

The Profile of a False Teacher

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[0:00] Jude, and I'll read in your hearing as you follow the first 19 verses. Would you please stand together with me for this reading from God's Holy Word.

! Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, to those who have been called, who are loved by God the Father and kept by Jesus Christ, mercy, peace, and love be yours in abundance. Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints. For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.

Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord delivered His people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels, who did not keep their positions of authority, but abandoned their own home, these He has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great day.

[1:12] In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.

In the very same way, these dreamers pollute their own bodies, rejecting authority and slander celestial beings. But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, The Lord rebuke you.

Yet these men speak abusively against whatever they do not understand. And what things they do understand by instinct, like unreasoning animals, these are the very things that destroy them. Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain. They have rushed for profit into Balaam's heir. They have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion. These men are blemishes at your love feast, eating with you without the slightest qualm.

Shepherds who only feed themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind. Autumn trees without fruit and uprooted. Twice dead. They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame.

[2:25] Wandering stars for whom darkest blackness has been reserved forever. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men. See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones to judge everyone and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

These men are grumblers and fault finders. They follow their own evil desires. They boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage. But dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold.

They said to you, in the last times, there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires. These are the men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts, instincts and do not have the spirit.

Well, I just want to say before we begin our study in Jude, thank you for your prayers as we've been on vacation.

The Lord has been very kind in answering those prayers and has refreshed and restored our strength for the work. Now, it's been several weeks since we've been studying the book of Jude, so I just want to remind you that this is not the letter that Jude wanted to write.

[3:51] He was very keen on writing a letter about the common salvation that he shared with these other Christians. But he felt compelled by God to set that on the back burner and instead to write a letter in which he would urge them to contend for the faith earnestly, that faith that was once for all handed down to them from Jesus Christ and his apostles to fight for that faith.

Indeed, the faith of the gospel must be fought for or it will be lost. And the reason for such urgency, he tells us in verse 4, is that certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you.

They're godless men who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny our Jesus Christ, our only sovereign and Lord.

So it's not just the atheists and the false religions out there that would trouble us and take the truth from us. It is rather false teachers who have wormed their way onto the inside of the church that are the greatest danger to us.

Now, while on vacation, there were two things that underscored our need for Jude's warning in this letter. The first was an article in USA Today about God and sports.

[5:31] And the writer complained about conservative Christian athletes who wear their witness on their cheeks, Bible verses on their eye shadow or their cheek shadow, and prayers before and after, and praise in interviews given to Jesus Christ.

And what bothers the author of that article so much is the conservative beliefs of many of these Christians, especially their exclusive claim that Jesus Christ is the only way of salvation, that their way is right and all others are wrong.

And he lit into the baseball chapel, a ministry that provides chaplains for all the major and minor league baseball teams. And it seems that their statement of faith declares that all non-believers in Jesus will suffer everlasting punishment separated from God.

And he simply cannot stomach such a narrow view of salvation that, quote, makes unwelcome judgments about everyone else's religion.

We expect that from the world, don't we? A world with enmity in their heart against God, who have set themselves up as judges, as what God can and cannot do.

[6:54] We expect it from the world. But sadly, as the article quotes, it's not just the world that has trouble with exclusive views of salvation. It's the Christian church.

And a survey done last year was quoted that found that 65% of American Christians believe that many religions can lead to eternal life.

Jesus says, I am the way, I am the truth, and I am the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

But 65% of American Christians say that there are other ways to the Father besides Jesus Christ. Jude says, they have secretly slipped in among you.

They're in the church. The second thing that struck me during our vacation was a three-hour Bible study that I watched in a DVD series of one who taught that salvation is indeed only through Jesus Christ and had very many other conservative views that we would say amen to, but who also taught that God has no problem at all with homosexual relationships that are monogamous, consensual, and loving.

[8:27] And all the Bible verses on homosexuality were examined in the Scriptures, in their context, and were explained in that way.

That it wasn't homosexual relationships and activity that was being condemned, but perversions of homosexual relationships that are loving and monogamous. And this person travels around to churches sharing these biblical insights that distort and twist the Word of God to the destruction of many.

And it's all happening from inside the church, just as Jude said in his letter. Whole denominations of Christian churches have embraced homosexuality as an equally valid and normal alternative lifestyle for the Christian.

And 65% of American Christians, according to the survey, reject that Jesus Christ is the only way to the Father. We need Jude's letter today.

It's not just something for Jude's original audience. It's for us. These things have been written for us upon whom the end of the ages have come. Now, last Tuesday night, John Allen Muhammad, also known as the D.C.

[9:51] sniper, was executed and went to meet his maker. Some of you remember seven years ago that for three weeks in October he terrorized the people of Washington, D.C.

and the surrounding areas. As people were going about their everyday tasks, they suddenly were found dead with a bullet hole through them.

And the sniper was never seen. He had a special trunk that enabled him to shoot from his trunk from a long distance and just evade the law.

One life after another until ten lives were taken. Now, in seeking to capture the D.C. sniper, law enforcement officials made use of what's called a profile of a serial killer.

A profile of a serial killer. It's a list of characteristics, traits, taken from past serial killers who've been caught and found and much learned from them and from them they have compiled a list of things that are true of all of these.

[11:04] What do they have in common in their age, their religion, their habits, their upbringing, anything that might prove to be a clue to find the present serial killer on the loose.

And I suggest that that's something like what Jude is giving us today in our text, verses 8-19. He's giving us a profile of a false teacher. A list of characteristics that are common among false teachers that we might know one when we see one.

And we notice that rather than giving us a catalog of their false teachings, in verse 4 he tells us a couple things that they teach, but the preponderance of weight throughout the rest of his letter is upon their behavior.

their actions, their lifestyle. Indeed, Jude believes with all of his heart that false teachers can be identified by their ungodly character.

And in taking this approach, Jude is following the attack of his older brother and Savior, Jesus Christ, who said of false teachers, by their fruits, you will know them.

[12:22] How will we identify these wolves in sheep's clothing? By their fruit, by their character, their behavior.

And so that's what Jude sets before us in this profile of a false teacher. And as he paints these men before our eyes, he makes generous use of word pictures that will stick in our minds, and well-known figures from history that would be well known to any who are familiar with the Bible. He's taking pains to help us identify these false teachers within the Christian community. Now, don't think this morning those within Grace Fellowship Church alone, those within ARCA, our association of churches alone.

I want you to think this morning as those within Christendom, those within those that claim to be Christians, followers of Jesus Christ. How do I identify false teachers?

Now, he's already told us in the passage we treated last, verses 5 through 7, that they're headed for judgment. They don't think Christ is coming again to judge the world.

[13:40] They deny him as the sovereign Lord and judge of all. They scoff at his second coming. And so, in verses 5 to 7, Jude reminded us of God's past judgments upon unbelieving Israelites, upon rebellious angels, and upon sexually immoral people in Sodom and Gomorrah.

And in each case, severe judgment fell, and God made examples of them, examples of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.

Now we come to verse 8. And he switches from past sinners to present false teachers in the church. And he says, in the very same way, these dreamers pollute their own bodies, reject authority, and slander celestial beings.

He calls them dreamers, perhaps because they relied upon their dreams. I've had a dream, I've had special revelation from God, and then taught their heresy.

Or perhaps it's just that they're so out of touch with reality that Jude says, they're dreamers. Much like you say to someone who's really out there, you're dreaming, man, that's not going to happen.

[14:51] They're dreamers. Now he gives us three vices that mark these false teachers. The first is sexual immorality.

verse 7, he's just spoken of Sodom and Gomorrah who gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. And in verse 8, in the same way, likewise, these dreamers pollute their own bodies. They defile their own bodies. And it includes all forms of sexual immorality done with the body.

Peter says that their eyes are full of adultery.

They never stop sinning. They seduce the unstable. 2 Peter 2.14, which you remember is an earlier letter saying these false teachers are coming and Jude says they're now here.

Their eyes are full of adultery and they never stop sinning. Now down in verse 16, Jude says that they follow their own evil desires.

[15:56] sinners. You know, God's law is very explicit with regard to sexual behavior. It is to be between one man and one woman in the confines of marriage.

That's where it belongs. That's what he made it for. That's what it's to express, the love and intimacy of a husband and wife. And anything outside of that is perversion of God's order and is sinful.

Now that's the law of God. It's very plain. But these false teachers don't operate by what God's law says. They rather operate by their own evil desires. They follow their own evil desires, verse 16 tells us.

What's governing them, what's piloting their ship is not God and his laws, but their own desires. What do I want?

That's what I'll do. Do I desire sex outside of marriage? Then that's what I'll have. Their own evil desires drive them and they follow.

[17:06] And in that, they're like brute beasts, Jude says. Their desires rise no higher than brute beasts for food and drink. And sex. Verse 10 says that they follow their instincts like brute beasts, unreasoning animals.

And these are the very things that destroy them. You've got to trust your instincts. You've got to go with your gut feeling. It can't be wrong when it feels so right.

Well, it can be wrong. It is wrong if it's contrary to God's word. God's word. And you see, sinful behavior feels right and natural to sinners.

Just like air feels right and natural to a bird and water feels right and natural to a fish. So, sin feels natural to a sinner.

God's word is not and as animals follow the instincts of nature alone, so these rise no higher than the animals. Verse 19 says, they are men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the spirit.

[18:24] Notice the contrast. They follow their own natural instincts and do not have the spirit, the spirit of God. You've got the natural man, natural man, and you've got spiritual man.

The natural man follows his own natural instincts. The spiritual man follows what the spirit commands in his word. But these have not the spirit of God.

And so they have no power to restrain the flesh. They have no power to restrain the natural instincts. And so they just give themselves to their natural instincts.

It's the truth that sets men free. It's the word of God that sanctifies us. These men do not have the truth. They have lies. And there's no power in their false system to sanctify them.

They have no spirit of God in them to curb sexual immorality and those evil desires. But rather their errors encourage them to live out their base instincts.

[19:43] And we shouldn't be surprised when we've been told in verse 4 that they changed the grace of our God into a license for what? For immorality. That's what they believe.

They believe the grace of God is something that gives you a free pass to immorality. God forgives. God's loving. So live it up.

Very antinomian perspective. And so having a license for immorality, they use it. And so the first mark of a false teacher is sexual immorality.

They pollute their own bodies. Perhaps they were claiming, as later Gnostics claimed, that bodily acts don't taint my spirit.

I can still be holy no matter what my body's doing. They claimed a spirituality so high and mighty that it was okay for them to act on their own evil desires as to the body.

[20:53] And isn't it true that a progressive morality usually goes hand in hand with progressive thinking? Let a man start thinking differently about God, about sin, about judgment, about hell.

And he begins to come up with situation ethics. and as long as it's the loving thing to do and in a very subjective way, men pursue their own natural desires.

Let me just pause to say, and this is found in the third point in your applications, that Jude is working from a biblical principle that there is a tight connection between a man's beliefs and a man's behavior.

Between what a man believes and how he lives. Titus 1.1 says the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness.

Truth that leads to godliness. And just as truth leads to godly living, so error leads to ungodly living. [22:05] Isaiah 32.6, he gives us a profile of a false teacher in his day. He practices ungodliness forgiveness and spreads error concerning the Lord.

You see, the two always go hand in hand. Error concerning the Lord is married to ungodly practice. And so consistent is this relation between what a man believes and how he lives.

God knows that wherever you find ungodly living, you can know for sure that at the root level, there are errors and lies being bought into.

That's not just true of the false teacher, that's true of you and me. When we sin, we're buying into a lie for the moment. And we're believing that this sin brings greater pleasure than the smile of our Savior.

And so there's this connection. Romans 1 shows us how men exchanged the truth for a lie. And what followed once men were believing the lie? All sorts of sexual perversions and every other kind of sin.

[23:19] Men cannot escape this connection between belief and living. We're wired this way. As a man thinks in his heart, so is he. Heresy at the root leads to rottenness at the fruit.

And that's why Jude is able to use this profile of a false teacher and point to his actions because a man's actions will be seen to be very tightly connected to what he believes.

What does he believe? That the grace of God is a license to immorality. So should we be surprised to see this man as a free thinker in the realm of sexuality and lives sexually immoral lifestyle that defiles his body.

Well, the second mark of a false teacher is that he rejects authority. You see that in verse 8. They reject authority. Watch them.

Watch how they treat the leaders of the church. These men just dismiss authority. They despise authority. And they do not submit themselves to the authorities, the proper authorities.

[24:30] But they would say, we have truth. These are no nothing, these preachers. Listen to us. And they reject authority. We should not be surprised because we saw in verse 4 as well what they believe.

They deny Jesus Christ our only sovereign and Lord. They deny the authority of King Jesus. And so we shouldn't be surprised to see them denying all the other God-appointed authorities that Jesus has given in the church, in the civil realm, and in the home, and in the school, in the job.

They did not bow to authority. and lordship. They refused to submit to God's laws or to His God-appointed human authorities.

In that way, they are just like the rebellious angels. Back up in verse 6. Who did not keep their place of authority. Here's God and the angels and so on.

They didn't keep their place. They wanted greater authority. And so they rejected the authority that God had over them and rebelled against Him. They rejected those whom the Holy Spirit made overseers in the church.

[25:52] Hebrews 13, 17 says, Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. It's God-appointed authority. It's those whom the Holy Spirit has made overseers in the church.

But they didn't submit to the church leaders. Instead, they caused divisions. Follow us. verse 19 says, These are the ones who divide you. And so they distorted the truth in order to carry away disciples after them.

Now we live in a day when rejection of all divinely constituted authority is common. And that's only natural to the man who will not submit to the lordship of Jesus Christ over everything in his life.

But we see it being lived out in all the authority structures that Christ has instituted. In the home, children submitting to the authority of their parents, wives submitting to the authority of their husbands.

In the church, submitting, the members submitting to the leaders that the Holy Spirit has appointed. In the government submitting, as you heard from 1 Peter chapter 2, to our leaders, our government leaders at work, at school, authority is being rejected wholesale.

[27:17] And sadly, it's seen in the church of Jesus Christ as well. We're witnessing an increasing number of independent Christians who reject proper church authority, not putting themselves under the oversight of any of the Lord's shepherds that he has set up for his people.

answerable to none but to Christ. And increasingly, that is becoming the norm among professing Christians. It's not according to the mind of Christ.

And it is a mark of the false teachers that they reject these authorities. authorities. And it's becoming so common in Christendom that they don't stand out as weird and strange. They ought to stand out like a sore thumb. What? You do not submit to the authorities that God has established? Beware of the teacher who dismisses proper church authority and sets himself up against them.

Paul tells Titus that the elders that he appoints in Crete must be able to refute those who oppose sound doctrine. For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers, deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group.

[28:34] They must be silenced because they're ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach and that for selfish gain.

False teachers are the rebellious people rejecting authorities. That's the second mark. Sexual immorality, rejecting authority, and the third mark is that their whole life reeks with bold and arrogant pride.

It's really behind the rejection of authority. I'm the man. I have the truth. I answer to none. It's behind the rejection of God's laws on sexuality. My desires will do just fine for me.

That's such a proud statement of one who's been made by God and is answerable to God. So there's this pride, this bold, arrogant pride. And Jude cites another clear evidence of their arrogant pride in verse 8.

They slander celestial beings. Peter makes the connection vividly in 2 Peter 2.10. He says, Bold and arrogant, these men are not afraid to slander celestial beings.

[29:48] Mouthing off to angels. Probably referring to fallen angels. Yet, verse 9 says, this is something not even Michael, the archangel, did when disputing with the devil about the body of Moses.

Probably referring to the time when God himself is said to have buried Moses on the mountain. And perhaps he did so by his angels. And Michael was there and there was some dispute between the devil and Michael.

But even this mighty archangel did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him. But said, the Lord rebuke you.

Oh, but these false teachers, they're so cocky, so confident, and they treat the devil and demons and all these things that they know so little about, so flippantly.

They have no qualms about speaking abusively, verse 10 says, about things they don't even understand. Their big mouths with no fear of rushing in where angels are to tread.

[31:02] Bold, arrogant bride. Do they speak flippantly about the devil and celestial beings?

Verse 15, they even speak harsh words against the Lord. How's that for bold and arrogant? They speak harsh words against the Lord.

Verse 15, Malachi 3.13, you have said harsh things against me, says the Lord, yet you ask, what have we said against you? You've said it is futile to serve God.

What does a man get for serving God? You say that and you spread that to others. You know, it's a bad deal to serve God.

You come out on the bottom if you serve God. You're speaking against the Lord. That's how He takes it. When they teach errors about the Lord, He takes it as speaking harsh words against Him for which He'll judge them.

[32:07] So these men ooze with their pride. to listen to them is to think they have the last word on truth. They're the enlightened ones with superior knowledge and the deep insights unknown to simple Christians.

Beware of contrived interpretations that go against the plain reading of Scripture. As I sat and watched this presentation on homosexuality in the Bible, words are being redefined to mean exactly opposite of what the general reading means.

Beware of these specious contrived interpretations, forced interpretations that are contrary to the plain reading of Scripture. Some of you young children who know the Savior and read your Bibles have more light on the Word of God than PhDs from seminaries who don't know or love the Savior and distort the Scriptures to their own and others destruction.

They're proud men. Notice verse 16 says these men are grumblers and fault finders. I'm still under the heading of pride. You know why?

What makes a man grumble and complain? What makes a man find fault? It's the bottom line belief that I deserve better than I'm getting. That is arrogance.

[33:36] That is pride. The next time those words of complaint and fault finding tumble out over your lips, stop for a moment and ask where did they come from and you'll find that at bottom you're forgetting something.

You're forgetting a very important truth and that's what you really deserve. It's God's wrath forever. But these men are grumblers and fault finders.

Nothing's ever quite good enough for them. They deserve so much, you see. Whether it be God and his providence and the way he's treated or whether it be the church and the church leaders and the way they're doing things, they're grumblers, they're fault finders.

And 16 tells us as well, they boast about themselves. They tell others how smart and spiritual they are. The ESV says they're loud mouth boasters. That's pretty plain, isn't it?

Loud mouth boasters. They got nothing but good to say about themselves and if by flattering you, you will give them your ear or your money or some influence, then they'll flatter you too.

[34:49] They'll praise you too. And you see the pride behind it all. They're willing even to cause divisions in the church if it means that some will be following me.

Self-promoting pride. So there's the three vices that mark the profile of a false teacher. Sexual immorality, rejection of authority, and bold and arrogant pride.

And by their teachings, they promote the same in their prayers. Sexual immorality, rejection of authority, bold and arrogant pride.

false teachers have a hearing, have an audience, because that's a popular message, isn't it?

That goes along with my own evil desires. It goes along with what my itching ear wants to hear. And so that's why their message is so popular.

[35:53] And numbers flock to them. They're told what they want to hear. Peter says, by appealing to the lustful desires of the sinful human nature, they entice people, promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity.

They themselves are slaves of depravity, and the message they preach appeals to their basest evil desires. So that's the profile.

He goes on then in the profile to talk about not just three vices, but their motivation. What drives a serial killer? What drives a false teacher?

And at bottom, it's greed. Peter calls them experts in greed and accursed brood. Jude says, woe to them. That means judgment for them.

Though they're filled with praise for themselves, they will not receive praise from God, but judgment. And then Peter, likens them to three greedy people from well-known history.

[36:59] Number one, they have taken the way of Cain, who was greedy for praise. You remember kids, the Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but he did not look with favor upon Cain and his offering, and he immediately went into an angry pout.

He wanted the praise that Abel was getting. And God warned him and said, that sin is crouching at the door and it wants to have you, but you must conquer it.

And it just stood and it ripened until he murdered his brother, greedy for the praise, jealous hatred conquered and controlled him.

And then he buried his brother, thinking he could get away with murder, just like these false teachers think they can get away with their activities. But his sin found him out, and he came under the curse of God.

So with these false teachers. Secondly, they have rushed for profit into Balaam's heir. Here's one who was greedy for money, a false teacher, greedy for money. Balaam was a profit for hire, highest bidder, you got me.

[38:11] I'll give you whatever message you want, if you pay me enough. Yes, I'll come down and try to curse the Israelites, Balak, if you pay me. And he goes.

You remember he fails, he's not able to reverse the blessing of God upon his people, so that every time he tries to curse, his mouth is made to bless. But he doesn't go home, he's greedy, he wants his reward.

And so by his false teaching, he turned the Israelites away from the Lord and indirectly brought a plague on them. When Jesus writes the church in Pergamum, he says, I have a few things against you.

You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality. He taught men to be indifferent to God's moral standard. And he brought men under God's judgment. So, what was driving him?

[39:16] Why does he teach his false doctrine? He was greedy for money, driven by greed. In their greed, these teachers will exploit you, 2 Peter 2, 3.

So, just send your seed money of faith in, put it in the envelope and mail it out today. In their greed, these teachers will exploit you.

like Balaam, they lead others astray for financial gain. Third illustration from a figure in history, Korah.

They had been destroyed in Korah's rebellion. Korah was greedy for power or position. By the way, what happened to Balaam? Numbers tells us that the vengeance of God found him out on the end of the sword.

Woe to them. Here's Korah. And he and his crew were not satisfied with their position and power of being helpers of the priests in the tabernacle.

[40:26] They wanted power and authority. They were greedy for power. They wanted to be priests as well. And so they came to Moses and Aaron and said, all God's people are holy.

It's not you guys. The Lord's with us as much as he is with you. So why set yourselves up above the rest of us? We can be priests. We too can come in before God.

It's not just you guys. You've irrigated this authority to yourself. We can be priests and leaders ourselves. And they rejected the authority. Remember, that's an earmark of a false teacher.

They rejected the God appointed leadership of Moses and Aaron and they would set themselves out to be leaders. Teachers defied the God appointed leaders of the church and rejected their authority just like Korah and his rebellion of old.

And what happened to them? Well, God did a new thing. And he opened up the earth and swallowed them alive. And he sent fire out of heaven and destroyed those that were offering their sacrifice or had their censers in the tabernacle pretending to be priests.

[41:40] And God showed he had not given them that role. Woe to them, Cain, Balaam, Korah. These false teachers are just like them and are greedy for selfish gain, for praise, for money, for power, and they will come to their same cursed end.

And lastly, Jude paints some pictures for us. I believe these are very helpful memory devices. Say a picture's worth a thousand words and he gives six word pictures, metaphors, ways to remember these false teachers.

First of all, their blemishes. That beautiful dress. No, isn't it nice? Oh, it is. Except for that one ugly stain. And that one ugly blemish spoils the whole dress.

These are blemishes at your love eating with you without the slightest qualm. There's the church and they're gathered together for their love feast.

The time of eating together and loving one another at which time they would also eat the Lord's supper and take those emblems of the Lord's body and blood by which they had been cleansed from sin.

[42:58] So there's the church having the love feast and the Lord's supper. Here are these vile polluted false teachers who have no qualms about eating together with them.

The audacity of them to be found at the Lord's table of all places. The brazen boldness to think nothing of joining in this holy ordinance. They are a blemish upon the beauty of the church.

an eyesore, a disgrace. They don't really belong there. Second word picture, they're shepherds who feed only themselves. There's a shepherd and like the shepherd of Psalm 23, he's out there on the hills and leading his flock to water and to food and he's caring for his sheep.

But not these shepherds. These are shepherds who feed only themselves. So this shepherd is ignoring the flock. He's letting them be attacked by wolves, doesn't care about a thing about them. All he cares is that he's the one eating. Shepherding himself is the way the word reads. Caring only about himself. And so these shepherds, false teachers, false shepherds who should be feeding the flock are only feeding themselves.

[44:21] They have nothing to give the flock to feed their faith on Christ. No sustenance. no truth as it is in Jesus. They're motivated by selfishness.

Clouds, the third picture, clouds without rain blown along by the wind. Palestine was a dry place. They depended so much upon the rain that if they didn't get it, crops would fail.

And oh, here comes a cloud just now. Look how the crops are wilting and need rain. and it's promising rain. It's approaching. But so disappointed are we as the wind just whisks it on by and it drops nothing.

Not a drop for us. That's these false teachers. Clouds without rain. We need nourishment. We need something to refresh our souls.

And they go right on by and drop us nothing of refreshment. They appear to bring something and leave us empty. Autumn trees, number four.

[45:28] Autumn trees without fruit, uprooted and twice dead. When you come upon a tree in autumn, you are right to expect fruit to be there. That's the time of harvest. And here's this tree.

And we come upon it in autumn. It's a fruit tree. But we find there's no fruit there. In fact, we find it's uprooted, twice dead. as if bearing no fruit was not enough.

It's also torn up by the roots like you see a tree after a tornado or a hurricane. Uprooted. And this is just a way of saying twice dead.

It's just saying dead, dead. Really dead. There's no life there. There's no hope of fruit from that tree again. And that's these false teachers. There's no spiritual life in them.

For all they claim about their super spirituality, they have nothing themselves and nothing to give us. No fruit of the Spirit. Number five, wild waves of the sea foaming up their shame.

[46:30] There's the stormy sea. You see the waves crashing upon each other. A lot of action, a lot of noise, but what do the waves produce? Have you stood along the shore, the rocks, and seen the foam, the bubbles, the scum?

All the waves do is drudge up from the bottom the dirt, the mire, the muck, the seaweed, and they dump their scum on the shore.

That's all these wild waves of the sea, untamed waves can produce. And that's these false teachers. For all the action and hullabaloo and hoopla, all that they produce is their own immoral scum.

Wandering stars, number six, for whom the blackest darkness has been reserved forever. You're standing outside on a clear night, and you can see the stars so well, and suddenly a shooting star goes streaking across in its brilliance, only just to fizzle out into darkness.

That's these false teachers who claim to be the enlightened ones, and enlightening everybody else. Oh yes, a big flash, dazzling, only to be extinguished in everlasting darkness, the darkness, the outer darkness of hell forever.

[48:01] Blemishes, self-serving shepherds, clouds without rain, trees without fruit, wild waves producing scum, wandering stars heading for blackest darkness.

These are the false teachers who are troubling the church. That's the profile. That's to help us identify them.

A couple words of application. We're having to save it for next week because it's the end of his letter. He gives the application, and next week we'll have the application.

So this is the way they are. Well, what about you? And Jude's got a pointed word to us. What do we do with all this? How do we not fall in with these? Well, just a couple words.

I want you to see this morning that Jesus loves his church. Are you a member of the church of Jesus Christ by faith in his life and death and resurrection? Do you belong to Christ?

[49:02] Are you joined to Jesus, married to him forever? You need to know this morning that Jesus loves you. And that's why he sends this letter to you through his servant Jude.

He wants to warn you about dangerous men who will lead you to hell. Much depends upon your correct identification of false teacher.

False teachers. Don't be deceived by them. Don't fall in with them. Don't give them your ear. Don't give them your feet. Don't give them your soul. Or you'll be lost with them.

Jesus loves his church. That's behind this letter to us. But then secondly, the Holy Spirit is our helper. Do you realize that these vices that control the false teachers, every one of those vices, every one of those sinful desires is found in every heart here this morning.

There's not a heart here that does not have desires for sexual immorality, that does not reject God's authority, that does not have pride and arrogance.

[50:27] difference. What's the difference between the church, the Christian who struggles with these things, and the false teacher? Well, the false teacher doesn't have the Holy Spirit of God, remember?

So he has no power to fight those desires. The believer has the Holy Spirit of God who's begun a good work in him and has changed his heart and taken out that old heart and given him new desires.

They're not perfect yet. He still has those temptations and inward pulls downward in these three areas, but he now has the power of God, the Spirit of God resident in his heart.

And so the false teachers without the Holy Spirit are left powerless. They have no power to mortify the misdeeds of the body. But you, Christian, through the Spirit of God, put to death the misdeeds of the body.

You, Christian, have all that you need for a life of godliness in this corrupt world. So thank God for the gift of the Holy Spirit and cooperate with him.

[51 : 36] Give yourself up to him. Live by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.

Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. Next week we'll see more of how we're to respond to the danger of false teachers within Christendom.

May the Lord convince us of his love for us and of the help that he has to bring us. We sing it in our response to worship 278. Jesus, with thy church abide.

Come and help us, Lord Jesus. Hear us, our mighty captain. We are weak in ourselves, but you are strong. We are so prone to wander to these very vices and these very lies that make us comfortable in our sin.

Deliver us, Lord Jesus. Set a wall of protection around us and teach us what it is to contend for that precious faith of the gospel that we have heard of a Savior who came and whose life and death and resurrection is sufficient for the forgiveness of our sins and the power over them.

[52:55] Thank you for bringing that gospel to many hearts here with power. Help us to take it to the world and to contend for this gospel and not let loose of anything of its truth.

[illegible]