

A FAITH WORTH FIGHTING FOR

Warnings About the Enemy

TEXT: Jude 12-23

INTRODUCTION: To really understand the message God is sending us through the Book of Jude, the whole context of the letter must be constantly kept in mind. So, will all of you with a perfect memory, who instantly recall every detail of the book we have thus far studied, will you, please, make allowance for the rest of us who need a little reminding?

Jude writes with a plea, “Join me in fighting to defend the faith that has been given us through the Holy Scriptures. Some ungodly men have snuck into the church, denying the Scriptures, perverting the gospel, and leading folks to disobey Christ.”

Last Sunday we studied that portion of Jude’s letter where he described these ungodly people because they are not always easily recognized by their outward appearance or conversation. They come in as wolves in sheep’s clothing. Therefore he told us what they were like on the inside, in their character. He said,

- A. They are like the unbelieving Israelites who refused to enter the Promised Land.**
- B. The enemies of God’s Word are like the angels who sinned in the day of Noah and are now in the bottomless pit.**
 - 1. They lead others to question the truthfulness of God’s Word.**
 - 2. They expressly deny what God has said.**
- C. They are like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah who cast off the restraints placed upon them by their Holy Creator God.**
 - 1. They reject the standards of God in favor of their own manmade rules.**

So, that’s where we are. What is next?

Next comes the warning:

A warning to the church and

A warning to individual Christians

Jude 12-23

¹² These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; ¹³ raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

¹⁴ Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, ¹⁵ to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”

¹⁶ These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage. ¹⁷ But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: ¹⁸ how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. ¹⁹ These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.

²⁰ But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

²² And on some have compassion, making a distinction; ²³ but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.

Now before we look at the warnings, I want to remind you of something else the Scripture teaches. This is something I am confident that you know; it is not new. But it is important to remember this, especially as we look at the two warnings that are given here in this letter.

There are two ways to deny the Scriptures:

- 1. Philosophically – to say the Bible is not completely true.**
- 2. Practically – to affirm that the Bible is true but to live contrary to its teachings.**
 - a. Either through willful ignorance**
 - b. Or through purposeful disobedience**

Either of these results in a denial of the Word of God.

I. A WARNING TO THE CHURCH ABOUT THESE UNGODLY PEOPLE WHO DENY GOD'S WORD.

A. They are self-centered and selfish.

- 1. They only served themselves at the love feasts.** (And you thought Baptists invented pot-luck dinners!)
- 2. They shipwrecked the fellowship of the church by their self-centeredness.**
 - a. “*spilos*” (used in 2 Peter) – spot or blemish**
 - b. “*spilas*” (used in Jude) – a rock just beneath the surface of the water**

I remember when I would go fishing with my friend Chet Keating at Venice, LA. When we went a low tide, we would see all these creosote poles sticking up just a few inches above the surface of the water. It made us cringe, because at high tide, they were sitting just a few inches beneath the surface of the water where they could not be seen but they lurked there ready to rip the bottom out of a speeding boat.

- c. That is what self-centeredness does in a church.**
 - Whether it is a focus only upon “me,” what I want, what I need
 - Or it is a focus upon my group, my class, my friends rather than upon the glory of Christ and the benefit of others
 - **Selfishness is a rock hiding beneath the surface of the water upon which the fellowship, the heart, the ministry, the effectiveness of the church can be sunk.**

B. They are useless. They do not do anybody any good.

- 1. They are like clouds which give no rain.**
- 2. They are like fruit trees that do not bear.**
- 3. They are like waves, ceaselessly beating upon the rocks, making a big splash and a lot of noise, but accomplishing no good purpose.**

Folks, God did not save us and adopt us into His forever family and make us a part of the Bride of Christ, the church, only for our pleasure and benefit.

Now it is for our benefit, but not just our benefit.

God saved us to be useful in the Kingdom of God. He saved us to be servants in His church!

Eph. 2:10

- **We are all to be witnesses for Christ.**
- **We are all to be disciple makers.**
- **We are all to use our abilities and spiritual gifts as servants of Christ and for eternal purposes.**

At this point, every one of us should pause to ask,

- **“Am I useful in the church?”**
- **“Am I useful in the Kingdom of Christ?”**

C. People in the church who become self-centered and who will not give of themselves to serve the Lord develop a host of other sins in their lives:

- 1. Grumbling**
- 2. Complaining**
- 3. Lustful**
- 4. Flattering others to get their way**
- 5. Living for their own desires**
- 6. Divisive**

II. A WARNING TO INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIANS

Jude 17 But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Jude 20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

A. Keep yourself in the Word so you do not become like this!

Jude 21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

B. Keep living with love as a priority!

John 13:35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

1. Sometimes love is acting in compassion and mercy.

2. Sometimes it is exercising “tough love” to pull people out of the fire.

Jude 22-23 ²² And on some have compassion, making a distinction; ²³ but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.

3. Either way, the motive is love.

CONCLUSION: What are we to do? This week it is easy to tell.

- Keep yourself in the Word so you do not become like this!
- Keep living with love as a priority!