ordered.

Democratic Kentucky Governor, Andy Beshear, [announced](#) that the state would enforce a stay-at-home measure by recording the license plates of any person attending Easter services.

"As hymns sang out Easter Sunday from a large outdoor speaker overlooking the Maryville Baptist Church parking lot, two Kentucky State troopers placed quarantine notices on parishioners' cars and wrote down their license numbers. Inside the church, roughly 50 worshipers ignored Gov. Andy Beshear's order against mass gatherings during the coronavirus pandemic so they could attend services together on Christianity's holiest day."

The pastor of the Maryville church, pastor Jack Roberts, said that he arrived at the church Sunday to find that someone had dumped nails at the entrances of the church parking lot—

"Of all the places to keep you from, they should've put them (the nails) down at the liquor store to keep people from getting drunk, going home, and killing somebody on the way," Roberts said, [Fox News reports](#). *"They could've put them down at the abortion center. They could've saved some lives down there, maybe."*

There are many more examples that I could give you where the government is trying to shut down churches in the name of the 'greater good' leaving Christian pastors and congregations to practice what I'll call—"righteous rebellion".

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in his famous "letter from the Birmingham jail" rightly declared: *"One has not only a legal, but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. A just law is a man-made code that squares with the moral law or the law of God."* He went on to explain, *"An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law [the law of God]."*

Since this may become more and more of an issue in the weeks and months to come—I'd like to spend some time tonight looking at this. Let me repeat what I said earlier—disobeying an unrighteous law (a law that is contrary to God's laws)—is a righteous act.

God's people in both the Old and New Testament, over the centuries have exercised a rich legacy of peaceful civil resistance to tyranny over conscience (Daniel, Mordecai, Jesus' apostles, the signers of the Declaration of Independence, Martin Luther King Jr. etc.).

Even Ben Franklin invented the motto that mobilized many Christians to fight against the King of England during the Revolutionary War—*"Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God"*.

For centuries, our national laws lined up with God's divine laws as stated in His Word—but in the last 60 years or so things have changed.

One Christian columnist commented on this—

"We no longer base our laws on the bedrock of God's law, which has forfeited His blessing and protection on our nation. As a result, our economy is hanging by a thread (with insurmountable national debt), our families are breaking, our churches are ducking for cover with the threat of government overreach, and we are now joined with Iran and other God-hating regimes that are dedicated to wiping freedom off the globe."

The words of the prophet, Jeremiah, sting us with an eerie similarity:

"'Why is the land ruined, laid waste like a desert, so that no one passes through?' The Lord said, 'Because they have forsaken My law which I set before them, and have not obeyed My voice nor walked according to it, but have walked after the stubbornness of their heart ...'" (Jeremiah 9:13-14a).

We have abandoned the God of the Bible, the very God of our founding. Our spiritual foundation has been compromised.

George Washington said, "It is impossible to rightly govern a nation without God and the Bible."

When we reject God's law by removing His influence from every vestige of society, how can we rightly govern ourselves?

The answer is: We can't, and we're not."

The Christian church in America has been talking about persecution coming for many years—it's no longer coming—it's here!

Do you remember Kim Davis—the clerk in Rowan County, Kentucky? In 2015, she refused to follow the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling establishing a "right" to same-sex marriage.

That was part of Kim's responsibilities as a clerk in Rowan County, to issue marriage licenses—but under Kentucky's state constitution which mandated that marriage was only to be recognized as being between a man and a woman—she refused to issue marriage licenses to homosexual couples.

But not only that—Kim Davis is a born-again Christian and she refused to issue marriage licenses to gay couples because it violated her belief that, under God’s law, homosexual marriage is illegal and therefore prohibited.

So, based on what Peter the apostle said to the governing authorities in his day who commanded the apostles to stop preaching in the name of Jesus Christ—to which Peter responded in Acts 5:29—*“We will not obey your order for we must obey God rather than men”*—

Kim Davis, in essence, said the same thing and took a stand and she eventually spent some time in jail for disobeying the Supreme Court ruling legalizing gay marriage.

It’s important to understand that if we rebel against the unjust laws of our land as Christians—we must be willing to accept the consequences—and Kim did. But let’s be clear—Kim Davis wasn’t persecuted for what she *did*—she’s was persecuted for what she *believed*!

I came across the following—it appeared in print the day after the Supreme Court ruled in favor of same-sex marriage a leading gay activist came out and said:

“This was never about legalizing gay marriage—not really. This is about silencing Christians through whatever means possible and removing Christianity from America. What’s at stake is the entire culture war.” He said the decision is an *“expression of hostility toward people who take their Christianity seriously.”*

We need to be ready—*persecution* and now prosecution against Christians who are serious about their faith has come.

**Are we ready to take a stand and
suffer the consequences for Christian
civil disobedience—for righteous rebellion?**

Leftists smell ‘blood in the water’ and now that they’ve gotten a taste of being able to control people thru the use of ‘emergencies’—they will try to use this to control and silence the Christian church.

We must be strong enough to say like Peter and others throughout the centuries of persecution against Christianity—We will not comply—*“We must obey God rather than men.”*

Alright, back to our study in Jude—

In verses 8-11, Jude provides a description of ‘who’ apostates are—now, he goes on to describe ‘what’ they are:

1. Spots in your love feasts—v.12a

Jude 1:12a (NKJV)

¹² These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving *only* themselves...

In the Law of Moses, God forbid an animal from being offered to Him that had any ‘*spot*’ or ‘*blemish*’ on it.

A ‘**spot**’ spoke of an *acquired* injury—like a scar, scab or any other physical problem brought about thru an accident of some kind (falling down a hill or ravine) or by being attacked by another animal.

A ‘**blemish**’ refers to something that an animal was born with—a birth defect or some other physical abnormality.

God had mandated in the Law that any animal with a spot and/or blemish was disqualified from being offered to Him. Spiritually, the spot and blemish spoke of defilement and corruption—the result of sin.

We can liken Jude's reference to these apostates among God's people in the local church—as a *defilement* upon an otherwise healthy body rendering the whole body defiled.

A *cancerous* spot that will eventually spread till the whole church body is eaten away and destroyed (like a little leaven will corrupt everything if left undealt with).

Jude's point is—apostates are dangerous, defiling and destroying 'diseases' on the Body of Christ that must not be taken lightly—and must be removed quickly!

Some of your translations say, **“These are hidden ‘reefs’ (or ‘rocks’) at your love feasts”**—the Greek could be translated that way.

As one pastor said—

“Jude’s description of apostates as hidden reefs graphically depicts the unseen danger they pose. Reefs are undersea coral formations usually located close to the shore. They are potentially harmful to ships because they can rip open the bottoms of their hulls, causing the vessels to sink. Like those hidden reefs, the apostates embedded themselves under the surface...of the early church, from where they tore into unsuspecting people with their lies and wickedness.”

Jude mentions these **‘spots’** in the context of the **‘love feast’** the churches conducted on the Lord's Day. The love feast also known as the “Agape Feast” was the forerunner of our modern church potluck.

A time when everyone in the church brought food and everyone shared their food with one another. This was an especially blessed time for the poor in the church who were usually slaves—and became, for some, their only decent meal of the week.

It was a beautiful display of God's love as the rich and poor, free and slave would sit and eat together as one family and celebrate God's grace and love for His people.

Unfortunately, these love feasts eventually stopped because they became corrupted by false sheep and false shepherds (apostates) who wound up destroying the love of God as it was strangled out of their fellowships thru selfishness.

We see it here in what Jude says—

Jude 1:12a (NKJV)

¹² These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves...

The word for **‘serving’** is the Greek word our English word *‘pastor’* comes from.

One author said—

“Originally, the love feast was intended to be a regular church gathering for the purpose of mutual instruction, encouragement, confrontation, and care. Believers would gather to worship, hear the teaching of Scripture, celebrate Communion, and then share their common love in a meal.

However, the love feast eventually became so corrupted and abused, due to the defiling influence of false teachers, that it passed from the scene. Lacking a functioning conscience or sense of conviction, and being adept hypocrites, the apostates were able to feast with believers *‘without fear’*...The fact that their actions do terrible damage to others is of no concern to them.

While the love feast was designed for believers to care for one another, the false teachers were guilty of caring only for themselves. The word rendered *‘caring’* is from *poimainō*, *‘to shepherd,’* indicating that the apostates shepherded no one but themselves. Their only interest was self-interest and self-gratification—at the expense of anyone else.”

1. Spots in your love feasts—v.12a

2. Clouds without water carried about by the winds—v.12b

In an arid climate like Israel has—rain is greatly valued! And as such, when clouds appear in the sky, they bring with them, not only the hope of rain—but life itself!

Of course, clouds that deliver no rain are good for nothing!

While they may look promising as a source of life-giving rain—they don't deliver and seem to exist "only for themselves".

Warren Wiersbe—

"Clouds that promise rain, but fail to produce, are a disappointment to the farmer whose crops desperately need water. The apostates look like men who can give spiritual help, and they boast of their abilities, but they are unable to produce. 'A person who promises a gift but doesn't give it is like clouds and wind that bring no rain' (Proverbs 25:14).

They promise liberty, but they can only give bondage (2 Peter 2:19)."

The term translated **"without water"** also occurs in Matthew 12:43—where it is used of evil spirits that "wander thru dry barren places looking for 'rest' and eventually take up residence in a person's heart".

False teachers wander from church to church until they find a 'home' where they can lodge and begin to impart their evil, demonic teaching.

This, I believe, is behind the idea where Jude says, that these apostate teachers are **"clouds without water"** (a reference to 'living water'—God's truth)—**"carried about by the winds."**

It reminds us of what Paul told the Ephesians to be aware of in their church—

Ephesians 4:11-16 (NLT2)

¹¹ Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. ¹² Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. ¹³ This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. ¹⁵ Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. ¹⁶ He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

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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