

Church Terrorism

Jude 1:11

(preached Pine Grove 3/18/18; Sunday AM)

Introduction

On September 20, 2001, only 5 days after the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, George W. Bush addressed Congress and the world...

In his speech, Bush announced a worldwide campaign against terrorism...

In his remarks, he simply said that the “war on terror” had begun in the United States and around the world...

Most see that war continuing today, 17 years later.

And the sides of this war are simply the civilized nations of the world verses the terror organizations of the world, like the Taliban, Al-Qaeda, and ISIS..

However, the great difficulty of this war is the the enemies doesn't line up on the opposite side of a battlefield and duke it out.

Instead, the terrorists hide and then strike and then go back into hiding..

They don't fight fair..

Instead, just like the 911 attacks, they weasel their way into a country and then literally explode on the scene...

Well, the war on terror has generated some pretty vocal supporters and opponents, but nearly everyone has an opinion about it...

And regardless of how a person feels, there is no doubt that billions of dollars and countless lives has been spent in fighting the war on terror...

In that way, the war on terror affect us all...

The sad reality is that very few people care or even show much concern for the war on terror within the church...

You see, there have always been terrorists in the church...

They don't carry assault rifles and fly planes into building...

Instead, their assault is on the truth and their victory is leading others to hell...

Now I am downplaying the war on terror in the world.

Evil is real and so are evil people and we should fight those who seek to kill those made in the image of God..

But even in the terrorist kills the true Christian, heaven still awaits...

Unfortunately, if the spiritual terrorist in the church is successful in his or her attacks, hell awaits their victims...

In other words, the stakes in fighting the terrorist in the church are much higher...

Yet, the concern over the spiritual terrorist is much lower..

In fact, the culture of the church today approves anyone who stands in a pulpit or teaches in a church classroom..

Today, it is bad manners to speak ill of anyone who declares himself a Christian...

Today, if you identify a terrorist in the church, they vilify you and insult you and call you unloving and unkind and unChristlike....

Yet, they forget that Jesus speak most of his ministry warning people about the terrorists in his day in the form of Pharisees and Saducees.

You see, spiritual terrorists have always existed in the world...

And it has often fallen on the shoulders of the people of God to identify these evil people who seek to harm the church...

Yet, now the war on church terrorism has pretty much ended as the majority of the church has no interest in protecting the purity of the church..

As you know immigration policy is a hot button issue in our country now...

And though there are many sides to the debate, one central issue in immigration is trying to prevent the terrorist from sneaking into this country...

I listen to people debate the best immigration policy, but no one is concerned about how to keep the spiritual terrorist out of the church..

In fact, most Christians spend way more time talking about immigration and global terrorism than church terrorism...

In fact, most Christians know way more about how to identify a terrorist wanting to harm them physically than the terrorist wanting to harm them spiritually...

Most Christians can spot the terrorist in the crowd but have n clue how to spot the terrorist in the church...

And what a shame because the terrorist in the church poses a much greater danger...

Jesus even said in Matthew 10:28..

28 Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in [x]hell.

So we need more Bible and less 24 hour news channels...

WE need more knowledge of the word than Homeland Security bulletins...

Well, the book of Jude is our guide to terrorists in the church...

These men who sneak over the border of the church, and find a place in the church, but eventually reveal themselves as they seek to blow up the church...

Jude saw these church terrorists at work, and it disturbed him so much that the Holy Spirit to write a letter to the church warning them of the spiritual terrorists in their midst...

And we have been creeping through Jude's letter simply because there is so much helpful information in it for us as a church today in 2018...

In case you don't know, spiritual terrorism is widespread in 2018...

Nearly any church today may have any number of false teachers lurking behind the scenes waiting on the opportunity to launch their attacks..

And our best defense is simply to know what these false teachers look like so we are prepared if we see one at work...

So far, Jude has been giving us the spiritual terrorist handbook by offering 3 character traits in verse 4, followed by 3 previews of the end of terrorists in verse 5-7...

And last week, we noted 3 actions of these apostate false teachers in verse 8-10...

Today, we seek to add to our outline of Jude's letter in verse 11-16...

As we take note the ancestors of the apostates, learn some more attributes of the apostates, and then finish with the aftermath of the apostates...

Let's jump into verse 11 as we see the ancestors of the apostates..

VII. The Ancestors of the Apostates (11)

Jude 11

11 Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay [k]they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

When we arrive at verse 11, we are in the middle of heart of this letter that God inspired Jude to write...

After a short introduction in verses 1-2, Jude tells his readers in verse 3-4 the reason for his letter..

The truthfulness of the Christian faith was under assault and true believers must rise and contend for the faith...

And the battle for the faith was with people who had crept into the church unnoticed , according to verse 4..

These people, who we have identified as false teachers or apostates, were unsaved people who hung around the church...

Even looked the part of a Christian, may have even spoke like a Christian, but the truth is that they were never saved..

And they crept in the church to lure people away from the true gospel...

So the heart of Jude's letter is to help us identify these false teachers....

And verse 11 is smack dab in the middle of what Jude's main point...

So, he begins to offer the readers some historical examples of apostates...

And these 3 examples comes from the OT in the persons of Cain, Balaam, and Korah...

I would love to take us to all these examples in the OT, but let me just summarize the error of these men in helping us understand the nature of these Christian terrorists...

Most of you know the story of Cain...

If not, you can read about him in Genesis...

Cain was the first son of Adam and Eve, followed by their second son Abel.

Once Cain and Abel had grown up, they went to offer a sacrifice to God...

Able brought a blood sacrifice in the form of an animal of his flocks, while Cain brought a sacrifice in the form of the fruit of his garden.

God accepted Abel's sacrifice but rejected Cain's sacrifice...

However, God offered Cain another opportunity to bring an appropriate sacrifice, but instead of going to bring the Lord an animal sacrifice, he kills his brother instead...

Now, what is the way of Cain that is talked about here in the book of Jude?

Simply put, the way of Cain is to ignore his commands and worship Him the way you desire to worship Him..

Cain had certainly been told the appropriate sacrifice to bring to the Lord, but he like many false teachers don't do well with God's commands...

So he went to the garden and decided what he wanted to bring to God...

But not is disobedience the way of Cain, so is the sin of destroying someone who simply obeys the Lord...

Cain, like many in the church, wasn't content to just leave quietly...

No, he left but not before he killed his brother..

You see, false teachers and false believers get angry with people who are truly saved and live by that truth...

John MacArthur rightly criticized the false teaching ministry of Benny Hinn a few years back, and Benny Hinn went on TV and said.....

Quote "I wish God would give me a Holy Ghost machine gun and I'd blow his head off."

This is the morality of false teacher...

Cain was called out by God in his disobedience, and if he could have killed God, he would have...

Instead, he killed his brother who was made in God's image...

This is the morality of a false teacher...

He is not a kind and gentle but misguided man...

He is lost and an enemy of God guided by animal instinct...

And Cain is the model for all the false converts that follow after him...

The second ancestor of the false teacher is Balaam..

The account of Balaam is found in the book of Numbers in chapters 22-24...

Balaam was in the mold of Cain because he too refused to obey the Lord.

Balaam was hired by the king of one of Israel's rivals to pronounce a curse on the people of God..

Though Balaam was not a prophet of God, God said to Balaam, "Do not curse Israel for they are blessed by me."

And though God prevented Balaam from pronouncing a curse on Israel by making Balaam's donkey talk to him, Balaam eventually led the people of Israel to sin against God and marry unbelievers...

This led to problems in Israel, but the example of Balaam is not only disobedience but greed...

Because Balaam only acted because the king of Moab had lots of money to offer him..

False teachers are not only disobedient and immoral, they are driven by money..

Also make this note about Balaam..

He was a little worse than Cain because Balaam led many more to follow him into disobedience, which is always the goal of the false teacher...

However, a step further down the road of the false teacher is the ancestor of modern day apostates is the person of Korah..

Jude speaks of Korah's rebellion to remind his readers and us that false teachers not only disobey God and lead others to disobey God, they also will openly attack God's chosen leaders..

In the days of Korah, Moses was designated by God to lead the nation of Israel...

Korah was supposed to be priest in the nation of Israel but he was denied that privilege for an unknown reason...

Instead of simply accepting this as a man of God, he gathered two more men and challenged Moses' leadership of the nation of Israel...

You see, false teachers understand that the first step to their ascension to places of ungodly leadership begins with the overthrow of godly leaders in the church..

So Korah took on Moses, and false teachers today take on true teachers of the Word of God..

Now, the rebellion of Korah was worse also because Korah was able to get 15,000 people to join him in his rebellion..

However, Korah went the way of Cain and Balaam because he and his 15000 followers were destroyed when the earth opened up and swallowed them in Numbers 16...

Yet all 3 of these men were the ancestors for the modern day apostate...

Cain's disobedience, Cain's self-created worship...

Balaam's disobedience, Balaam's greed...

Korah's disobedience, Korah's lack of respect for leadership...

All of thee have marked the false teacher through the years and still mark them today...

Now, let' move from the ancestors of the apostates to the attributes of the apostates, and we get a long interesting list of these attributes in verses 12-13...

VIII. The Attributes of Apostates (12-13)

We have already highlighted some of the attributes of the apostates, but here Jude gives us a picture of them in nature..

The first attribute of the false teacher is that he is like a hidden reef in the sea...

Verse 12..

12 These are the men who are [l]hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves;

The pattern of the early church was to meet very often in homes to hear the apostles teaching, to observe the Lord's Supper and to share a meal together...

These gatherings were often called love feasts because they highlighted the love that Christians had for one another...

Well, false teachers would come to these meetings and meals but they were looking to crash the gathering with their twisted worship and view of the Lord...

But note what Jude says about them...

They ate with the early church but did it without fear..

False teachers are fearless...

In other words, their God-given conscience is so seared that they will boldly sin without any sense of fear..

But not do they feast without fear, they care only for themselves...

Watch folks who seem to care only for their immediate needs...

Paul speaks of those in the early church who would eat before everyone else was fed..

This is the idea of a person who shows no concern for others...

This is a mark of the false teacher...

Continuing in verse 12..

“clouds without water, carried along by winds;

False teachers are also filled with empty promises...

I think we have all seen days where the clouds looked like they were filled with rain but not a single drop fell all day...

This is the false teacher...

Watch them on TV.

They promise health, wealth, and a life of ease if you will just send them a check for \$50, but all you get is an empty promise and a smaller bank account..

The idea of being carried along by the winds is the instability of these false teachers...

They are so unstable that a gentle wind can change their mind and direction in life...

They have no sure foundation because they have rejected the solid rock of Jesus Christ..

We get a 3rd attribute at the end of verse 12..

autumn trees without fruit, [m]doubly dead, uprooted;

Much like the picture of clouds without water, we see the picture of trees without fruit, which suggests the lack of spiritual fruit...

These men and women who pose as true Christian teachers produce no spiritual fruit because they lack the Holy Spirit which is the root of all fruit in our lives...

But even worse than not having the fruit of the spirit of God, they are also lacking fruit because they are uprooted...

It's one thing for the branches of the tree to be dead, much much worse for the whole tree to be dead...

Yet this is the picture of the false teacher...

He is doubly dead...

No life in his branches and no life in his root...

It is only a matter of time until the whole tree is thrown in the fire....

Then in verse 13, we get two more pictures of these false teachers...

13 wild waves of the sea, casting up their own [n]shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the [o]black darkness has been reserved forever.

The first is the picture of the waves of the ocean...

Jude calls these wild waves that produce a lot of foam...

As the ocean rolls, often the bottom of the sea is pulled to the top of the waves...

If you ever take note of the beach after a storm, there is often seaweed and other sea materials dumped on the beach by the waves...

The wild immorality of the false teacher is like a wild ocean wave that dumps the dirt of his heart all over the church...

The false teacher's own shameful sin is often put on display for all the world to see...

And then in the final part of verse 13, Jude uses one more example in creation to give us a picture of the false teacher...

He is a wandering star...

Again, Due highlights the inconsistent nature of false teachers...

As we think of the north star, we think of a fixed entry in our sky...

All the other stars rotate around that northern star from our perspective on earth...

Sailors have used it for years to navigate...

People have used it for centuries to walk at night..

And though the other move around it, the also move in a predictable pattern...

The only star of the sky that wanders is a shooting star, which isn't a star at al but a meteor zooming across the sky and burning out quickly..

This is the picture of the false teacher who flashes on the scene but burns out very quickly...

He or she may gain a lot of attention for a while but time and truth go in hand...

And given enough time, the truth about these people comes out..

And Jude says that those wandering stars end up in the black darkness of a lake of fire that was created just for them..

With that picture of judgment in mind, we must get to verses 14-16, which give us reminder in greater details of the judgment coming to these spiritual terrorists...

We can call this...

IX. The Aftermath of the Apostates (14-16)

14 It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord came with [p]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.”

Without dragging through all the details of this prophecy by Enoch, the point of Jude in mentioning Enoch is simple...

God has promised the judgment and destruction of all false teachers ever since the beginning of time...

In other words, Enoch, who was a prophet of God in the very beginning of time, but God wanted him to let the world know that judgment was coming to all false prophets, teachers, and believers eventually...

You see, one discouraging aspect of following the Lord is witnessing the prosperity of those who claim to be believers but really aren't..

There are very few weeks go back that I am not upset by folks claiming to be Christians who in fact are not...

This would include false teachers, false believers, false converts...

It is simply very discouraging to watch liars succeed in the world and especially in the church..

Yet, the remedy to that discouragement is that God sees it all, and he will deal with it all at the appropriate time..

Many false teachers have died but all will face judgment at the final Great White Thorne Judgment as Jesus will sentence them all to a lake of fire...

Injustice, unrighteousness, apostasy, false religions, false teachers, those who prey on the true church, will all be resurrected and stand before the throne of God and be cast into a never ending lake of fire...

Though that is sobering, it is also encouragement to all the true people of God who have been plagued by counterfeit people of God for so long...

And then before changing the subject in verse 17, which we will get into next week, Jude closes out this section with a few more traits of the church terrorist...

Verse 16..

16 These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; [q]they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage.

I hope you are loading up your notebook or making mental notes of all these characteristics of the false teacher...

The Lord, through Jude, is providing so much help to us here as we seek to guard ourselves and the church from these false teachers...

So let's quickly make a few more notes here that are great additions to what we already know about these men and women....

These false teachers are grumblers....

They smile to your face and grumble behind your back.

Some people are never content and that is certainly true of the false teacher...

And in his discontentment, he or she not only grumbles and complains, they find fault in others...

Here is how it goes in real life...

“I love our preacher but he talks too much and preaches too long...”

“That’s the reason the church isn’t growing.”

Or something like...

“He is a really nice guy but he gets on my nerves in Sunday School class.”

We will never be able to learn much if he stays in here.

I think I could do a much better job...

False teachers are grumblers that so discontent and seek to undermine the ministry of others...

And the reason they do is to pursue their own lusts..

Maybe they want power or influence or money....

It doesn’t matter what they want, they use their mouths to get it..

So they grumble, blame, and then notice that they cover those up with their flattery...

It never ceases to amaze me how people people follow up compliments with complaints...

I love the service, but...

I enjoy the church, but...

I love the message, but...

People who come to you with flattering words often hide evil intentions...

Now that is to say that all flattery is bad...

WE all need encouragement...

But be very on guard to people who always flatter you...

They may pat you on the back today and stick a knife in it tomorrow...

False teachers love to do that...

I have witnessed men who cozied up to the preacher so that they could sabotage his ministry...

IT is a sad reality but the devil often works through flattery...

Be very careful church.

Flattery is not always motivated by love; it can also be motivated by sinful lust..

Conclusion

Church, this is a picture of our enemy...

You know, the devil doesn't come to the church in a red suit with a pitchfork..

He sends his people to terrorize the church but dressing them up like us, making them sound like us, helping them sneak in to us, and then blowing us up from the inside...

Yet, just like we aren't to live in fear of terrorist in our world, we aren't to live in fear of the terrorist in the church...

Listen to what Jude down in verses 20-21 as the way to combat spiritual terrorism..

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, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.

We will look at this more in depth next week, but let me point out the ending to that verse...

The way to not live in fear of the false teacher is to live in anticipation of true King returning..

I will simply say this.

I can't fight off all the false teachers in the world, but I can pray for Christ to come and deal with them..

On the morning of Sep 11, 2001, John Mahoney was working on the 19th floor of the world trade center when the first plane struck...

He was former military and immediately thought it was a bomb...

Calmly, he assessed the situation and began leading people to the stairs...

He said there was chaos...

People screaming but he and a few others were able to calm them by praying...

Eventually, they made it to the stairs and started to descend...

Mahoney began reciting Scripture and he said that calmed him enough to know that quote...

“Regardless of the physical outcome that morning, everything would be all right (for me)”

Mahoney did make it out along with many others, but as he tells his story today, he reminds his listener that the greatest remedy for terrorism is an assurance of life after death...

What a great reminder to all of us who live in world of terrorists and even are part of church that attracts spiritual terrorists...

Though we should be prepared and trained for either one, we must be pray for the Lord's return and be ready to meet him if terror comes to us...

Those who are truly saved can survive in the world because of their assurance of heaven even if tragedy comes to them..

Those who are truly saved can also survive in the church and not be led astray because they know that the Spirit protects from error...

I pray that is true of you today..

If not, give your life to Christ...

Turn from your sins.

Put your trust in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

And experience the peace of forgiveness of sin..

The promise of a home in heaven..

And the security in Christ that can guard you spiritually today and forever...

Let us pray.