

We have gone over the telltale signs of the false teachers and seen how rampant they are today. Their goal is greed; and sensuality and the prideful blasphemy of angelic beings is their mode of operation. (2Peter 2:14) They come in secretly and lead the unstable away. (2Peter 2:18) In many denominations today, they lead openly to the same end. This is the most repeated sign of the end times from Jesus and the Apostles. They were not talking of minor doctrinal differences, but rather of major issues such as denying that there is a final judgment and the return of Jesus, excusing sexual deviancy, and robbing the flock for their own benefit. Yes, earthquakes will abound, pestilence and famine as well as persecution of believers. (Luke 21:11-12) All of these are signs, and we can see them today.

We should remember that the apostasy comes first before the return of the Lord. This is the clear teaching of the Apostle Paul in 2Thessalonians chapter 2. The Thessalonians were being told by a false teacher that the Lord had already returned and they missed it. (2Thessalonians 2:1-2) So Paul told them to stop worrying about that, because our gathering together to Jesus would be preceded by a rebellion. The Greek word is apostasy ³ *Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,* 2 Thessalonians 2:3 (ESV) The apostasy is ushered in by the numerous false teachers and by the revealing of the antichrist. The spirit of antichrist is certainly at work today. (1John 4:3) So rather than focus on the physical signs of this world being shaken, perhaps we would be better able to see the end times coming by watching the increase of false teachers.

Jude agrees with Paul. It is this sign of scoffers, also referred to as false teachers, that is the main mark of the last days. The scoffers fill the seats of professors and pastors. They lead entire denominations. And what did Jude say that they follow? They are led by their ungodly passions. It is almost daily that we read in the news about another teacher student affair. It has been going on with professors for a whole generation. Just today a headline told of the University of Minnesota giving a \$4000 honorarium for a transgender photography display. Our schools teach subjective morality and then throw people into prison for living it. We certainly expect the world to act like the world, but this is what is being taught to the next generation of leaders.

Denominations are welcoming homosexual pastors. (1Corinthians 6:9) I received a letter last week from someone telling me they were leaving their church because the new lesbian pastor was openly expressive toward her partner at the church potluck. Some call that intolerant. It is intolerance toward Biblical standards.

We are mocking God, and He will not be mocked. (Galatians 6:7) The bottom line is rejection of the Bible, which was the basis for our laws and the faith of our founding

Commented [notes1]: 2 Peter 2:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children!

Commented [notes2]: 2 Peter 2:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error.

Commented [notes3]: Luke 21:11-12 (ESV)

¹¹ There will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and pestilences. And there will be terrors and great signs from heaven. ¹² But before all this they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors for my name's sake.

Commented [notes4]: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2 (ESV)

¹ Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, ² not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.

Commented [notes5]: 1 John 4:3 (ESV)

³ and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.

Commented [notes6]: 1 Corinthians 6:9 (NIV)

⁹ Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders

Commented [notes7]: Galatians 6:7 (ESV)

⁷ Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.

fathers. Our culture has decided the moral foundation upon which the greatest nation in history was built is somehow old fashion. I was stunned when one of the party conventions took God out of their platform only to put it back in as the attendees booed. We apologize because someone told the truth about Muhammed, at the age of 50, marrying a 9 year old girl. It is in Muslim writings but someone dared to tell the story in English! The shame is the Middle East knows the story better than we do because our news media won't cover it out of fear of offending someone!

We even turn a blind eye to the historical precedence of great powers that have come before. As they grow in wealth and luxury, they always turn from their moral foundation and are soon destroyed. Historical revisionism is indoctrinating each new generation with a make believe history. Man's depravity is continually downplayed while Christianity's overwhelmingly positive contributions are ignored or credited to others.

When godliness leads to prosperity there is more leisure and more time to indulge in entertainment and luxuries. Those legitimate pleasures are not bad in themselves, but when we seek ever greater indulgences because we are not being satisfied in God, we turn to illegitimate pleasures.

Who dares to stand up and declare that unless we get back to the word of God as our moral foundation we will be judged? I'm not talking about a need for a clergy run government, but a people that insist government be true to Biblical principles. We have spent our grandchildren's future by strapping them with an enormous debt for the sake of social experiments. We have aborted a generation of innocents. What should we expect from God but justice? And why have we gone down this road? This nation has been willing led there by false teachers following their ungodly passions of sensuality and greed. And so Jude began the letter by telling the readers to contend for the faith that was delivered to you. Learn the facts and share with gentleness, patience, and love.

Jude goes on to tell us another way to keep from being lured to sleep by these false teachings and their doctrine of sensuality. ²⁰ *But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit,* -Jude took most of his letter to warn the believers about this attack on the church of Jesus Christ. Now he is telling them what to do about it. These suggestions modify the next imperative to keep ourselves in the love of God. He tells us the way to stay in that safe place is to be built up in our most holy faith and pray in the Spirit! (Colossians 2:7)

First, We need to repent and trust Him for our salvation. We invite Him to fill us with His Spirit. Then we follow His example. We get built up by doing the things that Jesus practiced, and by communing with Him in prayer. What did Jesus show us to do? He walked in humility and served. ⁵ *Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,* ⁶ *who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,* ⁷ *but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being*

Commented [notes8]: Colossians 2:7 (ESV)

⁷ rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Philippians 2:5-8 (ESV)

The false teachers always want to lead. They'd rather be the supreme authority, but if they can't then they will seduce as many as they can to follow them. In the end they want to be served rather than to serve. (Mark 10:45) They'd rather give orders than obey and so they exalt themselves and their "special calling". Jesus' example is to humble one's self and serve while obeying God and His word. The truth He spoke was extremely counter-cultural. We need a whole new generation of rebels, rebels against the decay of our Christian heritage!

Serving is a discipline that is sorely lacking in many churches. Our trustees have certainly exemplified service. They come every week and just ask what needs to be done. Your deaconesses and elders are always ready to serve you in any way they can, through prayer or a visit. You can tell the genuine followers of Jesus because they aren't barking orders; they are serving you as they serve the Lord. They are humble about it, not boasting of what they have done. They know if anything good was accomplished it was by the grace of God. (1Corinthians 1:31)

We build ourselves up by regular time in the Word and dwelling on what we have read. The Word is our spirit's nourishment, so we take time to be in it daily. But we must avoid racing through it. We need to let it speak to us. Then meditate on what the Lord was saying through it. (Joshua 1:8) That will often lead to memorizing a passage that is speaking to our heart.

We build ourselves up by praying in the Spirit as Jude said. Some think this means praying in tongues (1Corinthians 14:4) and others think it means praying as led by the Spirit. (Romans 8:26-27) Paul did say that praying in tongues builds up the one that has that gift. (1Corinthians 14:4) Certainly all our prayers should be prayed as led by the Spirit. Time with God is where we are changed. You've probably noticed older couples that begin to look alike; they spend so much time together. You will look more like Jesus as you spend time with Him in prayer. (2Corinthians 3:18) Linger in His presence. Don't rush through your requests. Talk to Him. Listen in your spirit.

Knowing Jesus personally will safeguard you from the lure of sensuality. After time in His presence, you'll know which TV shows or movies to turn off. Your hunger for the Word will grow. We will be sharing more ways of building ourselves up in the faith in the months to come.

²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. Here is how Jesus said it, ⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. John 15:9-10 (ESV) Live in His love. Love is the first fruit of the Spirit. It is the Great

Commented [notes9]: Mark 10:45 (ESV)

⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Commented [notes10]: 1 Corinthians 1:31 (ESV)

³¹ so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Commented [notes11]: Joshua 1:8 (ESV)

⁸ This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Commented [notes12]: 1 Corinthians 14:4 (ESV)

⁴ The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.

Commented [notes13]: Romans 8:26-27 (ESV)

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Commented [notes14]: 1 Corinthians 14:4 (ESV)

⁴ The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies builds up the church.

Commented [notes15]: 2 Corinthians 3:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

Command, to love God with our all. Jesus said that if we obey His commandments that we will keep ourselves in the love of God. If we love Him, we will want to obey. And His command was to love God and our neighbor as ourselves. (Mark 12:33)

How could we pull away from being in the love of God? We pull away by listening to the scoffers, denying the word delivered to us, and trying to find our satisfaction in some pleasure rather than in Christ. We must constantly choose keep ourselves in the love of God. It is an easy choice when we are being built up in Him.

We keep ourselves in the love of God while we await the mercy of Jesus. This is looking forward to the return of Jesus and our rich welcome into our heavenly home. Have you dwelt on that lately? Sing I Can Only Imagine. Think about the joy that will fill your heart when we enter the heavenly city. (Colossians 3:1)

²² And have mercy on those who doubt; God had mercy on us and so we owe mercy to others. He is probably referring to those who are wavering because of the false teachers' message. Be gracious to them. Show them the love of God. (Galatians 6:1) Don't rail on them because they don't instantly understand their error. The goodness of God leads us to repentance. (Romans 2:4) Let them see the kindness and goodness of our Savior. That will draw them. Warn them of the destructiveness of the path they are taking. Point them back to the love of God displayed on the cross.

²³ save others by snatching them out of the fire; Some will already be practicing the loose lifestyle of the false teachers. Don't give up on them. If they will listen, help them escape. Sometimes the consequences of going down that path will wake them up and give you an opportunity to guide them back to fellowship.

Pastor Jim is exemplifying this as his family personally is involved in helping a family that is escaping out of the fire, going above and beyond to see them set free. Our world has so many in the fire and only accepting Jesus as Lord of their life can snatch them out of it. If you lead someone to that point, you then must help pull them all the way out by being there to see that they are disciples.

to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh. Some will go full bore into the teachings of the false teachers. If they see their error show mercy, but be careful not to get caught up in their sin. (Galatians 6:1) Unlike Cain, we need to declare there is a Judge, and we must all give an account. Without Christ taking our punishment, we will have to face it on our own. We must distance ourselves from the destructiveness they have chosen. We can't preach freedom in Christ if we share their sin. We can't tell them we can live without sin if we compromise in it. We must hate the thing that once enslaved them and us and see it for what it is. Only then will we run from it. (1Timothy 2:22)

Commented [notes16]: Mark 12:33 (ESV)

³³ And to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

Commented [notes17]: Colossians 3:1 (ESV)

¹ If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Commented [notes18]: Galatians 6:1 (ESV)

¹ Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.

Commented [notes19]: Romans 2:4 (ESV)

⁴ Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?

Commented [notes20]: Galatians 6:1 (ESV)

¹ Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.

Commented [notes21]: 2 Timothy 2:22 (ESV)

²² So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

Throughout this series we have been closing with this benediction. ²⁴ *Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy,* ²⁵ *to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.* It is a powerfully comforting thought. I know a few of you have memorized it. Jude has told us to persevere, and now tells us how.

We are to watch out for the false teachers. We are aware of their tactics. We should build ourselves up in our most holy faith and pray in the Spirit. We should fear the Lord and His justice lest we remove ourselves from the love of God. But ultimately, it is the Lord that keeps us from stumbling. (Romans 16:25)

We should look to Him morning by morning and remember how weak we are. We should be praying as the Lord taught us, to deliver us from evil. (Matthew 6:13) When temptation to compromise comes in like a flood, we should run to the Word and prayer and get prayer support from the family of God. To try to face temptations alone is foolish. It is only the Lord who can keep you from stumbling.

Jesus is the only One that can present us blameless before the presence of His glory with great joy. (Ephesians 1:4) If we go any other way into the presence of His glory, it will not be with joy, let alone great joy. But just think about the day when you know God our Father will see us in the righteousness of Christ. (1Corinthians 1:30) The love and acceptance we will enjoy is indescribable. (1Corinthians 2:9) Not only can Jesus do it, He will do it if we continue to put our hope and trust in Him! That is what this benediction is declaring. Aren't you glad He has the power to bring you all the way home without stumbling? Aren't you glad that when you stand before a just and holy God you will be found blameless because you are clothed in the righteousness of Jesus? Hallelujah! What great things He has done for us!

Jude has warned us about falling and told us how to persevere, because all glory, majesty, dominion and authority belong to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord. He is the glorious One. All goodness shines forth through Him. He is the Majestic One. When all the kings and presidents and dictators and false teachers have come and gone, after man has failed at his best attempts to rule himself, Jesus will stand alone as the Majestic ruler of all. (Mark 12:36) He will have dominion over all things! He will be the sole and final authority. That is the way it always has been. That is the way it is now, and that is the way it will be forever. So we better get on board! Amen? We better persevere by His grace!

Questions

- 1 What is the most common warning about the end times?
- 2 What is the scoffers' motivation?
- 3 In what ways has our country abandoned its moral foundation?
- 4 What should we expect?

Commented [notes22]: Romans 16:25 (ESV)

²⁵ Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages

Commented [notes23]: Matthew 6:13 (ESV)

¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Commented [notes24]: Ephesians 1:4 (ESV)

⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love

Commented [notes25]: 1 Corinthians 1:30 (ESV)

³⁰ And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

Commented [notes26]: 1 Corinthians 2:9 (ESV)

⁹ But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him"

Commented [notes27]: Mark 12:36 (ESV)

³⁶ David himself, in the Holy Spirit, declared, "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet."

- 5 What is the danger of prosperity?
- 6 How do we build ourselves up in the faith?
- 7 How do we keep ourselves in the love of God?
- 8 Why must we be merciful to doubters?
- 9 How are we kept from stumbling?
- 10 Why should we heed Jude's instruction?