

Seek Godliness

Jude 1:5-16

I. God will deal with the ungodly... Seek Godliness (5-10)

- a.** The Exodus. (Exodus 14)
 - i.** They Rejected God
- b.** The Angels' Rebellion. (Genesis 6:1-4)
 - i.** They Rebelled Against God
- c.** Sodom and Gomorrah. (Genesis 18-19)
 - i.** The sins of sexual immorality lead to judgment.

II. False prophets can be identified by their character, attitudes, and actions....Seek the Truth (11-13)

- a.** A person's life reveals their heart.
- b.** You cannot follow false teachers for true direction in life

III. God's Judgement is reserved for and awaits the ungodly ... Seek Grace (14-16)

- a.** God's judgment is certain
- b.** There is a universal judgment to come, and God will bring to account every evil deed.

*Reject living your life in your own authority and run to the truth of God's word.
Sin's serious, so seek godliness & grace!*

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Introduction:

If you have your Bible, turn it to the book of Jude, if you would. Get the revelations and turn back or look across the page. You'll find it. It's about 25 verses of a very helpful truth for us that we receive from God. So today we consider a message entitled, "Remember What You Know."

Now in this section from verse 5 all the way down to verse 16, Jude is dealing with the main characteristics of the false teachers who are troubling this local congregation to whom he is writing. And you can detect four distinct movements in this section. First of all, in verses 5-7, he reminds us of three Old Testament examples of God's judgment against the sins of the ungodly. Now he does this, first, to diagnose the problem of the false teachers and to distance us from them. He wants us to see in the false teachers some of the very characteristics of these three, Old Testament people whom God had judged. Then, in verses 8-10, we see the second movement in this section. There Jude summarizes the heart-attitude of these false prophets, and he contrasts it to the behavior of Michael the archangel. Then, thirdly, in verses 11-13—though you can also see this again in verse 16—he pronounces a woe against the false prophets, and he characterizes their character with nine, colorful illustrations. And then in verses 14 and 15 he intimates the certainty of God's final judgment against all the wicked, but expressly against these false prophets. So before we read the word of God, let's pray for God's Holy Spirit to illumine our hearts and minds as we hear the word. Let's pray.

Story:

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“A man woke up a couple of weeks ago with tingling in his left arm. He was thinking that it was probably nothing. “I slept on it funny or something”. But I’ve heard of people who ignore signs like this. He rapidly consulted Google, a trusted source of medical information. It said:

Is your left arm tingling? Do not neglect the sign! Tingling in left arm may be a warning sign of something serious, therefore, is not worth neglecting...Following are some possible causes for tingling in left arm and hand. When the left arm or hand tingles, and at the same time if you experience pain in your jaw as well as chest, it is a major indication of an oncoming heart attack. You are advised to immediately rush to the doctor. Left arm tingling can also be a stroke symptom. Stroke is a medical condition in which the brain activity ceases due to insufficient supply of blood to the brain.

Just to be safe, he called his doctor. The doctor told him to get to the hospital emergency room immediately. So, he spent the rest of the day waiting to find out that the tingling in his arm was not caused by anything serious. But he was told that it’s very good that he took the warning signs seriously.”¹

It is very easy to ignore warning signs like a tingling arm and not realize that the tingling could be a sign that something very dangerous is happening. Tingling may seem harmless, but it could also be a sign of something more serious.

¹ <https://www.dashhouse.com/2011529whats-the-big-deal-jude-5-16-html/>

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This morning, we will be exploring the book of Jude in the Bible. It's the second-last book in the Bible, located right before the book of Revelation. And Jude has told us that there's something tingling, something that's a problem that needs to be addressed. Jude Says:

⁵ Now I want to remind you, though you know everything once and for all, that ^[a]the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, ^[b]subsequently destroyed those who did not believe. ⁶ And angels who did not keep their own domain but abandoned their proper dwelling place, these He has kept in eternal restraints under darkness for the judgment of the great day, ⁷ just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these angels indulged in sexual perversion and went after ^[c]strange flesh, are exhibited as an ^[d]example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

⁸ Yet in the same way these people also, dreaming, defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak abusively of angelic ^[e]majesties. ⁹ But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him an abusive judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" ¹⁰ But these people disparage all the things that they do not understand; and all the things that they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed. ¹¹ Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay ^[f]they have given themselves up to the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah. ¹² These are the ones who are ^[g]hidden reefs in

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your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, like shepherds caring only for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, ^[h]doubly dead, uprooted; ¹³ wild waves of the sea, churning up their own shameful deeds like dirty foam; wandering stars, for whom the ^[i]gloom of darkness has been reserved forever.

¹⁴ It was also about these people that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord has come with ^[i]many thousands of His holy ones, ¹⁵ to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.” ¹⁶ These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; ^[k]they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage.

Jude is writing to these Christians to ask them to contend for the faith. We talked about that the last time we were together. They need to make an intense effort against false teaching, because false teaching was hurting the church, and false teaching still hurts the church. And also they needed to contend for the faith, because the truth has been under attack ever since the Garden of Eden. And so we need to understand that we've got to fight against false teaching, because it does hurt the church, and also because the truth has been under attack for ages and ages, and we need to contend for the faith. And so Jude outlines this to them in this way. So we find these three things we need to remember.

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I. God will deal with the ungodly... Seek Godliness (5-10)

In verses 5-10, we find the first thing we need to remember, and that is sin is serious and God will deal with the ungodly, so seek godliness.

A. So here we find Jude talking about these false teachers that were hurting the church, and he describes them, but now he wants them to remember this one main point. It's a point we need to remember.

B. As we live in the world we live in, sin is serious and it brings serious consequences. So, in light of that, we need to seek godliness. So Jude begins here by using three examples from the Old Testament for us to understand how serious sin is and how it leads to the judgment of God, as we see by these three examples and so first we see in verse 5 that Jude takes time to remind them of these things they already knew, these three Old Testament examples.

1. First, he reminds them of the Exodus of God's people in vs. 5.

i. And here we see unbelief. We see that these people were marked by unbelief. God led His people to freedom out of Egypt (Exodus 14), only later to have to execute judgment on them in the wilderness. Why? Because of their unbelief. because of the sin in their life.

ii. One commentator helps us understand it this way.

Because Israel rebelled in unbelief by refusing to enter into the land, God condemned that generation of Israelites to wander 40 years in the wilderness until they died. Why? The sin of unbelief is serious. They died in the wilderness. The Israelites did not persist in faith to the end.

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- iii. David Helm, in his commentary, says, "It's a generation that rejected God. God saved, God spoke, God settled in their midst, but they did not believe God's Word."²
- b. They were faithless again and again. So they did not trust God or the daily provisions. They turned from solitary worship of God in unbelief. Their sin was serious. And they faced the judgment of God. That's the first example from the Old Testament.
- 2. The second example that Jude uses from the Old Testament is found in verse 6. Here, we see him talking about rebellion and how the sin of their rebellion caused the judgment of God to fall.
 - a. Now, he's referring to Genesis 6:1-4 here. The Jewish tradition understands that this is a reference to angels leaving their established place and crossing the line to have sexual relationships with the daughters of men. The angels' sin of not keeping their positions of authority was their sin.
 - b. God had given these angels a realm in which they could function and had given them a place to dwell, BUT
 - i. They did not stay under the authority of God.
 - ii. They did not stay in their rightful place. They rebelled.
 - iii. They didn't keep themselves under the authority of God.
 - c. Because they rebelled, they crossed these established boundaries, and it brought judgment upon them. You see, that's what sin does. Sin is serious. And when you find yourself in unbelief, you find yourself in rebellion against God, not staying

² <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/podcasts/help-me-teach-the-bible/david-helm-on-teaching-habakkuk/>

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under the authority of God, His judgment is sure. And so he tells them, sin is serious.

- i. You see it in the unbelief of God's people. You see it in the rebellion of these angels.

3. And then in the end, in verse 7, we see the third example from the Old Testament that sin is serious. Jude refers in verse 7 to Sodom and Gomorrah. Genesis 18-19 records the story of people who indulged in all kinds of sexual immorality and pursued all kinds of unnatural desires. And in Sodom and Gomorrah, any kind of sexual combination was acceptable. Anything went. And as one commentator said, “sexual immorality is the eager companion of an affluent society oftentimes.”³

- a. And according to Jude, those who gorge themselves without restraint are heading toward God's judgment.
- b. And so we've got to understand this. When we don't stay under the authority of God, we see judgment is going to come. That's why sin is so serious.
- c. The sins of unbelief and rebellion and sexual sins, they lead to judgment. They lead to destruction.
- d. And these examples, and I believe that every example of sin that we could give, we will find the same underlying problem in sin. In our sin, we value our experiences and our natural instincts more than we value the authority of God's Word in our lives.

³ <https://pouredouthislove.com/avoiding-sexual-immorality>

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4. You see here that it says that, in verse 8 it says, they were relying on their dreams. They defile the flesh. These people were led astray by false teaching and they valued their experience in life. They valued their own natural urges or desires more than the truth of God's Word. They didn't stay under the authority of the Scripture. I think this is what we find spelled out in verses 8 through 10.
- a. You remember what it says here. It says, ***yet in like manner, these people also rely on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones.***
 - b. And then in verse 9, it says, ***but when the archangel Michael contending with the devil was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce blasphemous judgment, but said, the Lord rebuke you.***
 - i. And so here we find a lot going on here. People today like to rely and trust in their experiences and their own natural urges instead of relying on God's Word.
 - ii. They reject the authority of God's Word. That's a problem. We see it here in Scripture. And it's still a problem today. People still do this today. They reject the authority of God.
 - iii. After this very serious reminder from Jude, he turns the corner in verse 9. And he gives us an example from a Jewish writing. It's a Jewish writing which many believe to be called the Assumption of Moses⁴, a pseudepigraphical text, we find it there in verse 9.

⁴ <https://www.pseudepigrapha.com/pseudepigrapha/assumptionofmoses.html>

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- iv. It's talking about Michael the archangel contending with the devil, disputing about the body of Moses. Now, Jewish literature records many traditions that relate to Michael the archangel. Well, one of these traditions has to do with Michael contending with the devil and disputing with him over the body of Moses because the devil said since he was a murderer, his body belonged to him. Don't get sidetracked by this. What Jude is doing here is he's using a Jewish writing to illustrate a point for us.
- v. That's not what's being said. But the illustration is something he needs us to see that is a biblical understanding. You see, Michael the archangel here is the example for us. Do you see what Michael did in the story? It says, but when the archangel Michael contending with the devil was disputing about the body, Moses, listen, here it is. "***He did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment.***
- vi. What did he do instead? He said, ***the Lord rebuke you.*** So what we see here Michael doing is the point. Michael did not arrogantly assume authority of his own, but merely invoked the Lord's authority.
 - a. To put it another way, he stayed under rightful authority. He did not try to contend with the devil in his strength. He stayed under the authority of God and said, 'The Lord rebuke you.'

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vii. It's an example for us. It's just an illustration for us that to protect ourselves from the seriousness of sin, we need to stay under the authority of God. When we are under the authority of God, it means we believe His word and live our lives in accordance with it, not through our experiences or just our desires.

viii. Staying under the authority of God is so important. It's so important for us, and it reminds us that sin is serious. So we need to seek godliness.

ix. And the greatest way to seek godliness is to stay under the authority of God's word and to see God's word come alive in your life. Reject living your life in your own authority and run to the truth of God's word. That's going to take a while to seek godliness because when we come to faith in Christ, we enter into this process of sanctification, of becoming more like Christ.

C. And the frustrating thing about sanctification is it doesn't just happen. You take two steps forward spiritually, then you take one step back. Oftentimes we think that it's all the distractions in the world that keep us from becoming more like God. And sometimes those things are pushing in on us, but sometimes we just get tired and we sit down.

1. We don't keep struggling in the faith.
2. We get tired of always doing the right thing.
3. We get tired of always dying to the flesh and sowing to the spirit.
 - a. But as believers, we've got to continue forward, staying under the authority of God's word. And every day, just getting up on

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that day, say, no, today I'm going to sow to the spirit, not the flesh.

- b. Today I'm rejecting my experiences and urges that I may feel, and I'm going to look to the truth of God's word, and I'm going to live in godliness before my God.

D. So that's what Jude's reminding them. Sin's serious, so seek godliness. He gives them examples to how to understand that.

II. False prophets can be identified by their character, attitudes, and actions....Seek the Truth (11-13)

A. Now the second thing that Jude teaches us in verses 11 through 13 is very simple: Life shows the heart. A person's life reveals their heart. And so Jude's point is that false prophets can be identified by their character, their attitudes, their actions. And he uses nine illustrations over the course of these three, small verses (from vs. 11-13) to describe these false teachers.

1. First of all, he says, they've gone the way of Cain, Balaam, and Korah.
 - a. You remember Cain, that unloving and unfaithful man who killed a man more righteous than himself? He says, 'Well, these false teachers have slandered those who are more righteous than themselves. They're like Balaam.'
2. You remember the prophet that the enemies of Israel tried to hire against Israel to curse Israel (Number 22-24)? He was hired for pay to apply his prophetic trade.

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- a. You see Jude is saying, 'These men are in it for the buck. They're teaching what they're teaching because they're in it for the buck. By the way that's a good thing to judge by.
 - i. If you're on television and somebody asks you for money in the name of Christ, nine times out of ten it's a heretic.
- 3. Thirdly, Korah, the rebel against Moses' authority who is eventually judged by God—again someone who rejects divinely appointed authority. This is what they're like but he's not done yet.
- B. He gives 6 metaphors in verses 12 and 13 for what these people are like.
 - 1. They're stains in your love feasts. They've interjected impurity into church life. The false teachers were very comfortable in the church at that time. He said, they're at your love feasts. When the church gathers to eat together and then partake in the love feast, the Lord's Supper, these false teachers were there in their midst. They were hidden reefs at your love feast with you, without fear. *So seek the truth.*
 - 2. They're shepherds who feed themselves. They're self-serving. They're looking out for #1 and you're way down the list. False teaching encourages selfishness in the one teaching it and in those who hear it and believe it. Shepherds feeding themselves. Instead of taking care of the flock, to protect and feed them, false teachers and their teachings are marked by selfishness, as they take advantage of God's people and exploit them for their own benefit, prioritizing their own needs. And sadly, oftentimes there are contemporary examples of this that we could think about.

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- a. You can also see the false theology of things like I've already said, like the prosperity gospel that takes advantage of people, teaches people a false gospel that only enriches the false teachers. And you see it in their lifestyles. False teaching is hidden and it's selfish. It's like a shepherd who feeds himself, *so seek the truth.*
- 3. They're clouds without water. They look full, they look like they're bringing needed rain, but the rain never comes. They promise but they don't produce.
 - a. False teaching is unfulfilling. These false teachers are like waterless clouds.
 - i. Now Palestine was a dry climate. It was very dependent on rain at crucial times of seasons, of life and when you really needed rain and clouds would roll in, but did not produce the rain, it was a disappointment. It left you unfulfilled.
 - ii. The clouds looked promising to produce what was greatly needed but did not deliver, and let me tell you something.
 - iii. False teachers will not deliver the truth. They will leave you unfulfilled
 - iv. False teachers cannot bring spiritual fulfillment because they do not possess as what one commentator said, "the living water of the gospel."
 - b. I was around this huge prosperity gospel church when I lived in Houston and so many people were left unfulfilled and hurt.

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After they had been exposed to that false teaching, it was very difficult to go to them with the truth of the gospel. These teachers and those beliefs were like waterless clouds. It left people unfulfilled.

- c. You know, there was nothing that ever filled me and gave me fulfillment in my life until I came to understand who Jesus Christ was. When I came and I turned from sin and turned to Christ, that's when fulfillment could truly come. Because He is what I needed. I needed the forgiveness of sin. I turned from it and turned to Christ. And there's a fulfillment that comes through. Through the gospel but it cannot be found through false teachers. They leave you unfulfilled, *so seek the truth!*
- 4. They're trees without fruit. The fruit of the Spirit is not there in their lives. False teaching is also dangerous because it leads to death. That's what it leads to. Waterless clouds swept away by the winds. Fruitless trees in late autumn. Twice dead. Uprooted.
 - a. The false teachers were like these fruitless trees in late autumn. Now notice that it was late autumn and the trees still had not borne fruit. That was a problem.
 - b. But in scripture, God's people are described as trees and plants and vines that we are to produce fruit, right? The reality of the tree being totally dead is seen in the emphatic statement that the tree was twice dead. It was false teaching, false teachers are dead, dead. Like they're really dead.
 - c. Then it says they were uprooted. If something's uprooted, it's really dead because there's not even a root to sustain.

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- d. So false teachers and false teaching only bring death. They cannot bring life because they're not preaching truth.
 - e. Jude is painting this sophisticated picture to help these people understand. False teaching is so dangerous, *so seek the truth!*
5. They're raging waves of the sea. Ever been on the seashore after a great storm and seen all the debris from the bottom swirling up to the surface, now emerging onto the sand? Well, these false prophets, they crash like waves and all they do is stir up moral filth, *so seek the truth!*
6. They're wandering stars. They blaze with light like a shooting star, but they're destined to burn out in oblivion. Wandering stars for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever.
- a. Those who teach false teachings, who lead people astray, who mislead them, are like a shooting star that gives flickering light but no true direction. and for them, everlasting punishment is awaiting them.
 - b. Sailors use the stars to navigate, but If you follow a shooting star for directions, you're going to have a problem.
 - c. You cannot follow false teachers for true direction in life either and so here we see false teaching is a big problem. The point is their life shows their hearts.
 - d. Mrs. Porter was telling the first-grade parents that their children will learn what they live before them. She says:
"It's essential to teach them (children), but they will learn from you; they will learn from you what you live before

Story ➡

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them. And no matter how loudly you teach, you will never be able to live down what you have lived before them.”

That’s what they will learn more than anything else.”

- e. Well, Jude is just saying, ‘A life shows the heart, and that’s the same case with these false prophets.’

End Point 2

`I. God will deal with the ungodly... Seek Godliness (5-10)

`II. False prophets can be identified by their character, attitudes, and actions....Seek the Truth (11-13)

Then, finally, He reminds us of something else we need to remember, and that is God's judgment is certain. So you've got to seek His grace. Now you see, this is not a popular understanding in our world today.

III. God's Judgement is reserved for and awaits the ungodly ... Seek Grace (14-16)

- A. Then he says in verses 14 to 16 that there is judgment to come. The severest punishment is reserved for and awaits those who are ungodly. He’s telling us about the certainty of the Lord’s judgment against false prophets. Divine punishment is reserved for the ungodly.
- B. In verses 14 and 15, he quotes from an interesting book, the Book of Enoch, “a pseudopigraphical book.” Just like he did with the assumption of Moses he used before, he uses this reference to 1 Enoch, which is this Jewish writing, for us to illustrate a point here. I want us to see what he's saying in verses 14-16.

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1. It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with 10,000 of His holy ones to execute judgment on all to convict of all the ungodly and all of their deeds of ungodliness, that they have, have committed in such an ungodly way and of the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against them.”
 - a. This book is not, by the way, part of the Apocrypha, that part of literature that was written between the end of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament which is found in Catholic and in Eastern Orthodox Bibles. This is a part of writings from around the time of the sub-apostolic era that was very popular. It was read in many places, but it’s never been part of any Christian canon.
 - b. But it may well have been literature that these false prophets appeal to, and so Jude may be quoting from a book that they liked in order to emphasize a point that he could have supported from dozens of passages in the Old Testament: that is, that God is going to judge and He is going to judge the ungodly.
2. There is a universal judgment to come, and God is going to bring to account every evil deed.

C. How does Jude characterize these false teachers?

1. You see at the beginning of verse 16, “¹⁶ ***These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; [a]they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage.***”

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2. Isn't it interesting that Jude concludes this section of the book by stating that God will judge false teachers, and so often, what is precisely that false teachers deny – that God is going to judge?
3. And Jude is saying, 'Oh, no. God **will** judge, and He will set things right. So believe the truth, be discerning, look at the lives of teachers when they make these strange and outlandish claims, and remember God's grace always produces faith, humility, and holiness.

Let's pray.