

## **“Churchland” Security**

Jude 1:17-25

(preached Pine Grove 3/25/18; Sunday AM)

### **Introduction**

Just recently, SC’s acting governor Nikki Haley resigned when President Trump asked her to serve as the US ambassador to the United Nations.

Though it is quite unusual for governors to leave before their term is up, sometimes an opportunity to serve the country presents itself and resigning is the only option..

Such was the case for Tom Ridge, who resigned as governor of Pennsylvania in 2001 to become the first head of the Department of Homeland Security.

Strangely enough, the Department of Homeland Security did not exist when Ridge was elected governor of Pennsylvania in 1995...

It was only after the terrorist attacks of Sep 11 2001 that George W Bush created the Department of Homeland Security and asked Tom Ridge to be the first head of that department..

Ridge was seen as a no nonsense leadership who would get the department up and running...

His mission was simple...

George W Bush wanted Ridge to gather all the efforts of all the powers that be in Washington together to find the terrorist behind the attacks on 9/11 and to also work together to prevent future attacks..

Needless to say, Ridge was extremely successful in consolidating a lot of manpower and helping them work together to locate and punish terrorist while also working to keep America free of future acts of evil..

In fact, the office of Homeland Security became the Department of Homeland Security in 2002 under the leadership of Ridge.

Its now one of 15 federal departments of the United States, and though Homeland Security now has a number of responsibilities, its primary responsibility is to keep our nation safe from terrorist both foreign and domestic.

Now, that is an incredibly difficult job description, but it is a necessary one in this day and age...

One of the first tools of Homeland Security was the Advisory System that used colors to indicate terrorist threats from day to day...

Green was allow threat all the way up to red which was called a severe threat..

That system ended in April 2011, and was replaced by the National Terrorism Advisory System...

However, the purpose of these systems was to raise the awareness of the public to possible terrorist attacks in hopes of saving lives...

Sadly, the church has no such system to warn its people of spiritual terrorist attacks...

If it did, the alert system would be on RED all the time since Christian terrorist are growing every day in the world.

In fact, every time I walk into a Christian bookstore, I see the playbooks of spiritual terrorists on the shelves, and I watch people buy those books which explode like bombs in their lap...

You see, as we talked about last week, most Christians are way better equipped to spot a terrorist in the community that they are a terrorist in the church...

Because of that lack of discernment, they walk into a Christian bookstore and have no idea what is good and what is bad..

Because of that lack of discernment, they turn on the radio and hear preaching and have no idea that they may be listening to a false teacher...

The unfortunate truth is this...

The church has ignored the warning system that the Bible gives us in regards to spiritual terrorism...

You see, the Lord has provided an “office of churchland security” in the Bible..

Not only does the book of Jude and others warn us of coming attacks, they teach us how to protect ourselves in terms of false teaching spiritual terrorist..

Tragically, the church has ignored those warnings...

In fact, few in the church have ever read about these warnings since the church as a whole is ignorant of what the Bible says on most issues...

Well, that is not going to be the case for us...

We are not going to be biblically ignorant of false teachers in the church who act as spiritual terrorists.

And Just has been key in giving us insight into these people who sneak in the church and seek to launch their spiritual attacks from within...

We have learned that these people are counterfeit Christians..

On the surface, they look like us and talk like us and fellowship with us...

But behind the scenes, they are ungodly people...

Sexual immorality, greed, resistance to authority mark these people...

They are filled lustful desires, so they prey on people to gain an audience and find more victims..

They sin frequently and take advantage of grace.

They claim direct revelation from God through visions and dreams..

They rebuke the devil because they don't understand the unseen spiritual world..

They make promises that they can't keep.

They lack spiritual fruit because they lack the Holy Spirit.

They are unstable and inconsistent...

They lack a sure spiritual foundation because they don't have a proper view of the Word of God...

They grumble behind your back..

They blame others.

They speak flattering words to win your trust but don't have your best interests at heart...

Now, we know that these men and women will meet a sure judgment of the Lord.

Enoch predicted that long ago.

The OT prophets looked forward to that.

Jude assures of that in a number of places..

Yet, that day has not come, and these spiritual terrorists are still on the loose...

So, what do we do as believers in response to these people?

Well, the end of Jude's letter is going to give us what I call the antidote to apostates..

And he is going to give us that cure for Christian terrorists in 3 parts...

The first part of our vaccination for these church villains is this...

### **I. Don't Be Surprised (17-19)**

One of our greatest blessings in seminary was the kindness of a couple families who bought us plane tickets to come home once in the summer and at Christmas...

Now traveling with children is difficult enough, but getting children through Los Angeles International Airport security checkpoints is quite stressful..

However, we did that 3 or 4 times, not to mention the checkpoints at other airports we had to endure...

And each time, we went through those checks, my radar went up as a dad...

I was checking the other people around me..

Then we we got to our terminal, I did another scan of the people waiting to board the plane with us..

Then once we were seated, another scan of the surroundings..

Now why such a heightened sense of the people around me...

I remembered the attacks of 9/11...

I remembered all the crazy incidents on planes...

I was aware of the past so it affected my present situation.

Look, don't be misled by a false teacher and then say you didn't know that could happen...

Listen to Jude verse 17....

***17 But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, 18 that they were saying to you, "In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts." 19 These are the ones who cause divisions, [r]worldly-minded, [s]devoid of the Spirit.***

What is the point of these verses?

Expect false teachers in the church...

Jude tells his readers the apostles of Christ predicted these attacks by false teachers...



Here is what Paul said in the book of Acts to the Ephesian elders...

We just read this a few weeks ago in our Scripture reading...

Acts 20:28-31...

***28 Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you [q]overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He [r]purchased [s]with His own blood. 29 I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.***

Jesus Himself said this...

Matthew 7:15

***15 “Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.***

John said this..

1 John 4:1

***1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.***

Let's be clear...

False teachers exist in the world and in the church...

I am sure it makes people uncomfortable for me or other pastors to mention names associated with false teaching...

However, it should encourage you to know that I believe verses 17-19 because I believe the words of the Bible...

And if the Bible says that false teachers exist, I am on the lookout for them...

You are my flock and I don't want you led astray by a false shepherd...

I don't want to see you eating from the field of a false teacher...

The grass may look greener but it is full of poison..

My job is not to give you a list of false teachers each week, but my job is remind you that false teachers are lurking everywhere in the shadows...

And the book of Jude tells us they exist and what they do, so don't be surprised when you see them...

And don't be tempted to follow them when they call...

According to verse 19, they love to divide people, they love the world, and they love their lusts..

So when you see those things in someone, don't be surprised that they are a false teacher...

You have been warned.

Could you imagine someone buying a smoke detector, hanging it on his wall, and hearing it go off in the middle of night but figuring it was just a false alarm and going back to sleep?

Why buy it if you aren't going to respond to it when it warns you of fire?

I feel the same way about folks who hear the warnings of the Bible but fail to respond to them...

So, don't be surprised by false teachers...

They are everywhere in and around the church today...

And you better know the Bible well enough to be able to spot them before they spot you...

The second part of the antidote for apostates is this...

## **II. Don't Be Satisfied (20-21)**

Let's read verses 20-21...

***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.***

Though Jude tells us to expect false teachers, that doesn't mean we don't need to guard ourselves from them.

So how do we do that?

Well, here are 4 easy ways to protect yourself from terrorists in the church..

#1 - Build yourself up in the faith.

I love the picture here.

The picture of construction..

This is who we are in Christ...

At salvation, we are made new.

The Bible calls us new creatures.

We are called to put off the old man and put on the new man..

Yet, that is not a one time process...

Now, some construction happens immediately...

Our foundation of a life of sin is replaced by a foundation of life now built on our desire to please the Lord.

Yet, the construction isn't done at salvation...

In fact, construction is never over in the Christian life.

We are growing and building and being made new every day...

But how does that happen?

Does God just do it all while we sleep?

Yes and no...

The Holy Spirit works in us as we work on ourselves...

But what are the materials we need to build our faith?

Simple.

First, you need a steady diet of the Word of God.

Daily time in the Bible.

Study of the word in Sunday School.

Hearing the word in preaching.

Fellowshipping around the world with others and talking about what you are leaning and growing in your understanding...

The building of your faith is essential to keeping you safe from the attacks of false teachers..

Now why is that?

Well, if you don't know what the Scriptures teach, you don't know what Christianity truly is..

I hear people all the time talk about the value of all the religions of the world...

In fact, I was talking to someone this week who claimed to a Christian and said, quote, "all the religions of the world essentially say the same thing..Catholics and Jews and Baptists are essentially identical..and it really don't

matter what you believe as long as you believe in something.”

I wasn't in a position to jump on the table and start preaching...

I just simply said, “Im sorry to hear that.”

But that is the reality for most people even in the church.

And the reason for that is that no one knows what the Bible says..

And if you aren't being taught how to read and study and understand and apply the Bible properly, you are leading yourself wide open for an attack.

You must grow in your faith if not, you may realize that you never were a part of the faith at all...

Get busy building yourself up in the Word of God.

Second, back to verse 20...

Pray in the Holy Spirit...

The simple explanation here is that you pray according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in your life...

And if you are truly saved, you can't help but pray in the Spirit because the Spirit of God dwells inside you..

He guides your prayers unless you hindered the work of the Spirit in your life by living in unrepentant sin...

To pray is to fellowship with the Lord...

To express our desires, anxieties, cares to the Lord..

But ultimately, prayer is an acknowledgement that God is in control and that you are totally dependent upon Him...

Prayer puts us in our proper place before the Lord...

We are humbled before our God whenever we turn to him in prayer...

And the way that prayer protects us from false teachers is that it keeps us in touch with our true teacher...

Let me give you an example of this...

A great guard against adultery is to constantly communicate with your spouse.

When we stop talking to the one we love, and we start talking to someone else more, our defense against adultery is weakened...



Communication is a key to faithfulness both in marriage and in your primary relationship to the Lord...

Pray to guard your heart from false teachers..

A third way defense against false teachers is found in the first part of verse 21..

Keep yourself in the love of God...

Now in one sense, nothing can separate the believer from the love of God...

That is the point of Romans 8...

Yet, we must never forget that disobedience of God strains our relationship with him..

Look, all of you love your children unconditionally..

There is a love that you have for them that will never be broken, but we also know that our love for them can be strained by arguments, disobedience, lack of respect, etc..

The simple application is this...

A great defense against false teachers is to live in obedience to the word of God...

I cannot offer all the examples of people who were led away by false teachers because they weren't walking with the Lord in obedience to Him..

Keep obeying and that will keep you in the love of God and safe from the attacks of false teachers..

A final piece of arming yourself for false teachers is this..

Live in the anticipation of what is coming.

Jude simply says this..

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

A great guard against false teachers is to keep your eyes on eternity..

You see, false teachers promise the things of the world to you...

Health, wealth, and other material blessings of the world...

And if you are someone consumed with this world, their message always sounds better...

However if you are someone looking for the world to come, the things of this world won't be nearly as tempting...

I always tell people to look down in their Bibles and up to the Lord in prayer, and try to stop looking around so much at others...

If you can do that, you will be well guarded from the false teacher...

In other words, never get satisfied with where you are at in your sanctification...

Stay in the Word and build your faith, ..

Stay on your knees and pray in the Spirit,...

Stay away from sin and in the love of God,....

And stay with your eyes to the sky waiting on Christ...

So far, Jude helps us contend with false teachers by...

#1...not being surprised by false teachers and

#2...not being satisfied with our Christian growth...

A final action in the war for truth is found in verses 22-23..

### **III. Don't Be Self-Centered (22-23)**

We live in a culture obsessed with self...

This is often a me-first world, but the church is just the opposite...

We think of others before ourselves...

We are called to lay down our lives for others...

As John the Baptist said, I must decrease as Christ increases...

For that reason, our mission as a believer is go from a me-first attitude to a He-first attitude...

For that reason, we can't afford to be self-centered in any area of our Christian life even when it comes to false teachers...

We must, as Jude writes, be ready to rescue those caught in the grips of false teaching..

Let's read verses 22-23..

***22 And have mercy on some, who are doubting; 23 save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.***

Without taking too much time here, the people in false religion fall into 3 categories that we see here...

Some are being led astray by their own doubts about Christianity..

They are people who often call themselves open-minded in regard to truth..

I have seen people like this who literally read and believe everything...

They will go to a Baptist church, a Catholic mass, a Jewish synagogue and tell you that they are all good...

And they brag about so open minded about different kinds of truth....

But if you are open to truth, you are also open to error...

And these people wander aimlessly in the world.

The Lord tells us through to show mercy to these people, nit in the sense of letting them wander aimlessly through life but in the sense of telling them that everything can't be true...

It is mercy that calls us to confront these people being led astray by doubts..

The second and third group are found in verse 23...

The next group to rescue are those in the fire of fire of false religion...

And the word that Jude uses here are graphic..

They are in systems of false religions that are headed to hell..

Fire isn't used here as symbolic.

Some people are sitting atop the flames of hell if they don't come out from under these false teachers...

Jude moves beyond telling us to show mercy to telling us to save those folks...

Not in sense of beating salvation into them...

God is the only one who can save these people, but we are to plead with them to come to their senses and get out of the fire...

And the final group we are to reduce are those who are deep into these false religious systems...

This would include the teachers in these false religions and false forms of Christianity..

We are even called to rescue them...

But here, we are given a word of caution by the Lord...

Show mercy to them by be fearful, and the reason is that these folks are deeply committed to their false teachings...

They know the in and outs of their arguments..

They are sharp in the Bible and put the Christian with little Bible knowledge on his heels in a hurry...

Not only that, they can suck you in as well, so God adds to en of verse 23...

Make sure you are polluted by their filth in the process of trying to rescue them...

Let me give you an example of this inside and outside the church...

There are people who knock on your door...

Most likely in this area, you will see Jehovah's Witnesses..

And possibly a Mormon every once in while, but they prefer towns and cities..

When they come to your door, each of those groups comes in pairs..

One is being trained and the other is well seasoned..

One deserves your pity and one deserves your preparation...

I often target the trainee who is being lured into death sentence...

And I have great patience for them to help them understand the error of the system...

For the seasoned veteran, I usually just speak very straightforward about the lies of their false religious system...

They are hardened and committed and prepared for confrontation..

I may offer an argument against their system but I won't let them speak very long...

In the church, there are people who seem to float around in Christianity...

They never anchor themselves to the Bible...

They chase every ministry that looks good...



Though I am bothered by their lack of study of the Word of God, I want to be merciful and patient and kind but also clear to warn them of their inconsistencies...

On the other hand, false teachers in the church are the worst kind to deal with...

Most have built a little following to insulate themselves from attack, so you have to be careful when you try to reduce them...

I usually kill them with kindness and the word of God...

I have found it best to let the Word do the work..

These people want arguments and they want to make it personal..

The more I can stay away from the personal stuff and make it about what Scripture teaches, the better.

Look, the issue is never personal..

The issue is the truth of the word of God versus the error of man...

And that is the best way to try and reduce these people before it is too late...

Look, we can't be self-centered in the war on truth.

I want to protect as many as I can while also guarding my own heart...

## **Conclusion**

So, three ways to fight the false teacher...

#1 - Don't be surprised when they attack.

#2 - Don't be satisfied with be able to fight them off, but train yourself by reading, praying, obeying and looking to eternity.

#3 - Don't be self centered buy rescue as many as you can from the false teacher yourself.

My great uncle was on the Arizona on the morning of December 7, 1941 when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor.

He was once the few who made it off the boat...

The success of the Japanese attack was due to the element of surprise and lack of preparation by the US.

Here is a picture of what it may have looked like on that morning..

The picture of a lady hanging out laundry on a nice Sunday morning while Japanese planes arrived for their

attack is a great examples of the element of surprise and lack of preparation by US officials..

That is a picture that represents the church today in so many ways...

We are busy with the affairs of life but forget that false teachers buzz round us ready to destroy the church and even us if it were possible..

The lack of preparation is the church is incredible today...

People in churches who claim to love the Lord but never crack open the Bible..

Don't even bring it to church where they know it is going to be opened and studied...

This is the state of affairs in the church today...

False teachers hover over the church while most in the church are overcome with the affairs of the world to even notice...

Church, prepare yourself to fight the war on truth.

Open your Bibles to study, open your hearts to pray, obey the Lord, and think more about heaven than you do about the things of earth..

Only then are you ready to fight like a good soldier of Christ...

Only then do you any hope of not falling victims to the attacks of the these church terrorists...

Let us pray.