

The Book of Jude

John Walden

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Foreword

I am both honored and humbled to have a part in preparing these messages by John Walden for publication. He was my uncle and I loved him dearly. He brought encouragement as well as admonition to me many times through the teaching of God's Word. I always considered it a privilege to be in his presence and always came away refreshed by his love for the Lord and his presentation of God's Word. The material presented in this book was taken from a taped series that John Walden presented to his radio audience over a period of thirteen weeks.

The Book of Jude is very relevant to our present day, and it is our desire that each of you who read it will be built up and encouraged in the Lord.

For those of you who haven't made a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ, it is our desire that you see your need and feel the urgency to invite the Saviour into your life. It is His desire to have you with Him at His coming.

T. Victor Anderson

Preface

This is the seventh and last book of short messages by my dear husband John that I will publish. The "LITTLE BOOK OF JUDE" was one of his favorites, and these

messages are taken from the series of radio messages he had made.

Since they are so relevant to these days we are living in, I pray they will turn the hearts of many to trust our Lord and Saviour.

Without the help of my nephew, T. Victor Anderson, I could not have finished this seventh book. However, there was the help of Mr. Charles Barnes in editing. Miss Elaine Nelson, the original typist, and my grandson, Paul York, for the cover, and my dear friends at Gospel Folio Press, the publishers.

To all of these I express my deepest gratitude.

Nan Walden

Chapter 1 Calling of God

I want you to join me in a study from a book of the Bible which is not very well known, nor often read. It is, I think, passed over probably because it is such a brief treatise, such a short book—the little book of Jude. Jude comes just before the book of Revelation. In fact, it has been called a preface to the book of the Revelation. It is a unique book. It is a book in which there are at least twenty words not found anywhere else in the New Testament. It is a book in which there are many, many references to Old Testament passages and even to apocryphal literature—that is, literature which is not part of our Bible, but which the Spirit of God saw fit to have Jude quote here so that we might have the information.

The pattern of this book is interesting. It is just filled with triplets—that is, there are many (at least twelve) occasions where he uses three words together. He tells

us about three classes of people or he tells us about three men who were notorious sinners. Three times he uses the word “beloved,” describing Christians, and so on. We will notice these as we go ahead in our studies.

Let us notice first of all in the opening of this book the man himself: “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James.” Now there are various theories as to whom this man was. Some say he was the brother of the apostle or even the Apostle Jude. This isn’t likely. Had he been an apostle, he certainly would have said so. He is very likely the same Jude or Judas mentioned in Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3 and, as such, was called the brother of the Lord. The Jewish leaders were astonished and they asked, in Mark 6:2, “From whence hath this man [Jesus] these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto Him, that even such mighty works are wrought by His hands? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James and Joses, and of Judah and Simon? and are not His sisters here with us? And they were offended at Him” (Mark 6:2, 3). So we have James and Jude both mentioned here as in Matthew 13.

Now there are some, of course, who object to saying that our Lord had any brothers; that is, that Mary had any children. We have nothing in the Scripture to give us any reason why she and Joseph should not have had children following the birth of the Lord Jesus. All we know is that the Lord Jesus was born of the virgin Mary. He was born without a human father. He came into this world miraculously as God manifest in the flesh. He came into this world taking human nature. He never ceased to be God when He became man.

Some have thought that if Jude were actually the half brother of the Lord Jesus, he certainly would have said so, but if you are a believer you know better than this. You know that his attitude toward the Lord Jesus should be just exactly what it was. He called himself the “slave,” the bond slave (that is the word “servant” here), of Jesus Christ and brother of James.

James was probably better known. Likely, he is the one who gave us, by the Holy Spirit, the epistle that bears his name—the book of James. He was a godly man. It was said that he prayed so much that his knees were like the knees of a camel. Jude is a humble man, who identifies himself in a very simple way and speaks of himself as being the “bond slave of Jesus Christ.” I might say that every New Testament writer of the epistles says exactly the same thing—Paul, Peter, John, James, and Jude. They all call themselves a “slave of Jesus Christ.”

How does it happen that these men consider themselves slaves of Jesus Christ? They were redeemed, they were set free. That is one of the meanings of the word “redeemed.” The Lord Jesus had bought them with His own precious blood and set them free. They were no longer the slaves of sin and Satan. If they were free, how do they happen to be called slaves? Why, the only answer, of course, is that it is a voluntary love slavery. If you don’t know the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, you are not going to understand what I am saying just now, but any Christian should understand this. We love the Lord Jesus so much for what He has done for us that we gladly say, “Lord Jesus, I belong to Thee, spirit, soul, and body, and I want Thy will in my life. I want to be whatever is Thy will for me.”

We have a nice picture of this in the fifteenth chapter of Deuteronomy: The slave who had a chance to go free but said, “I love my master and his family. It has been well with me here and I don’t want to go out free. I want to remain in his service.” I have known the Lord now for some fifty-three years and for the last thirty-five years I have been trying to serve Him in preaching the Word from one end of our country to another, and I want to tell you He is the best of masters. I am not serving Him for salvation—this would be an insult to His grace. Salvation is a free gift. “The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:23). But once you know the Lord Jesus you want to do anything you can to please Him. I learned this little couplet when I was a boy:

I dare not work my soul to save,
That work my Lord has done;
But I would work like any slave
For love to God’s dear Son!

This is the man, Jude, through whom the Holy Spirit gives us this very lovely book. Jude was not a believer during the lifetime of the Lord Jesus. It plainly says in John 7:5, “Neither did His brethren believe in Him.” But His resurrection apparently was the convincing thing that happened, and this ought to be the convincing thing for every person! You ought to be convinced that the Lord Jesus Christ is just what He claimed to be because He rose from the dead. And don’t say there isn’t enough evidence. A New York corporation lawyer said that we have more evidence for the resurrection of Jesus Christ than we do for any fact in history. There were at least five hundred persons who saw Him at one time after His

resurrection, and apparently this is when James and Jude were convinced that He truly was the Son of God.

In the first chapter of Acts, verse 14, just after the Lord has gone back to heaven, you will find all the believers, the apostles, and others gathered together in prayer with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus and with His brethren. So Jude evidently was there on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came down.

According to 1 Corinthians 9:5, he was a married man. We don't know much more than this from the Bible.

Secular history or tradition says that his grandchildren were arrested for being Christians and that they stood firmly for the Lord. So the work of the Lord went right on in his family.

But now notice that he says he is the “servant” or “slave of Jesus Christ, and brother of James,” and he is addressing this to “them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.” Now, all who are truly born again, every saved person, is sanctified by God the Father—that means set apart unto God. You never would have come to the Lord, you never would have been saved, you never would have trusted the Lord Jesus if God had not set you apart, if God the Holy Spirit had not dealt with you and made you feel your need of Him. You would never hold on, you would never go on for God as a believer except that you are set apart by God. Of course, we are told to sanctify ourselves in a practical way, day by day, but this is something which God has done.

And we are “preserved in Jesus Christ,” or by Jesus Christ. We are kept by the power of God, Peter tells us. You could not save yourself, you could not keep yourself.

But all of us who are saved are kept by the power of God, and we are waiting for that day when we shall be taken into our inheritance, which Peter says is being kept for us (1 Peter 1:4).

Then Jude also mentions that they are “called” of the Lord. It is wonderful to be called of God. We were called to salvation. The Lord Jesus said, “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28). Have you heard that call, and have you answered it? We are called to be His followers. Every one of the disciples (the apostles) had these two calls—called to salvation and then called to service (Rom. 12:1). We read in another place that we are also called to suffer with Him (2 Tim. 2:12). The Lord has called us to be His own, and this is a calling. We are saints by calling according to 1 Corinthians 1:2. And so he speaks of the Lord’s people in this wonderful way and shows His love to them when he says “beloved.” Jude says this three times in this epistle. He loved the Lord’s people because the Lord loved His people. This is a general epistle written to all believers.

Our Father, we ask Thee to bless these few thoughts to us. There may be some who have never yet received our Saviour. Help them to see that, through the death of our blessed Lord and His resurrection, they too can be children of God. And help us who believe in Him to be indeed His servants, the slaves of our Lord Jesus. In His Name. Amen.

Chapter 2 Beloved of the Lord

The Book of Jude is a very small book as far as the number of verses is concerned—only one chapter with twenty-five verses, but a very full book and a very

important one, I believe, in the particular days in which we live. We will see this as we continue our studies. We noticed already that Jude, the writer of this book, is a man who very humbly takes his place as a brother of James and a slave of the Lord Jesus Christ. We saw that he had a love for the Lord's people.

I would like to say a little bit to you now about his addressing the believers as "sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called" as the beloved of God. Later in this book he speaks of them twice again as the "beloved." Of all of the things he says about these people, he never once mentions that they belong to his particular denomination. Have you ever wondered why there is a total absence of mention of denominations in the Scriptures, in the early days, in the days when the Scriptures were given? The reason is that the only thing that is said about them is condemnation. God never intended for His people to be divided into denominations, into sects. The Lord intended that all who are truly born again should bear the name of the Lord Jesus alone, and that we should be all one in Christ. This is what He wishes for these people who are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ—not preserved in the church. Nobody is saved by the church; nobody is saved by ordinances. We are preserved by Jesus Christ and Him alone! See to it that you give Him all the credit for your salvation.

He wishes for them in verse 2, mercy, peace, and love. "Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied." This is a little different from the salutations of, say, the Apostle Paul, or of John, or of any of the others. Why mercy? Because we will always need mercy. Mercy is for sinners. When I received the Lord Jesus as my Saviour

my sins were forgiven—so were yours if you accepted Christ. “Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins” (Acts 13:38). But we are told in 1 John chapter 1, that “if we [believers] say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves.” He says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (vv. 8, 9). So you see, even as Christians, we still need mercy for our sins. It is God’s mercy that I am still saved. It will be God’s mercy that takes me home to heaven. I cast myself upon the mercy of God and can demand no rights for myself, can demand no justice, no blessings because of any merit of my own. I stand alone on the merit and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you?

And not only was mercy to be multiplied to them, but peace. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; that is, through being justified by faith we have peace with God. This is Romans 5:1. Then we have the peace of God which comes to us when we put our trust in Him about our daily problems (this is mentioned in Philippians 4:7). The Lord wants us to be peaceful Christians. This doesn’t mean that you are to be dead in your tracks; it doesn’t mean you are to sit in a rocking chair the rest of your days; it doesn’t even mean that you are to have a peaceful existence as far as problems are concerned—but it means you are to have peace in the midst of all this. You can have peace in the very midst of tribulation because peace is a divine gift. The Lord Jesus said, “My peace I give unto you” (John 14:27).

“And love be multiplied” (Jude 2). “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son” (John 3:16). Could He love me any more than this? Well, He is still

showing His love day by day, and those who believe in the Lord Jesus are made the recipients of the daily love of the Lord Jesus. We are told that “Christ... loved the church, and gave Himself for it” (Eph. 5:25). Paul said, “The Son of God... loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). We ought to be enjoying the love of God daily. We are told in verse 21 of this epistle to “Keep yourselves in the love of God.” This doesn’t mean to keep God loving us, but it means simply to keep in the sunshine, to enjoy His love to us.

Jude addresses these believers as “beloved.” He says, “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation...” These people were beloved of the Lord and, therefore, they were beloved by Jude. If you belong to Christ, then you belong to me. If you are God’s child, and I am God’s child too, that makes us brothers and sisters. It is a shame when brothers and sisters are not speaking. It is a shame when brothers and sisters have nothing to do with each other. It is a shame when brothers and sisters live in the same town and have no contact, no communion, no fellowship with each other, never see each other. It is a shame that sectarianism and denominationalism have built fences between the children of God. We are all beloved of the Lord, and we ought to all be beloved of each other.

Jude intended to write to these beloved, to these Christians, about their common salvation. Let me say a word or two about our common salvation. “Common” doesn’t mean ordinary or unimportant—it means that we hold in common that which belongs to all of us. Our “common salvation” is the salvation which belongs to every believer. The word “salvation” is the inclusive word in the New Testament which takes in everything

God had done, is doing and will do for those who believe in His Son. We have been delivered from so great a death. He doth deliver, and we trust that He will yet deliver us. I have been saved from the penalty of sin, from hell and from judgment. I am being saved from the power of sin as I allow the Lord to do this day by day. I shall be saved from the very presence of sin when the Lord Jesus comes back. That is what Paul means when he says, "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed" (Rom. 13:11). That is the climax, the ultimate. The completion of our salvation will be the salvation of our bodies. My body isn't saved yet and yours isn't either. That is why we have these aches and pains. We would be very foolish if we denied we have them. We do have physical problems but they are all going to be dispelled at that split second when the Lord Jesus comes and calls His own to meet Him in the air!

Now, Jude says, "I wanted to write to you about our common salvation." You couldn't blame him for that, could you? I love to talk about our common salvation. I love to talk to other Christians about what the Lord has done for us. He has done the same thing for you that He has done for me. This doesn't mean we are all enjoying everything we have. Some people have a great deal more than they enjoy! Some Christians are afraid to enjoy their salvation. I knew one person whom I believed to be a real child of God. She said, "I believe in the Lord Jesus and I know that He says in His Word, 'I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish,' but it just seems presumptuous of me to say that I know for sure I am saved." Now listen, my friends, if the Lord says He has saved us, it is not presumption to believe His Word and to believe what He has said. In fact it is rank

unbelief, and it dishonors Him to say anything else! If someone tells me that he or she loves me, am I being presumptuous if I make the same statement? If God says that He has given me eternal life, and He says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish" (John 10:28), is it presumption, then, to say I have eternal life? "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). He says, in 1 Corinthians 1, "unto us which are saved." If the Lord says I am saved, am I being presumptuous if I say so? You ought to be enjoying this daily salvation too. You ought to be enjoying the presence of the Holy Spirit living within you because every believer has the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:9 tells us, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Since the Holy Spirit of God is indwelling you, then you have the power of God to live to please Him. This is part of your common salvation. Shouldn't you be enjoying the prospect of the Lord's coming back again? Why, my dear brother and sister, there isn't anything that will lift your heart quite like believing that the Lord is coming back and that He may come this very day. We have reason to believe that the coming of the Lord is right at the door.

The days in which Jude lived were serious days as we will see when we continue our studies in this little book. That is why he had to write to them to "earnestly contend for the faith." You and I live in serious days too. The days when the Lord Jesus comes, the days of the coming of the Son of man, will be like those days. They will be like the days of the flood and of the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. In the day when the Saviour comes back (and this may be today) He is going to find very few who are really standing up for what we believe.

He tells us here in verse 3, that we have the faith “which was once delivered unto the saints.” The faith means the Word of God, the truth of God. So God has given us His Word. He has delivered it to us. We ought to appreciate it, read it, enjoy it, stand for it and share it with others. Have you received His Son? Then you are one of His beloved and one of mine too, my brother and sister.

Lord, bless Thy Word to us. We ask that Thy dear children will be drawn closer to one another and we will not allow differences to separate us. We pray for those who are not yet saved —that they may see they have missed out in this salvation which is through faith in our Saviour. Take our thanks in His precious Name. Amen.

Chapter 3 Our Common Salvation

As we continue in the Book of Jude, I believe the Bible to be the Word of God; therefore, I make no apology for sticking with the Scriptures themselves. We are taking this verse by verse, and are trying to learn what God has for us in this wonderful little book of only twenty-five verses. It has been called the “preface to the Book of the Revelation,” and I believe that the events of the Revelation are right at hand. I believe the coming of the Lord is very near and, therefore, I believe that the warnings in the Book of Jude are especially suited for our day.

Now, we got as far as verse 3, where he said he wanted to write to them about their common salvation; but he said, “It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” We wanted to write about their common salvation (write to ask them, to exhort them, to stir them up, to earnestly

contend for the faith), I believe that the Bible is given by inspiration of God. This statement is made in 2 Timothy 3:16. You all know John 3:16, and you also ought to learn 2 Timothy 3:16: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." That is, all Scripture is God-breathed. God put His own thoughts into it, just as I put my thoughts into words. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect [or mature, complete], thoroughly furnished unto all good works." All that you need is in the Word of God, and all that is in the Word of God is the Word of God. I don't believe the Bible contains the Word of God. I believe the Bible is the Word of God. I am like the old-fashioned fellow down in the mountains who said, "I believe the Bible from kiver to kiver"—from cover to cover—"and I even believe the kiver!" It says "Holy Bible"—and I join right in with him. I believe the Word of God. I have gone to the trouble to study it in the languages in which it was written because I wanted to know for sure. There was a time when I was a skeptic. There was a time when I didn't know whether I could believe the Bible—whether I could trust it or not. I have no such qualms or questions any more. They have been answered for me. I am sure that this is God's Word.

It was needful for this man Jude to write because the days in which he lived were such that the children of God had to contend for the faith. Now, when we say "the faith" we mean the whole body of truth, the Word of God itself. When I talk about faith I talk about my belief or my confidence in the Word of God or in God. But when I talk about the faith, I talk about the thing which I

believe, the truths which I believe. So I have faith in the faith! The faith, then, is all Scripture.

Now, the faith has been once delivered unto the saints. Don't look for anything else. Anyone who tells you that there are new revelations, anyone who tells you the Bible is incomplete, that we have to look for new revelation from time to time, is deceiving you. The Apostle Paul plainly says he was chosen to complete the teaching of Scripture. It is true that John wrote after Paul, but he gave no new revelation, no new truths, no new doctrines. All of the doctrines are completely set in the Word of God.

Why does he tell us we are to "earnestly contend for the faith"? Isn't it wrong to be contentious? He doesn't say be contentious, he says contend for it. That is, stand for it. You don't have to be argumentative, you don't have to be fussy, you don't have to be always looking for a scrap. But you do need to stand for something. It is about time God's children stood up to be counted. It is about time that all of us who believe the Bible say so. It says, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so" (Psalm 107:2). Do you believe God's Word? Has it been delivered unto you? Are you. one of the saints? That is what we are called in verse 3. You don't have to die to become a saint. All of God's children are saints. We are His saints by calling. That means His separated ones. We are separated to the Lord and the truth of the Word of God has been delivered to us. It has not been given to the world. It is our responsibility to share it with our fellowmen. It is our responsibility to preach it; it is our responsibility to tell them the Gospel for we are the custodians of the faith. We believers are the stewards of the manifold

grace of God. We are responsible, then, to teach others the things that we have.

Now, why does he send this warning? Verse 4 says, “There are certain men crept in unawares.” The Revised Version says, “Certain men have wormed their way in among us.” When Paul called together the elders from Ephesus to meet him, he said, “I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things [twisted things], to draw away disciples after them. Therefore, watch...” (Acts 20:29-31). Some people think that because a man is a minister or because a book is a religious book that it is good, or that he is good—that he is trustworthy. This is not true. The Word of God plainly warns us against false prophets, false apostles, false brethren, and there are many who have professions of being the children of God, the servants of God, who are not His at all! In fact this is what is keeping some people away from church. Maybe you are one of them. You say, “I don’t want to go to church. It is full of hypocrites.” Let me tell you this. They counterfeit money, but they don’t counterfeit scraps of brown paper because it is not worth counterfeiting. There are counterfeit Christians, (we all acknowledge that), but it is because they are worth counterfeiting. It is because there are genuine Christians, and you know it! You know that there are some who are real. What you should do instead of trying to hide behind a hypocrite (you have to be smaller than he is if you hide there!) is to acknowledge your own need of the Saviour, accept Christ, and then be real. Don’t be one of these hypocrites!

“There are certain men crept in unawares.” We are going to learn about these men in the Book of Jude. We are going to learn about some in the Old Testament days. We are going to learn about whole groups of people who were what we call apostates. The word “apostate” means one who turns away. Apostasy is a giving up of the truth of God. This is not a true believer. A true believer never becomes an apostate. A true believer may get away from the Lord and the Lord will have to chastise him to bring him back to Himself. An apostate is a person who said he was a believer, who professed to believe the Bible, and then gave it up. And there are plenty of them in the world today. Our colleges are filled with young men and women who went there saying they were Christians and now they say, “I no longer believe the Bible. I don’t even know if there is a God.” Much of this has been the result of the teaching they have gotten in these schools, but a great deal of it has been that they have no foundation. They had no root of light within them. They were not born again and, therefore, it was easy to turn away.

These certain men whom he says have “crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation.” That doesn’t mean that God chose them to be lost. Nobody is born to be saved or born to be damned. It simply means that anyone who takes this turn will be condemned. That is all it means. Let me tell you, if you turn away from the Word of God, if you reject the Scriptures, if you say, “I don’t want Christ and I don’t believe in Him,” then you too will be condemned. He says, “He that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:16). You have your choice of Christ or condemnation. If you reject Christ, you have no other choice. There is

nothing left for you; there is no alternative. To reject Christ is to be condemned.

Now, he calls them “ungodly men” in verse 4. The word “ungodly” doesn’t mean they were living licentious lives particularly, although in this case they were turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness or lustfulness. The word ungodly itself (which is mentioned six times in this little letter) really means godless, those who have left God out of their lives.

Am I talking to someone who is just not taking God into account at all? Are you living as though there was no God? “Oh,” you say, “I am not an atheist.” That may be, but you may be a practical atheist. You may be acting as though you didn’t believe there is a God, you are giving Him no right, no control over your life. You have not accepted His verdict about your being a sinner and being lost and you have not accepted His offer of salvation through the Lord Jesus.

And so, these people turned the grace of our God (notice it is not “their God” but “our God”—we who are believers can claim Him for our God!) into lasciviousness. That is, they were saying, “Well, if salvation is by grace then we can do as we please.” No real Christian ever says that. We are saved eternally, but we certainly do not believe that we can do as we please, and we do not believe that a real Christian will live this way. This is proof he is not a Christian.

Not only that, but they denied the Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. He is my Lord Jesus Christ. This title is used three times in this epistle: Lord, Jesus, Christ. He is my Lord. “Jesus” means He is Saviour. “Christ” means He is the One who has been sent to do the work the

Father gave Him to do. Have you trusted the Lord Jesus Christ? If you have, are you willing to stand for Him?

Lord, bless Thy Word to us. There is so much in it. Help us to grasp some of it. Save the lost, we pray Thee. And lead Thy dear children on for Thyself. Help us to earnestly contend for the faith which Thou hast delivered unto us, to appreciate it, to believe it, to disseminate it. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Chapter 4 Apostasy

The little Book of Jude is written for our day in a very special way because it warns of the apostasy. The apostasy means the turning away from the faith, or the turning away from the Scriptures. This is a common thing in our days.

Recently a questionnaire was sent to about two thousand professing ministers of the Gospel of Christ. (I am not telling you this to destroy your confidence in ministers or any man you may be listening to, or anyone else. I am just telling you the facts.) Ninety-seven percent of those men who answered the questionnaire said they do not believe there is such a place as hell. Some of them even said they weren't sure there was such a place as heaven! Many of the men (over half of them) said they did not believe the Lord Jesus Christ was anything more than a common man—a good man, but just a man. This is denying the faith!

We are told in Jude, verse 3, that we should “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” because, he says, “there are certain men [who] crept in unawares”—wormed their way in among the Christians—“who were before of old ordained to this

condemnation.” That is, if you turn away from the Word of God you can’t expect anything except this condemnation. “Ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The apostasy warned against was producing some terrible things. First of all, they distorted the grace of God. They turned or twisted the grace of God into something else. God’s grace means God’s kindness shown to us who were undeserving. The difference between mercy mentioned in verse 2 and grace mentioned in verse 4 simply is this: God is merciful when He does not punish us. He is gracious when He gives us what we do not deserve. Mercy is negative, grace is positive. I am not punished for my sins because Christ took my place—that is mercy. I am given the Son’s place and all of the blessings that God has for me—this is grace.

Now, think of taking the grace of God and distorting it and twisting it. They twisted it into lascivious living, lustful living, living for themselves, living for the flesh, living for the world. I hope that none of you who are reading this, who profess the name of Christ, have forgotten that you are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ and are living lasciviously, lustfully.

Then, there was a rebellion, a denying of the only Lord God. It is a terrible thing to rebel against God. This was Satan’s sin in the first place. This was the sin he led Adam and Eve into in the Garden. He led them to rebel against God. Second Thessalonians 2 tells us that rebellion is going to go on and increase until the man of sin (and this word really means rebellion) is going to

lead in a great rebellion against God. When the Lord has taken His people home to heaven, then at the very last, after the thousand years of the glorious reign of Christ on this earth, Satan is loosed out of his prison for a little time and we are told he leads the men of the world in a final rebellion against God. The human heart is rebellious. If you will be honest and look into your own heart, you will find that you do not like to do what you are told. You do not like to give in to authority, and especially to the authority of God. Judge this thing as a sin! These people made no bones about it. They denied the only Lord God, the Lordship of God, and they denied the Lord Jesus Christ. They dishonored our Saviour. Now, if this was true in Jude's day, let me tell you it is far more true, far more prevalent in the twentieth century. You and I live in days when there are few who really stand for first century Christianity!

There are three examples given to us of apostasy in verses 5, 6, and 7. We are going to begin to study these. They are recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures and they are to be brought to our remembrance. "I will therefore put you in remembrance." Twice in the New Testament (Rom. 15:4 and 1 Cor. 10:6, 11) we are told that the things that were written beforetime were written for our admonition and for our learning. The things which happened to people in the Old Testament and are recorded for us are written in order that we might learn lessons from them. Some people wonder why we have the Old Testament, now that we have been given the New. Well, there are 880 quotations from the Old Testament in the New Testament so you see you almost have to have some understanding of the Old Testament in order to appreciate the New.

Here is one example: "I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not" (Jude 5).

Does this mean that some people believed the Lord and were saved and then because they turned away, they were lost again? Well, if you think this, it shows you are not very familiar with the story of the Exodus. If you go back to the book of Exodus, the twelfth chapter, you will find that the people were redeemed by the blood of the lamb. This is a picture of salvation, because 1 Corinthians. 5 says "Christ our Passover, is sacrificed for us." The lamb died that the people might live. The Lamb of God, as John the Baptist called Him in John 1:29, takes away the sin of the world, and so you and I are redeemed by precious blood.

But, you see, there was a crowd of people who followed the children of Israel out of Egypt. They are called in the Old Testament, a "mixed multitude" (Ex. 12:38), a little of everything. Some were Egyptians who wanted to get away from things, some other foreigners were there who thought, "I am tired of this place, I think I will join the children of Israel." In Numbers 11:4 we are told it was the mixed multitude that lusted against God. So you see, there were people who professed to be believers but who were not. We are told plainly in Romans 9:6, "They are not all Israel, who are of Israel." There are many people who are descendants of Abraham, but who are not true Israelites. They do not believe God. You see, it is possible to have a profession and not have possession. It is possible for you to be like one of these who have left Egypt (Egypt is a picture of the world). "Well," you say, "I certainly have left the world behind, I don't drink, I

don't swear, I don't do the things that the people of the world do. I belong to a church. I've been baptized, I'm a religious person." Are you a believer? "Well," you say, "aren't we all?" No, we are not all believers. There are many who are not believers. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Are you saved? Are you sure your sins are forgiven? Are you sure you are God's child? Now these were apostates, and that is why they were destroyed.

Then, in verse 6 we have another case, another example: "The angels which kept not their first estate [or their principality], but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Personally, I believe these are the same ones who are mentioned in Genesis 6 as the sons of God who lusted after the daughters of men, and as a result of this unnatural cohabitation there was produced a race of giants. The Lord, in order to preserve the purity of the human race and in order to keep the line of Seth pure from all this, sent the flood. You see, the Lord Jesus was to be born from Adam's descendants, from his son Seth, down through His descendant Abraham, through his descendant David, and so on down through the line until He was at last born of the virgin Mary. The Lord Jesus must come into the world through this line.

The devil apparently used these fallen angels; and remember this—all angels are not the angels of God. At least one-third of the angels followed Satan in his rebellion against God and these are the fallen angels who have left their habitation and are reserved in everlasting chains.

Don't ever say you don't believe in punishment. Do you know the same word is used to describe everlasting punishment as is used to describe everlasting life! And even God is everlasting! Of course punishment is everlasting. Why? Because sin is everlasting. If you die in your sins you will be a sinner forever. What do they do in hell? They weep and wail and gnash their teeth, and this indicates an anger and a bitterness against God. If you die in your sins you will never change. Oh, I tell you, my friend, if you haven't trusted Christ as your Saviour you ought to acknowledge yourself as a sinner and take the Lord Jesus right now and get free from that awful thing which will destroy you. They are reserved under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. We are told in 1 Corinthians 6 that we who are Christians are going to sit with the Lord at the judgment of the Great White Throne and judge angels. There is no salvation for angels; there is for you.

Lord, we thank Thee for salvation through our blessed Saviour. We thank Thee that God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son. Now we pray for Thy blessing on Thy Word, on saint and sinner. In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Chapter 5 Contending for the Faith

Looking at verse 3, we notice Jude continuing to exhort the people of God to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." It is an attempt by the Spirit of God to draw us back to the truths that have been given in the Word of God. Now, in Jude's day, they were already turning away from the Word of God. Certain men (mentioned in v. 4) had wormed their way in and were undermining the truth of

the Word of God. This is warned about also in Paul's letter to Timothy; Peter speaks about this; John in his first epistle tells about it; and now Jude tells us that just as we have had apostates in the past so we have now and will have for all of this present church age.

We notice in verse 5 that some of the apostates were people who came out of the land of Egypt. They professed to be of God, but were destroyed because they believed not. In verse 6 we saw that there were some angels who "kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation." We believe that these are the sons of God referred to in the sixth chapter of Genesis, who took wives from among the children of men. If it be objected that angels are sexless and therefore not capable of this, let it be remembered that angels ate food, and it is necessary for a spirit to take a body if he is to be seen. It is quite possible for angels to take a body so they can eat with men as they did with Abraham. We have reason to believe they could take a body in order to cohabit with women as they were said to do in the sixth of Genesis. This was the reason for the coming of the flood.

And now we have the third example in verse 7. "Even as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them in like manner, [this is the area now known as the Dead Sea] giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh," that is, unnatural sex relations. These are described in Romans 1—both men with men and man with beast. It is unspeakable how vile human beings can get when they turn away from the plan set forth by the Creator! The Lord has given to us some things which are lovely and good. They have been distorted and warped by men and the results of their turning against God and against God's ways, in verse 7, is that they are set forth

for an example “suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” A reckless abandon to lust—this was true in the days of Abraham and Lot, and Sodom and Gomorrah received fire from heaven in vengeance against that wickedness. This is true in America today. It is true in the world in the generation in which you and I live. The rebellion against God and against His order has led men into all kinds of unspeakable wickedness. We are told in verse 8, “Likewise also these filthy dreamers,” do three things: “defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.”

The defilement of the flesh, of course, has to do with their own actions with their own bodies. A man or woman may say, “This is my body. I can do with it as I like.” But remember, God gave you that body and that body is the house for your spirit. You are left here on this earth that you might take the Lord as your Saviour, that you might become a child of God, that you might be an educated spirit, that your spirit might come to know the Lord in a better way.

Your body should merely be the servant, the handmaiden of the spirit in order that you might be an honor to the Lord.

These people lived for the flesh. They despised dominion. That is, they have rejected God’s order; they have rejected God’s control; they do not want God to have any control over their lives. I wonder if I am talking to someone just now who is saying (not audibly but by your actions), “I want God to keep His nose out of my business.” My dear friend, you are making a terrible mistake when you despise the dominion of God over your life!

And then they speak evil of dignities—that is, against those whom God has placed in authority. “Yet,” Jude says, “Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.” We have here people who in disobedience to God, brought upon themselves divine retribution. First of all, we have a people in the past who were destroyed. These were the people we read about in verse 5: God “destroyed them that believed not.” The word “destroy” in the Bible never means to annihilate, but it means to spoil for its original purpose. We are told for instance that, when the Lord Jesus died on the cross, He destroyed him who had the power of death, that is the devil. Of course the devil still exists, but his power has been taken from him. He has been destroyed for his intended purpose. Then we read in verse 6 about some who are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. So there is a future day of retribution called here “the great day.” The Bible does not teach a general judgment; but it does teach that there is a day coming when God is going to judge the world, according to Acts 17:31, “by that Man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead.” Our blessed Lord Jesus is going to be the Judge of the quick and dead, of living and dead. This judgment is the judgment of the Great White Throne and is described in Revelation 20. Believers, Christians, are going to be associated with the Lord in this judgment according to 1 Corinthians 6, and this terrible judgment is still ahead.

These angels who sinned against the Lord so many centuries ago are now reserved in everlasting chains; they are kept in the bottomless pit; they are reserved unto that day.

You see, when a person dies without Christ (this is true of human beings as well as of these angels), his soul goes to hell. Hell is the temporary place, the present jail house in which souls are kept until the judgment of the Great White Throne. Then they will have their judgment, not to see if they are saved or lost (for they are already lost), but to see what their part will be in the lake of fire. The lake of fire is eternal. We are told in Revelation 20 that death and hell are then cast into the lake of fire. This is called in Jude 7, eternal fire. I will call your attention to this again. He speaks about everlasting chains; he speaks about eternal fire, and the same word is used to describe the duration of punishment as to describe the duration of happiness in heaven. The same word is used to describe the duration of God Himself, and the lake of fire is just as eternal as God Himself!

Now, it says that these people at Sodom and Gomorrah are suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. This means not simply that their villages, towns, and cities were destroyed and that they lie there in a state of ruin, but it means also that the persons themselves are suffering. They are conscious today in hell. This is a terrible thought! I want you to know, my friend, that the Lord Jesus went through the suffering of hell itself for you on the cross so that you never would need to endure the vengeance of eternal fire. We must remember that the Lord wants us to be familiar with the faith. He wants us to contend for it and to keep it in remembrance. He

wants us to be on guard against the ungodly, to have no confidence in the flesh.

He tells us that these people, these filthy dreamers who are defiling the flesh, despising dominion, speaking evil of dignities, should remember that Michael the archangel, great as he was, (and this is the only angel called an archangel in our Bible) disputed against the devil about the body of Moses. We wouldn't know about this except for the Book of Jude. There is some mention made of it in an apocryphal book but we have no reason, because of that, to accept the book as being authentic. It is simply that the Spirit of God took this one bit of information and gave it to Jude to put in the Word of God itself so that we do know this dispute took place. The reason for it we can't say. Some have supposed that it might be in order that Moses' body would be preserved and that he might appear with the Lord on the Mount of Transfiguration when he and Elias came there. Others have thought it might be because, if the people knew where the body of Moses was, this might result in a kind of idolatry. Whatever the reason, there was a dispute about it and his rebuke was, "The Lord rebuke thee." You see we are dealing, when we think of Satan and the supernatural, with powers beyond our strength, and we must turn to the Lord for protection and help. Not only is He our Saviour, but He is our keeper. We are perfectly safe in His hands. "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world."

Our Father, we thank Thee for our Saviour and for His triumph at Calvary. We thank Thee for the forgiveness of sins and a home in heaven and deliverance from eternal fire. We pray for those who are reading this just now for Thy blessing. In our Saviour's Name. Amen.

Chapter 6 Willfully Ignorant

The Book of Jude, with only twenty-five verses in it, is a very pertinent piece of literature. We have been going through it verse by verse, and have now reached verse 10. It is just as up-to-date, and modern, as today's newspaper. The things that were happening in the first century have continued to happen. They have increased at such a rate that the apostasy, the turning away from the Word of God, and the consequential immorality which is described in the Book of Jude is even more true in the twentieth century.

We have been reading about three classes of people illustrating the evil works and, as Peter speaks of them, evil teachers also. Jude says in verse 10: "These speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves." We are talking about some people who are wrong. First of all, they are wrong in their thinking. "They know not." Now there is no responsibility placed upon a person who is ignorant if there is no way of knowing, but if he is willfully ignorant then he has no excuse. We are told very plainly in Peter's second epistle (which is very much like Jude), "For this they willingly are ignorant." People willingly never even read it through! This is God's message to the world. Don't be willingly ignorant.

Secondly, they not only were ignorant of God's ways, but they were unwilling to be what God intended them to be. He put us here to be men. He gave us spirits; we are not like the brute beasts. We can fellowship with God, but we have turned away from Him and we know only the

things that are known naturally. We are not interested in spiritual things. This is the indictment against the world.

Then the third thing said about them is that they corrupt themselves. To corrupt is to make rotten. I know that isn't a nice word, and I know someone is going to get his feelings hurt by my saying this, but I am reading it from the Word of God. "In those things they corrupt themselves." A corrupt mind (for all sin starts with the mind, starts with an evil thought) can only produce corrupt actions which will eventually corrupt the whole character. There is only one solution for it. Anything that is corrupting is dead, but the Lord wants to give you life. You remember Lazarus was in the grave four days and his sister didn't even want the grave opened. She said, "Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days" (John 11:39). The Lord had them take the stone away and then He called Lazarus back to life. The Lord can take a corrupt sinner and make out of him what He wants him to be.

Now, verse 11 pronounces a woe. This is one of only two woes found outside of the Gospels and the book of the Revelation. It is not a common word but it is a solemn word. "Woe unto them!" Sorrow be to people like this. Why? First of all, "For they have gone in the way of Cain." Secondly, they have run "greedily after the error of Balaam for reward." Thirdly, they have "perished in the gainsaying [or backtalk] of Core."

First of all, Cain. What do we know about Cain? We have his history in the fourth chapter of Genesis. He was the first man born into the world. Adam and Eve, his parents, were created. The first man born was Cain. His name means "gotten from the Lord." When Adam and

Eve sinned against the Lord, He promised them a Messiah. He promised He would send a Saviour. When Cain was born Eve evidently thought the Saviour was come. What an awful mistake! He turned out to be a murderer and not a saviour.

Cain was not an irreligious man. We must never think of Cain as being a person who had no thoughts of God and no interest in God's things. He was religious. God had explained the need for sacrifice. He taught it in furnishing the first garments for Adam and Eve. When they had sinned against the Lord and recognized their nakedness and made for themselves fig leaf aprons, God made for them coats of skin necessitating the death of animals in order that they might be taught the way of sacrifice. We know this from Hebrews 11:4 where he tells us, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain." The only way you can do anything by faith is to do it because you believe God's Word and you believe what God says. So God did say what they should do, but Cain decided to take his own way. That's why it is called, in verse 11 in the Book of Jude, "the way of Cain."

Now, the way of Cain is the way of self-righteous religion—no blood sacrifice. He brought to God the fruit of the ground. He was a dirt farmer. Abel was tending sheep; however, there were sheep enough for both of them. Cain had offered his sacrifice of his own good works, of the things he had produced out of the ground, and the ground had been cursed. Don't forget that! God had cursed the ground for man's sake. What he brought to God was the fruit of a cursed earth and the fruit of his own labor. But after he had done this God said to him, "If thou hast not done well." The Revised Version says,

“There is a sin offering crouching at your door.” You can take that little lamb and offer it. It is not too late. But Cain would not have God’s way. He did not want an animal sacrifice. Now you know, of course, that the blood of animals never put away sin. We are told this plainly in the Book of Hebrews. It simply covered sin. We might say they paid the interest but never paid anything on the principal. By offering these animal sacrifices the people showed they were expecting the true Lamb of God to come into this world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Romans 3 tells us that the Lord Jesus died “for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.” That is, sins that were committed before the Cross. Abel offered a sacrifice of a lamb. The lamb didn’t take away his sins, but it covered his sins until the Lord Jesus died on the cross and then his sins were taken away. We are told, “By this sacrifice He being dead yet speaketh” (Heb. 11:4).

Cain made the terrible mistake of offering his own works to God for salvation. Now, maybe I hear someone saying, “Well, after all, if we don’t save ourselves, who is going to save us? Isn’t it up to us to do the best we can and try to make up for the things that are wrong? If our good deeds outweigh our bad ones, won’t we be saved at the last?” Well, my friends, that is the picture of Egypt. The Egyptians have a picture of something like that on one of their tombs showing the soul of men being weighed against his good works. It is very good heathen religion! But it isn’t the teaching of the Bible at all! Salvation is by grace through faith. We are told this very plainly in Ephesians 2 verses 8 and 9. We are told in Titus 3:5 that it is “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.” Salvation is

through the precious blood of Christ, and when you are willing to receive the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, God will take your sins away for the sake of His Son who died in your place.

But there is one other thing about the way of Cain that we must not overlook. In 1 John 3:12 we are told we are not to belike Cain, who was “of that wicked one.” That is, he was a child of the devil and he killed his brother Abel. Why did he kill him? This verse says it was because Abel’s deeds were righteous and his own were wicked. So not only does self-righteousness not produce salvation, but it brings a hatred of those who are saved. If you go on as an unsaved sinner, if you go on as a religious person trusting in your own good works, you will find yourself hating those who are truly born again. You will find yourself hating the preaching of the Gospel. Maybe someone is just about ready to tune me out now because he thinks, “Why, this man is very conceited to say there is only one way to be saved—through accepting Christ.” Well, this is what the Bible says. Our Saviour Himself said, “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me” (John 14:6). Don’t show any hatred against those who believe in the Lord. Just acknowledge yourself to be wrong and turn to the Lord for salvation, for there is still salvation offered. A wonderful lesson can be learned here, the lesson of substitution, the lesson that Christ died in my place, and that by taking my place on the cross He put away my sins by the sacrifice of Himself. This is the lesson for unbelievers.

There is a good lesson here for Christians to expect persecution. The world is still full of people like Cain, of religious people without Christ. Expect persecution, for

the next verse in 1 John 3 says, “Marvel not... if the world hate you.” Our Saviour said that just before He went to the cross and sixty years later the Spirit of God had John write it down in this Epistle. It is still true in the twentieth century: “Marvel not... if the world hate you.” Expect persecution because you are on the Lord’s side.

Our Father, we thank Thee for Thy Word and we ask Thee to bless it to each one now. We pray that if any conviction has been wrought salvation will follow. We pray that Thy children will go on well for Thee, that many will be won for Christ. We pray in the precious Name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.

Chapter 7 The Error of Balaam

Jude is the inspired message of the man who was born as the half brother of our Lord. He was a son of Joseph and Mary and did not believe in the Saviour while He was here on earth. After the resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the dead, Jude accepted Him and was found with the rest of the believers, in the first chapter of Acts. He was a man who was given a message especially important in that day, and in our day as well, concerning the apostasy. Apostates are people who turn away from the Word of God, who reject the teaching of Scripture, who give up everything we have in the Word of God.

We have had the characteristics of three groups of people and now we have begun to study three individuals in verse 11. We have read about Cain. Let’s look at the next one: “Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward.” Who was Balaam? He was a false prophet. He never knew the Lord. He did not know

enough to do what God told him to do, but the dumb ass that he rode on was more intelligent than he was, and saved his life. Read the whole story in Numbers 22 through 25 when you have time. Then turn over to Numbers chapter 31, verse 16, and you will notice that this man did some very wicked things. First of all, he was going to try to curse God's people, Israel. He wanted to do this for reward as we read here in verse 11. Balak the king of the Moabites offered him quite a handsome sum of money if he would bring a curse to God's earthly people, Israel.

Balak wasn't the last person to hate Israel, and there are still more to come. The Antichrist is going to turn against them. No person has ever hated God's earthly people of Israel and prospered. Make sure you are not on the side against them. We, as Christians, should be praying for Israel and doing everything we can to show kindness to them and perhaps win some of them to faith in our Saviour and theirs. We owe a great deal to the nation.

Balaam tried to curse the race of Israel and was not successful. He gave us seven parables. God overruled in each case and made him say good things when he wanted to say bad things. When he failed to curse the people he had a scheme. His scheme was this: he said to Balak the king of the Moabites, "You get the women of your nation to entice these men, these Israelites, and then, when they have sinned against the Lord, the Lord will do the damage. By getting them to sin you will bring disgrace on the nation and you will bring the curse of God against them." So this is exactly what Balak did.

The end of the story of Balaam is a very sad one. He finally died along with the rest of the enemies of the Lord, even though he said, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." This is true of many an apostate. Most religious people who turn away from the Word of God are those who have said, "I would like to die like the righteous," but they don't want to believe like the righteous. You cannot be righteous unless you are a believer. You have to accept God's message, and Balaam was not prepared for the Word of God. God told him in the first place, "Don't even go with these messengers of Balak." "But," he said, "I want to go. There is money in it for me." Finally God permitted him to go. On the way there, God set things in his road to stop him; but he wanted his own way, he wanted to do as he pleased, and God let him do so.

Now Jude said, all apostates are running "greedily after the error of Balaam for reward." This is the attitude of many people in the religious world today: "What is there in it for me?" There are many people who join a church simply because it will help their business. There are men who enter the ministry (and I certainly do not mean to cast any discredit upon those who really love the Lord and who sincerely seek to serve Him and speak well of Him), but you know and I know that there are many who enter what is called the ministry and take the place of being ministers of the Gospel, who are not ministers of the Gospel at all. We are warned against them in Paul's second letter to the Corinthians.

Here he said that the ministers of Satan have transformed themselves into the ministers of righteousness. Then he said, "Don't be surprised at this because Satan himself is transformed into an angel of

light.” Satan does not always appear as a roaring lion (as he is called in 1 Peter 5) seeking whom he may devour. A great deal of the time he appears as an angel of light, and he is much more successful as an angel of light than he is as a roaring lion. In the first century or two of the history of the people of God, he was a roaring lion trying to destroy the people of God by persecution. When this failed he began to infiltrate the church and then the sad history of the darkness that came upon the professing church you know as well as I do.

Now, we are to learn some lessons from the error of Balaam. We are to learn, first of all, not to be blind to grace. He couldn’t believe that God could forgive. He figured if they sinned, they were done, they were doomed. There was no way of getting around it. You earn what you get, you get what you earn. Are you blind to grace? Have you learned that God doesn’t save people who deserve it, but He saves people who receive His Son as their Saviour?

There are other things said about Balaam in the New Testament. In 2 Peter 2 we are told about the “way of Balaam.” In Revelation 2:14 we are told about the “doctrine of Balaam.” The way of Balaam was covetousness; the doctrine of Balaam was corrupting the people of God by getting them to mix in with the world. If you are a Christian, let me tell you that God intended you to live a separated life.

Let’s learn some more lessons from Balaam. First of all, beware of false prophets. All prophets are not the prophets of God. Secondly, be established in grace. Understand the grace of God. Don’t depend upon your own good works, but rather upon God’s free grace.

Thirdly, stay as far away as you can from covetousness—hate it. Whether you are a believer or not, covetousness will wreck your life! Last of all, maintain separation. The people of God failed because they were not living a separated life. Separation should be, first of all, unto the Lord, and then from evil.

But, in this same verse we have some who perished in the gainsaying of Korah. His history is given in Numbers 16. He was a cousin of Moses and Aaron. He had a job to do. He was part of the Levite tribe, but wasn't satisfied with what he had to do, and he rebelled against God's authority and intruded himself into the priesthood. He said, "I am going to be a priest. I have just as much right to this as Aaron has."

"Gainsaying" (which is an old English word) means "talking back." If you put the letter "a" at the beginning of it, you will have its meaning: "again saying," or talking back. He was a man who was not willing to believe what God said and take God's Word and God's authority for things, but he had to have his way. I wonder what your attitude is. Are you willing to accept God's Word as authoritative, or do you have to have your way? Are you willing to believe what God says, or do you question it?

This man, in sinning against authority and in intruding into the priesthood, was destroyed. A terrible thing came upon him and his two companions, Dathan and Abiram—fire from heaven and the opening of the earth which swallowed them alive. The only ones who were spared were those who accepted the Lord's offer. The Lord said, "If you will get up away from your fathers' tents, I will spare your lives."

The children of Korah did this. They later became singers in the Temple. You will find several of the Psalms inscribed “To the Sons of Korah.” It is spelled Korah in the Old Testament, and Core here in Jude, is the Greek spelling. The sons of Korah, did not take sides with their rebel father but took sides with the Lord and were spared judgment and were permitted to sing.

What lessons may we learn from this? First of all, let’s learn that God has authority. You are not going to be saved your way. You are going to have to accept God’s way of salvation. You are going to have to be saved the Lord’s way. You are going to have to receive Christ as your Saviour.

Then God has His way of service. There must be humility and willingness on the part of every true believer to serve the Lord in His own way. Then we need to recognize our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only priest who has any authority. The priesthood of Aaron has disappeared. There are men who claim to be priests today, but their claims are not based on Scripture. The priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who offered Himself without spot to God and who died for our sins, heads up the priesthood of all true believers.

Remember, too, that the redeemed children of the rebel were now permitted to serve the Lord in song. I happen to be a redeemed child of a rebel—Adam. Having received the Lord as my Saviour, I too have the privilege of singing His praises and we are going to do it forever, brother and sister. We joined the choir of Korah’s sons when we received Christ as our Saviour.

Lord, we thank Thee for Thy loving kindness to us. We thank Thee for the warnings of Scripture. We thank

Thee for the way of salvation. We thank Thee that Thou hast given Thy Son to be our Saviour and that Thou hast given us opportunity to serve Thee in Thy way. Bless the saved and save the lost, in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Chapter 8 Moses - Enoch - Adam

The much neglected Book of Jude is a good preparation for the Book of the Revelation because Revelation tells of the things that are going to happen following the coming of the Lord, while Jude tells us the condition of things just before the return of the Lord. He warns us about the apostasy we have been seeing.

Now I mentioned to you previously that there is a pattern that runs through the Book of Jude. There are at least a dozen triplets—three things mentioned together. We had three classes of beings in verses 5, 6 and 7. We have three sinners in verse 11. Now there are three other men mentioned in this book, and while they are not mentioned together and not very much is said about them, it is certainly no accident that God has included the names of three Old Testament saints—three men who believed God. We are going to look at them.

The first one is in verse 9, "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses." Then, in verse 14, "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam." Now you have all three names. They are mentioned in just the opposite order of their living. Adam was, of course, the first man. Enoch was the seventh generation from Adam, and Moses lived hundreds of years later. They they are mentioned in the other order: Moses, Enoch, and Adam. Let's see a little bit about this man, Moses, first of all.

Moses was the lawgiver. Moses is an interesting picture of the Law, as well as being the man through whom God gave the Law. You see, Moses was born under sentence of death. Pharaoh had said that the boy babies of the children of Israel should be put to death. He was born under the sentence of death.

He died for disobedience because he refused to honor the Lord before the people. He was 120 years of age, but his natural force was not abated and his eye was not dim. He was taken away for disobedience. We are not critical of him—he was probably the greatest man in the Old Testament, but men fail. He was a redeemed man—he was redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. We have this in the twelfth chapter of Exodus. He, like the rest of the children of Israel, went out of the land through the redemptive power and through the blood of the Lamb.

He was a man of faith, according to Hebrews 11. He did two things: he refused certain things, and he chose certain things. If you are going to amount to anything for God, you are going to have to learn to refuse some things and to choose other things. At the end of Moses' life, according to Deuteronomy 34:5, 6, he was buried by the Lord Himself, undoubtedly to prevent the children of Israel from falling into idolatry over his grave.

Moses appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration and in Luke 9 (one of the three places where the Transfiguration is mentioned), we are told he not only appeared there with Elias, but they talked about the decease of the Lord Jesus—about the death of the Lord Jesus which was to take place a very short time thereafter. This was of great interest to Moses. Although Moses was used of God to give the Law, we are told “the

Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." The Law could never save anyone. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight" (Rom. 3:20). "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life" (2 Cor. 3:6). If you are trying to keep the Law for salvation, remember this: "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Moses wasn't saved by the Law. He failed, and he sinned against God. Moses was saved just as you and I are—by grace through the death, burial and resurrection of our blessed Lord Jesus.

So there are some wonderful lessons to be learned from this man Moses. We can't go into them all, but certainly there is the lesson of salvation, of redemption by blood. Then there is the lesson of a life of faith, for he is included in Hebrews 11 among the heroes of faith. He did a great many things and he did them by faith—because he believed God. Then there is the lesson of discipline. Although he belonged to the Lord, and the Lord took him home to heaven, still he had to suffer discipline when he was disobedient. If you are God's child, you are God's child forever. If you are a disobedient child, you will have to be disciplined. You will have to be corrected. This may be in a gentle way, or it may have to be in a severe way.

Certainly we can learn a lesson of future glory because Moses and Elias were there on the Mount of Transfiguration. So were Peter, James and John, and although Moses and Elias did not live at the same time as each other, and certainly not with the apostles, they all knew each other. When we get to heaven we are all going to know each other—that is certain.

The second man mentioned is Enoch. He has a very short history. There are only six verses about this man in the whole of the Bible, and yet he was a man who had a wonderful history. His history is in two parts: the first part was before he knew the Lord (the first sixty-five years of his life). The last three hundred years of his life he “walked with God.” Now, if 365 sounds like a long time to live, remember this was before the flood when the years of men ran into the 900’s. Adam lived to be 930. Enoch’s son was Methuselah. This was a mark of Enoch’s faith when he named him this because Methuselah means, “at his death, it shall come.” At the death of Methuselah the flood came! Maybe this is why God allowed him to live on for 969 years!

While Enoch had a short history compared to the others of his day, he had a very wonderful history, for when his son was born he began to walk with God. We are told very plainly that two cannot walk together except they be agreed (Amos 3:3). There is no way for you to have fellowship with God unless something has been done first of all about your sins. You cannot ignore your sins: “God requireth that which is past” (Eccles. 3:15). When you acknowledge yourself as a sinner and receive Christ as your Saviour, then the way is open for you to walk with God. But if you are to continue to walk with God, you must continue to confess any sin that comes up in your life and keep things out of your life that will hinder your fellowship with the Lord. It is a wonderful thing to walk with God, which means to go on well with Him.

Of course, walking with God resulted in his speaking for God. We have part of his message given here in verses 14 and 15: “Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to

convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.” Enoch had a message—it was a message of judgment. He said exactly what needed to be said. He was a man who walked with God and spoke for God, and he was taken to heaven without dying. This is a wonderful picture of our own translation, for we believe that the Lord is going to come, and that some of us will go to heaven without dying. We find this in 1 Corinthians 15 and in 1 Thessalonians 4. So we learn the lesson of conversion, of walking with God, and witnessing for God, and of the blessed hope when we think about Enoch.

Now, the third man mentioned was Adam. You know the story of Adam, the first man created, and of his fall. Adam is called the federal head of the race—that is, he was the beginning of this race, and we are all descended from him and we are all like him. We have Adam’s sinful nature. We also have inherited death from Adam, for “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin... for that all have sinned” (Rom. 5:12).

Now there is another Adam mentioned. In 1 Corinthians 15 the Lord Jesus Himself is called the “last Adam,” “the second Man.” The Lord Jesus is the Head of a race also. Which race do you belong to? Are you still in the generation of Adam? Or are you in the generation of Christ? Have you been born again? The Lord Jesus said to Nicodemus, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

Not only do we receive new life in the Lord Jesus, but we are going to receive a new body through Him. That is

why, in 1 Corinthians 15, you have Christ contrasted with Adam. In Romans 5 the contrast is between the spiritual relationship with either Adam or Christ. In 1 Corinthians 15 it is the physical relationship between either Adam or Christ. So, from these federal heads, we receive either death or life, depending on whether we remain as a child of Adam or become a child of God.

We also learn the wonderful lesson of complete restoration for believers. Not only have we been transferred into a new family by the new birth, but one of these days we are going to have new bodies, bodies like unto His body of glory. We are of the earth, earthy; but we shall be of the heavenly when we have bodies like the Lord Jesus.

Isn't it wonderful that God gave us these three men to picture these three lessons! If you are not a believer, do take the Lord Jesus right away. If you are, show by your life that you are walking with God.

Our Father, we ask Thee to bless Thy Word to us. Again we pray for those who are not saved, that they might come to Christ. And we pray for Thy dear children, that we might live lives that will please Thee. In the Name of the Saviour. Amen.

Chapter 9 Fruitless

We are going to look at seven things in the book of Jude which are said about those who are unbelievers and against whom we are warned in this book. Jude is the book of warnings, a book of warnings against the men who have wormed their way in (as we read in v. 4), gotten in among God's people, men who do not really believe the Bible, who do not believe the Lord, and their

lives prove it. We are going to see seven ways in which the lives of unbelievers show they are not believers. “By their fruits ye shall know them,” the Lord said (Matt. 7:16-20).

In verse 8 we read, “Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.” They are called “dreamers.” The word “filthy” is in italics which means it is not in the original. It is omitted from the more critical texts, the revised versions. Of course they are filthy, but that isn’t the point. The point is that they are dreamers. That is, they are living in unreality. Back in the twenty-eighth chapter of Isaiah we read about a man who was hungry and he ate in his dream, but he awakened still hungry. This is the way of the world. How many people there are living in unreality, thinking they are getting something out of life, thinking this is really living. They are going to awaken one of these days, and what a sad awakening it will be because they are just living in a dream—they are not facing things as they really are. You should find out for sure where you stand in relation to God. You should find out for sure about your future. Don’t trust it to some man or some church. You are responsible to turn to the Word of God and find out for yourself. In the sixteenth chapter of Luke, our Saviour tells us about a man who lived sumptuously, enjoyed life and then he died; and then it says, “In hell he lifted up his eyes.” He awakened in hell! I don’t want to hurt anyone’s feelings, but I want to tell you that you are responsible to find out for sure about these things. Don’t be a dreamer.

In the second place, in verse 10 they are called “brute beasts.” “But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts,

in those things they corrupt themselves." A brute beast is simply a beast which is insensible to spiritual things. You may think a great deal of your dog, but when he dies he will just be dead. There is no "doggy heaven," there is no place for animals after death. They are just animals.

You and I are not like this. When God made Adam, He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul. All human beings are going to exist forever somewhere. We are not brute beasts! Why should we act like brute beasts? I know our young people are being taught that our ancestors originally were beasts, and so they ought not to be surprised if they feel a little bit like acting like beasts and their consciences ought not to be bothered by it. This is a wicked thing to teach young people. We are responsible people. We were not made like brute beasts. "God hath made man upright," the Book of Ecclesiastes says, "but they have sought out many inventions."

These people are insensible to spiritual things. They may be perfectly sensible to all that's going on around them. They are very alert as to making money and enjoying the pleasures of life, but so far as God is concerned, they never lift their eyes toward heaven. They are like brute beasts. They even eat their meals that way, without looking up in thanksgiving.

In verse 12 they are called "spots in your feasts of charity." "Spots" is a word which is also translated "hidden rocks on which boats might be wrecked." Feasts of charity were the times when the Christians got together in the first century and had fellowship together over a meal. We do this sometimes, don't we? Yet, even

in the midst of these, there may be people who instead of being an ornament to the grace of God (and we ought to be this because He says we should adorn the doctrine of the Lord Jesus), may be just a spot. You may be just a hindrance. This means, of course, a false profession.

Notice that these people are feeding themselves without fear—that means they are thoroughly selfish. Selfishness is really the heart of all sin. People steal because they want something that belongs to someone else. They kill because someone is in their road and hindering their purposes. All sin is the result of selfishness.

Then these people are called, in verse 12, “clouds without water.” In the parallel passage, in 2 Peter we read about wells without water. You expect water from a well, you expect water from a cloud. I remember the terrible clouds that came over during the dust storm days in the thirties, and I recall how we hoped there might be a little rain. This is unfulfilled promise—a cloud but no water, a profession of being a child of God, but no refreshment for anyone else. Are you genuine?

There is a great deal said about hypocrites in the church. Some people say, “I never go to church because the people there are all hypocrites.” They know this isn’t true! There are hypocrites in the church—but there are hypocrites in lodges, and there are hypocrites in politics. There are just hypocrites. Many people, in fact all of us, at some time or other are hypocritical. This isn’t going to excuse you. You have to be smaller than something if you are going to hide behind it. Don’t be a hypocrite yourself—be what you are. The Lord would like you to be a cloud filled with water. He would like you to be a refreshment to others.

Then they are called “trees whose fruit withereth”—that is, autumnal trees—“without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots.” Works? Oh, yes, lots of works, but no fruit. Anyone can do good works, but only a Christian can produce fruit and that fruit is produced, according to Galatians 5, by the Holy Spirit living within us. The fruit of the Spirit is what makes man Christlike. You will only be like the Lord Jesus as the Holy Spirit works within you. If you have never been born again you do not have His Holy Spirit. “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His” (Rom. 8:9).

Then they are called “raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame” (v. 13). Now you know that the sea cannot rest. Isaiah 57 has something to say about this. The last two verses of that chapter tell us, “The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked” (Isa. 57:20, 21). “Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame.” You know, we talk about whatever is on our heart, whatever is in our mind. All you have to do is listen to an unsaved person a few minutes and you know that he is just foaming out his own shame. The word here is in the plural. It is really “foaming out their shames,” because their shame is different. Perhaps you would be ashamed to be the kind of a sinner another person is, and yet you too are without rest, a raging wave of the sea. The Lord Jesus said, “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28).

The last description of unbelievers is inverse 13: “wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.” When God put the planets and stars in the universe, He put them in their orbits, but you

have seen “shooting stars,” meteorites. They are not in orbit, they are just plunging. They plunge into the atmosphere of this world and they go out in a flash. God says to these people who wander out of their place, who are unwilling to be guided by God, who are unwilling to allow God to control their lives, who are unwilling to receive Christ as Saviour and Lord, for them is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

If you have found yourself to be a dreamer, awaken! Let the Lord Jesus give you light and life. If you are a brute beast, remember the Lord can turn you by His Spirit, through His grace, into a Christlike child of God. Isn't this wonderful, that God can take people who are more like beasts than men and make them more like God than men! Spots can be turned into adornment. Waterless clouds can be turned into refreshment, refreshing hearers with the Water of Life. When you hear the Word of God yourself, you can pass it on to another one and you refresh someone else. I hope I am able to give you a little of the Water of Life. Then, fruitless trees can be turned into fruit-bearing branches in the True Vine, according to John 15. If you are joined to the Lord Jesus, you can bring forth fruit that will please God and refresh men. Raging waves of the sea can be turned into restful and patient believers. Wandering stars can get into orbit. We can become obedient light-bearers like the sun and stars, all in their place, obeying the Lord who put them there, who governs men and would like to govern you. So we have the sevenfold description of what sin has done to the human race and, in contrast to this, the thinking about what God can do to make you what you ought to be. The question is, are you willing to receive Christ as your Saviour? Are you willing to allow the Holy

Spirit to make of you what God would like to make of you? If you are a believer, are you willing to be subject to Him?

Our Father, we thank Thee for Thy Word. It rebukes us. Help us to accept it. Change those who need to be changed. Save the lost. Revive and restore and help Thy children, we pray in the precious Name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.

Chapter 10 Mockers in the Last Times

Jude is a book that is suited to our day because it warns about the things that are happening in the religious world today. In verse 3 Jude says it was needful for him that he write and exhort the believers, that they earnestly contend for the faith. He tells them that certain men had crept in unawares, had wormed their way in among the believers. But by the time he gets to the fourteenth verse where he quotes Enoch, he tells us that these people are not only coming in and their lives are not right, but they are getting blatant and open about it. They are speaking outwardly. There are hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him, against the Lord. Verse 16 says these are “murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouths speak great swelling words, having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage”—that is, they are interested in people simply because it will bring some advantage to themselves. They are willing to butter someone up, they are willing to flatter people, they are willing to cater to others because it will bring something to themselves. They have no thought of right or wrong, merely of selfishness. But, beloved, remember the words that were spoken before by the

apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was spoken by at least three of them: Paul, Peter, and John all warned about this. “How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit” (Jude 18, 19).

Seven things are said here to be the characteristics of these apostates. Apostasy means a turning away. An apostate is a person who professed to be a Christian but is not genuine, never having been really born again. He turns away and hinders the work of the Lord instead of helping it. We have already read seven things about them that tell us the way they act. These things tell us more of their attitudes. Of course, there are some outward manifestations of it, but we know how they feel by reading these things.

First of all, they are murmurers. Most people in this country feel there is nothing wrong with a little complaining. In fact, the officers in our armies tell us this is healthy. The soldiers have to complain a little. If they are not complaining, they get worried. They must be grumbling a little, otherwise they think they are not normal. Think of it! When the Lord has so much to say against complaining, we think it is normal!

What about murmuring? We are told in Numbers chapter 21 that God was so displeased with the murmuring of the children of Israel that He sent serpents upon them. That was the time when Moses had to lift up the serpent of brass on the pole for their salvation. In John 3:14 and 15, the Lord used this as a picture of Himself being lifted up on the cross. So, you

see, murmuring is a very serious thing in God's thoughts.

Murmurers and complainers are mentioned together here in verse 16. They are not the same thing.

Murmuring is something which is usually done under the breath. In fact, the word is a word that carries that thought—just grumbling to ourselves. But it isn't to ourselves, it is toward God. Murmuring is complaining against God. It is saying that God is not giving me what I deserve. My dear friend, if you got what you deserved, you know what it would be—and I know what I would get. We have no right to murmur against God. Instead of murmuring against God and against His Word, we ought to bow to His Word and bow to His will, and accept it as being right because He is God.

Then there are complainers. This has to do with their fellowmen, for complaining is usually done to some person. In our stores, we have a complaint department. These complainers have a great deal to say against the Lord and against His ways. This is a sin. If you say anything about God, His ways, or His Word to someone else, it should be to help them. Complaining can do nothing but hinder. It shows the attitude of the heart. And then these people are said to be "walking after their own ungodly lusts." Now, the word "lust" in the Bible is a word which is used for strong desire. It may be either good or bad. We are told that the "flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh." The flesh, or our base nature, our evil nature, has strong desires. The Holy Spirit has some strong desires, too, but, of course His are right. You have some strong desires, haven't you? Would you be ashamed to have them known? Well, one of these days they will be known. These people are

openly walking after their own lusts. I said something to a college fellow recently about the way he was living, and he said, "I take my kicks where I can get them." In other words, "I am going to do as I please, I am going to walk after my own lusts. If this is what I want, I am going to take it. I am going to get what I want in this life." This is not the way of a Christian. It is certainly not the way of our blessed Lord, for we are told, "Even Christ pleased not Himself (Rom. 15:3).

Then these people are very wordy; they have a great deal to say. They are called mockers in verse 18, these people who speak great swelling words as we read in verse 16. They have a great deal to say about their own opinion of things. It is wonderful to live in a country where we can express our opinions. I am very thankful that I live in a country where we have liberty of speech. Remember this though, liberty of speech does not give you the privilege of speaking against God, nor against His Word. Let's be careful we don't mislead others by our wordiness, by our saying what we believe and what we want and what we think. Let's find out what's right from God's Word. Then notice how they "have men's persons in admiration because of advantage." They flatter each other, they exalt man in pride and vainglory. It is almost sickening to hear an introduction of some important person. He is built up to the skies. He is lauded as being one of the greatest personages who ever lived. What is man anyway? The Bible says, "What is man that Thou takest notice of him?" (Psalm 8:4).

What is man but a creature with a limited amount of time here on this earth, dependent on God for the very breath he breathes? If he is intelligent, where did he get his intelligence? Paul says, "What hast thou that thou

didst not receive?" Let's stay away from pride and vainglory, my fellow Christian, because God hates this thing and He criticizes these people for their show of pride and vainglory.

And then these people are divisive. They separate. Verse 19 tells us that they separate themselves—that is, put themselves in a special class. There are many people who are denying the Word of God who are writers of books, who are public speakers and who are leaders in religious circles today. They begin their tirade against the Word of God by saying, "All scholars agree that the Bible is no longer dependable." This is a lie! There are many scholars who believe the Word of God and believe it implicitly. Men have no right to speak for Christians when they are apostates, and yet apostates put themselves in a special class. Not only do they do this, but they are divisive of the church of God, for in putting themselves in a certain class and saying, "We represent the church," they are casting out those who are simple believers who stay with the Word of God. So, through their false teaching they are dividing the people of God.

Then we are told they are sensual, having not the Spirit. The word sensual is a word which means natural and it comes from the word soul. We don't have any word like this, but we need one. We need the word soulical in contrast to the word spiritual. A spiritual person is one who is controlled by the Holy Spirit. A soulical person is one who is controlled by his own feelings. The soul is the part of man with which we feel. We love or hate or enjoy or feel strongly about this or that or another thing. These men go entirely by their own feelings and their own thoughts, simply because they do not have the Spirit. We are told in Romans 8, "If any man have not

the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” The only power for godly living is in the presence of the Holy Spirit. We are not told to try to keep the Law. We are not told to try to be what we should be. We are told to receive Christ as our Saviour; and, when we do so, the Holy Spirit enters in, and He enables us as believers to be what we ought to be. These people are not right simply because they do not have the Spirit of God. If they do not have the Spirit of God, they do not understand God’s Word because the “natural man receiveth 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). Have you been born of the Spirit of God? Do you really belong to the Lord, or do you just belong to a church? Get it settled. If you are God’s child, avoid these things that characterize the ungodly.

Our Father, we ask Thee to save the lost. And again we pray for Thy dear children, that we may avoid these things that are so prevalent in the world today. Bless Thy Word to us, we pray in our Saviour’s Name. Amen.

Chapter 11 Sanctified

We have been studying a great deal about the apostates because this is the subject of the Book of Jude, but there are some things we must not pass over that have to do with true believers. The Word of God is written in this style. You often find great contrasts in the same book or in the same chapter. When he tells us about the apostates, which means those who have turned away from the Word of God and rejected it, he also tells us about those who have stayed by the Word of God and whom he is exhorting in this epistle to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. Let

us just look back over the book and see what we can learn about believers—first of all, as to our standing. What does he say about believers? In the very beginning of the book we read, “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.” Then we read at the end of verse 3 that the faith was “once delivered unto the saints.”

Who is he talking about here? Well, he is talking about all believers. There is no such thing as dividing the people of God into groups, into sects, and denominations in the New Testament. This has all been added, this has all come in to spoil the lovely original unity of the children of God. The Lord’s prayer for us, in the seventeenth chapter of John, was “that they all may be one.” This is what He still wants. There are people who are proud of belonging to this or that organization which shuts out other children of God. Let’s keep away from this. Let’s remember that all children of God are called living saints. “The faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). Paul writes his epistle to the Corinthians (who were anything but saintly in their behavior!) and addresses them as those who are called saints—set apart unto God, to be wholly for Him and this is what God intends for all those who receive Him as their Saviour.

That is why we are said, in verse 1 to be “sanctified by God the Father.” Sanctification began in the mind of God, long before we were saved. We are told this at least twice in the New Testament. In Paul’s writings, he tells us we are set apart by the Holy Spirit before ever we are saved (2 Thess. 2:13). Peter tells us the same thing (1

Peter 1:2). If the Spirit of God had not set you apart, you never would have come to God in the first place.

Then we are said to be sanctified by God the Father who has set us apart for a special purpose. We are also said to be sanctified by God the Father by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all, and through His blood (Heb. 10:10; 13:12). Then we are told we are sanctified by the Word of God (1 Tim. 4:5). We are also told to sanctify ourselves (1 Peter 3:15). This is a daily setting apart of ourselves to God. If you are saved by God's grace, you belong to God and He wants you all for Himself. When I got married I expected that my wife would be mine and mine alone, and so it has been for over one third of a century. This is God's way with us—He wants us for Himself, and the world should have no part of you.

Then we are "preserved in Jesus Christ." We preserve fruit by putting it in jars. God preserves sinners by saving them and putting them in Christ. The Revised Version says, "Preserved in Jesus Christ." Both are true. We are told in Peter's first epistle that we are kept by the power of God. Salvation is not something that you do, it is something God does for you. You are called to be an obedient child, but you are preserved, you are kept by God's power through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then we are said to be called ones at the end of verse 1. I remember when I first heard the call, when the Lord Jesus called me to Himself: "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). Each of the disciples had at least two calls. They were called to salvation, and then they were called to His service. I hope I am speaking to some

today who have listened to God's call, not only to save you but to serve Him. We are even said to be called unto suffering (1 Peter 2:21).

Then Jude speaks of himself as a servant. This is literally the bond slave of Jesus Christ. It is true that we have been liberated by redemption. We are perfectly free, but our love for the Lord should make us want to be His bond slave. You should so love our Lord, you should be drawn to Him and you should not want anything except His will. Our Saviour was this way toward His Father. He said, "I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me" (John 5:30). In Romans 15:3, we are told even Christ pleased not Himself.

Jude speaks of himself here as being the brother of James; but, of course, in the spiritual sense he is a brother to each one of those who are the children of God. You and I, as children of God, are brothers in Christ. Now I do not believe in the universal fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man, simply because it is not taught in the Bible. Some people are called the children of wrath. That is where I was when God found me. Some are called the children of the devil. They certainly are not the children of God. But we are the children of God, we are told in Galatians, by faith in Christ Jesus. Has this happened to you? Then you are my brother in Christ. It is a wonderful thing to be brothers in the Lord.

A little later on Jude speaks about the feasts of charity which the Christians had. They enjoyed fellowship together. They ate together and enjoyed the place of brothers in the family of God. We should be so thankful that there are other Christians with whom we can have

fellowship. You can argue with any Christian you meet; you can find something to disagree about, if this is what you want to do. But let's look for things on which we can agree. Let's look for things we can talk about—and certainly the Lord Jesus is our chief topic. I can have a wonderful time with any born again Christian talking about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then, notice that they are called “beloved.” This is found three times: in verses 3, 17, and 20. We are called the beloved. I suppose this means not only beloved by Jude as his brothers and sisters, but beloved of God. We are God's beloved ones! “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). We are also the beloved of the Lord Jesus, for the Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me. “Christ... loved the church, and gave Himself for it” (Eph. 5:25). One of these days the Lord is coming back to claim His church, to take us home to be with Himself. We are the beloved of the Lord. We should be enjoying the love of God as He says in verse 21: “Keep yourselves in the love of God.” So we ought to be enjoying the place that we have.

Now we have been given certain responsibilities. Our common salvation, as it is called in verse 3, means that we enjoy in common many things which belong to all believers. (It does not mean it is ordinary or commonplace but it means that it is all ours together. Since we have this, we have a responsibility to contend for the faith. We have to stand for what we believe. There are many enemies of the faith. There are many who would turn us away from God, and so God has given us some very stern warnings in this book.

One of these is, “Beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles” (v. 17). We have a responsibility to know the Word of God. Some Christians have never even read the Bible through. Some read it very little. Some depend on hearing something when they go to church. You have a responsibility to know the words which have been spoken by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ and of remembering them. Perhaps you could remember them better if you memorized some of them. I am sure you could remember them better if you read them more often and if you speak of them to others.

Then we have the Holy Spirit. Every believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, so we have the responsibility of being subject to the Holy Spirit, that He might make of us what He would like to make of us.

We have some wonderful prospects, too, here in this book. We will say more about this later, but it tells us we are looking for the coming of the Lord Jesus. We are looking for Him who is going to return and take us to be with Himself and present us before His glory with exceeding joy. We have wonderful prospects. It is true that our present prospects are of difficulties. If you are a child of God you can expect persecution. They “that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Tim. 3:12). It is true, we can expect apostasy in these last days before the return of the Lord. We ought not to be disturbed by this, we should expect it. We can expect His love and care during all this time. Whatever you need from the Lord daily, you can expect because you are His child; but then our future presentation before the Lord is our blessed hope, our bright hope. We have

wonderful prospects if we receive Christ as Saviour!
Have you received Him?

Our Father, we ask Thee to bless Thy Word. Save those who are not yet saved and help us that are children of God to appreciate our possessions and to go in and possess them, to enjoy what we have in Christ and to be looking for Thy blessed hope—the return of our Saviour. In His Name. Amen.

Chapter 12 God's Beloved

We have been observing a great many serious warnings in the Book of Jude concerning false teachers and wicked men who worm their way in among the people of God. This is especially true as we come to the end of this present age. We are nearing the return of the Lord, we believe, and this means conditions are increasingly worse. It means that those who are against the Word of God are more blatant and more open in their opposition to the things of God. It also means that we who are Christians have a greater responsibility and a much higher privilege of standing for the Lord in the evil day. There were a few godly people waiting for the first coming of the Lord Jesus. I trust you and I will be found among those who are really looking and waiting for His second return.

Now, we have reached verse 20. We have read about the evil people and what was said about them and their own ungodly lusts. In verse 20 we have the third use of the word “beloved.” We saw it in verses 3 and 17, and now in verse 20 we read, “But ye, beloved.” The disjunctive “but” turns our minds away from one thing to behold another. We saw in our last study how the Lord has a great deal to say about what He has done for us as

believers. In this section we learn what God would have us as believers do for Him. What is the first thing He wants us to do? I believe, by the very use of the term “beloved,” He wants us to believe and enjoy our place as His beloved ones. You are not going to be much good for God unless you believe that He really loves you and that, just at this moment, your Heavenly Father is doing the very best thing for you. These are the only Christians who really amount to much for God!

Are you one of God’s beloved? Well, you say, “I believe God loves the world in general.” Have you appropriated this to yourself? You say, “I don’t feel I am worthy.” Who is? “God so loved the world”—He took in all human beings. “Whosoever” is a word that takes us all in. If you have received Christ as your Saviour, you are one of God’s beloved. Don’t let your feelings spoil what God says. Trusting your feelings instead of trusting the Word of God is downright unbelief and it is a dishonor to God. When my wife tells me she loves me, if I say, “I don’t feel you do,” I couldn’t do anything to hurt her feelings more. Don’t trust your feelings. Remember they will go up and down like a thermometer, but the Word of God will never change.

How do we know we are saved? First John 5:13 says, “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know ye have eternal life.” Avoid legality—that is, the spirit of “If I earn it, it will be mine, but I am not sure I have earned it.” You could never earn God’s salvation because we are not saved by works, we are saved by grace. You cannot earn God’s keeping power. We are kept by the power of God, and this is done irrespective of personalities or worthiness. Don’t permit doubts to spoil your enjoyment

of your place as God's beloved. Come into His presence with what He calls in the Book of Hebrews, a holy boldness. Have liberty to enter into the presence of God. Come to Him and call Him "Father" because He has given you this right.

Now, the second thing in verse 20, is that we are to build up ourselves in our most holy faith. We have been reading about the faith which was delivered to the saints. This is what we are told in the very beginning of this book, in verse 3, for which we should contend. God has given us His Word, but you and I have the responsibility of building ourselves up in our most holy faith; that is, we must study the Word of God, we must memorize it, we must meditate upon it, and then of course we must share it with others. We are not a Bible-reading people. I was only nine years of age when my father started us out on a Bible-reading system that carried us through the Word of God once every year. At least once a year you should go through the Word of God. Are you a Bible reader? Or do you just have that perfunctory one-chapter-a-day with the family and then try to stay alive on that? Not only should you read it, you should study it. It should become a part of you. Much of this should be stored in your memory. You should meditate upon it. Meditation has been called a lost art. This is a shame because it is only as we meditate on the Word of God, as the old cow lies down and chews her cud, that we really get the good out of the Word of God. Notice that he says you are to build up yourselves. You don't leave this to some one man who is hired by the congregation to do it. The first century had no such man. All the people of God were to function as a priesthood. Each member of the body had his gift, according to 1

Corinthians 12. All the gifts were not embodied in one man who was hired to do it. You have a responsibility to get into the Word of God yourself.

The third thing we are to do is pray in the Holy Ghost. Notice this at the end of verse 20, "Praying in the Holy Ghost." First of all, this will entail our avoiding any grieving of the Holy Spirit, for we are told in Ephesians 4:30, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." If you grieve God's Holy Spirit, He will not be able to lead you or to teach you to pray. In Romans 8 we read, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." The Holy Spirit will help you to pray, if you maintain your state with Him and do not grieve Him. "Well," you say, "I have grieved the Holy Spirit, I have sinned against the Lord." Then the thing to do is confess that sin. "If we confess our sins [this is said to Christians], He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). So, if you follow the Word of God as the Holy Spirit reveals it to you, you will have liberty when you pray. The Spirit of God can indite, or put into your mind and lead you into the kind of prayers He would like you to pray. You see, only the Holy Spirit of God knows what is best for you. You don't know. You may be asking for something which is not according to the will of God. You may be asking for something that would not be good for you at all. If you are willing for the Holy Spirit to lead you in your prayers though, you will find that more of your prayers will be answered.

Then he says, "Keep yourselves in the love of God" (v. 21). This doesn't mean to keep God loving you. God

would never cease to love any of those whom He began to love. He had no reason to love you in the first place, and He certainly will have no reason to stop. It simply means to keep in the sunshine of it, as Dr. H. A. Ironside said. Keep yourself in the sunshine of God's love. The sun always shines, but if you hide out in some dark cellar in the dampness, you are not going to enjoy that sunshine. Believe God's love and enjoy it.

Then, we are to be looking for His return, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. I am not looking to get eternal life. The gift of God is eternal life, and those who have received Christ are in possession of eternal life, but we are looking for God's mercy at His return, in bringing us into the full enjoyment of this eternal life. This is our blessed hope. Are you looking for the Lord to come? Have you remembered even once in this last week that He will come, and this might be the day? A day should not go by in which you don't look up and long for His return.

Then we are told to be compassionate about souls—"of some have compassion." He has told us about some people who seem very hopeless in this little Book of Jude, but no soul is hopeless as long as it is alive. Be compassionate of souls. This is God-like. Of course, you should be grieved at what you see, as Enoch was, when Jude wrote of him in the fifteenth verse, seeing all the ungodliness of those who deny the Lord. But you should have a compassion for souls and you should want to try to win these souls for Christ. You should pray definitely for souls. Pray for them by name. Widen your interest. Take an interest in all sorts of mission fields—the work of the Lord in this country and in other countries.

Then Jude said, “And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh” (v. 23). Only God can save, in one sense. Yet in another, the Apostle Paul says, “that I might by all means save some” (1 Cor. 9:22). We can go, some of us, maybe only across the street, maybe others of us across the ocean. We can pray, all of us. We can give. We can study the Lord Jesus’ methods of soul winning. We can win some souls for Christ. If you are not doing this, you are not an obedient Christian. We are left here with the responsibility to spread the good news to all those around us. The Lord help you to enjoy your salvation and to share it with someone else.

Our Father, we thank Thee for Thy Word. We thank Thee for all Thou hast given us. We thank Thee for any measure in which we have enjoyed it. We pray for those who have not yet received Christ. We pray for Thy dear children, that Thou wilt encourage and help and lead on and supply every need. In our Saviour’s precious Name, we pray. Amen.

Chapter 13 He Is Able

We have come now to the last two verses of Jude. The wonderful ending of this Book of Jude, filled with disturbing things: warnings, woes pronounced upon those who have turned away from God, indictments against sinners for their murmuring and complaining and living after their own lusts, and warnings for the Lord’s people that they be kept from these things. Now at the last our attention is focused on the Lord Jesus Himself. “Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God, our

Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

Attention is focused on the Lord Jesus. This is the way you became a Christian. First of all the Spirit of God showed you that you were lost. This was uncomfortable, wasn't it? We did not enjoy having the searchlight of God's holiness focused on ourselves. We did not enjoy hearing from the Word of God that we were sinners and lost. How glad we were, though, when we knew our need and the Spirit of God showed us Christ. Just as in the wilderness Moses lifted up the serpent of brass and called upon the people to look to the serpent and as many as looked lived, so you and I were saved by a look at the Crucified One. We looked by faith at the Lord Jesus and received Him as Saviour.

The way to go on well for the Lord is to keep our eyes on Him. All other sights will disturb us, distress us, distract us. Someone has said, "A look around us will distract us, a look within us will disgust us, a look at the church will disturb us, but a look above—a look at the Lord Jesus—will delight us." Get your eyes on the Saviour. "Unto Him"—God wants all praise and honor to be unto Him. Don't give it to me! If you hear someone preach the Word and they do well, thank them for the word they delivered to you, but don't say, "Oh, he is a wonderful man," for no man is wonderful. "Wonderful" is a name for our blessed Lord in the ninth chapter of Isaiah.

Our blessed Lord, we are told, is able. "Unto Him that is able to keep you from falling." We have already been told about His loving willingness. We are told, in verse 21, that we are to keep ourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto

eternal life. Oh yes, God loves us and is willing to do the best for us. He is also able. My father was able to do certain things for us, but he was willing to do a great deal more than he was able! So it is here on this earth, but we have One who is not only willing to do for us, but He is able to do it.

What is He able to do? Three things: first of all, to keep you from falling. "Neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand" was a word of the Good Shepherd (John 10:28). And don't tell me you can pluck yourself out. You, too, are a man. Oh, yes, our Lord Jesus is able to keep us from falling. That is the only way I ever would have been kept for even fifteen minutes of my life. Remember the little boy who was about to cross the slick street with his father. The father said, "Let me take your hand." He said, "No, I'll make it alone," and he slipped and fell. Then the boy said, "Let me hold onto your finger," and he slipped and lost his grip and fell again. Then he said, "Daddy, you'd better take my hand." This is what you and I, as Christians, need to remember. Just put your hand into His hand. He is able to keep you from falling. You have certain temptations and problems that I don't have; I have some you don't have. He is enough for all and any of them.

Secondly, He is able to present us faultless before the presence of His glory. I have never been faultless. I have tried to keep my life blameless, but I am not faultless and neither are you. I would hardly recognize you (or even myself) if we were faultless. This is the way God is going to present us when He gets through with us. You see, at Calvary our Saviour bore our sins in His own body on the tree. We are told we are cleansed by the precious blood of Christ. At the Judgment Seat of Christ

anything that isn't right will be ironed out. In the Book of Ephesians we are told that He is going to present us to Himself without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. We are going to be presented faultless. When the Lord gets through with us, we will be just like Himself. We shall see Him as He is. That is when we will be like Him.

The third thing Christ is able to do for us is to present us before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. I am glad that I am a Christian. I have enjoyed knowing the Lord. I have enjoyed His Word. I enjoy telling it to others, but I have never known this exceeding joy. It is ahead of us. We should have had the woes of a lost eternity—weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. This is how sinners who die without Christ are going to spend eternity. This should be my lot, but I have the exceeding joy ahead. Our Lord Jesus, we read, wept. "Jesus wept." That is the shortest verse in our Bible, you know (John 11:35). The second shortest verse in our Bible is found in 1 Thessalonians 5, and it says, "Rejoice evermore." Jesus wept, so you could rejoice evermore.

Then we are told He is the only wise God. Not only is He willing to do the best for us because He loves us so, not only is He able to do the best for us because He is the Almighty, but He knows what is best for us. He is wise. Colossians 2:3 says that in the Lord Jesus are hidden "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Don't look any other place for it. Don't turn to anyone else for true wisdom. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Psalm 111:10). "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Prov. 9:10). Do you know Him? Have you received Him as your Saviour? Are you learning a little about Him each day? You certainly are not depending on your own wisdom, are you? The Book

of James says, "If any of you lack wisdom [of course, we lack it, we all lack it!], let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (1:5). Expect from God a share in the treasures of His great wisdom. He is the Only Wise God! We are told He knows the end from the beginning. He is our Saviour. Isn't that wonderful! "The only wise God our Saviour." We enjoy Him together.

We read in the fourth verse of Jude that these ungodly people who turned away from the Lord and His Word turned the grace of our God into lasciviousness and denied our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the third time in the Book of Jude that the Lord has been called ours. I am glad I can say, He is mine. I am glad to share Him with you, brother and sister. He is our Saviour.

"To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." Who else is worthy of glory, majesty, dominion, and power? Certainly not any human being; certainly not me. I can take no glory to myself for anything God has done. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8, 9). Boast is the same word as glory. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," Galatians 6 tells us. In the first chapter of 1 Corinthians the Apostle Paul says that no flesh should glory in His presence. The Lord Jesus deserves all glory and majesty! Oh, yes, He is King. He came as King of the Jews, and was rejected and crucified as King of the Jews, and He is coming back to reign as King of the Jews. Our Lord Jesus is a King. He shall be honored yet as King of kings and Lord of lords! All dominion is due unto Him. Make sure you give Him

dominion over your life. Give Him His place as Lord in your life. Eventually, He will have it over the entire universe. And power belongs to Him. "All power is given unto Me," said the Saviour, "in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18). There is power enough for you too. You can draw on this everlasting and inexhaustible source of power. When you plug in an electrical appliance, you are drawing on the power of the great power source that is behind it. In prayer you and I draw upon this One who has all power and to whom all power should and will be given, both now and ever. Let me give you the Revised reading of this: "From before the whole age, now and ever." Of course, what he has been saying has to do with the ages past, so really all of this is from before the whole age. Before our Saviour came into this world, He had this place of honor. It is going to be His in the coming day. It is up to you and me as believers to see that He has all of this honor now, for the world will not honor Him. Let's be careful as believers that we do honor Him. All glory and majesty, dominion and power, be unto Him now and ever. Amen.

Lord Jesus, we desire that Thou shalt be glorified not only by our lips but by our lives. We thank Thee for loving us and dying for us. We thank Thee, our Father, for Thy Son. We pray Thee to save souls for Thy Son. We pray Thee to save souls for His glory and bless Thy dear children, we ask in the Name above every name. Amen.