

Jude

by Peter Hammond

Peter Hammond's sermon on Jude emphasizes the urgent call to defend the faith against apostasy and false teachings while remaining grounded in Scripture.

Scripture: Matthew 13:55, Mark 6:3

Topics: "Apostasy Warning", "False Teachers"

Description

Peter Hammond preaches on the book of Jude, written by Jude, the brother of James and half-brother of Jesus. The sermon emphasizes the stern warning in Jude, challenging believers to stand firm in the faith, resist false teachers, and contend earnestly for the Gospel. Hammond highlights the importance of identifying and confronting false prophets who defile the Gospel, deny the Lordship of Christ, and lead others astray. The sermon stresses the seriousness of sin and apostasy, drawing parallels to divine judgments in history and warning of the impending judgment on false teachers and mockers.

Transcript

The Author

Jude, the brother of James, was the half-brother of Jesus. "Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon and Judas?" Matthew 13:55. Here Jude is mentioned fourth, so he could be the youngest of Mary's sons. "'Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary and brother of James, Joses, Judas and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?' So they were offended at Him." Mark 6:3. Here Jude is mentioned third, so certainly one of the youngest brothers. Judas, or Jude was a common name, but because of the treachery of Judas the apostle, most people who had the same name, quickly changed it to the abbreviation Jude.

A Stern Warning

This is a general Epistle written before AD 67. It is a letter of warning, very similar to 2 Peter, and written about the same time. Jude is a challenge to action during a time of apostasy. Jude is a strong and sharp letter, a stern rebuke.

Stand Fast

The message is to stand firm, to be grounded and rooted in the Faith, to build up your faith, to grow in your faith, to contend for the Faith, to be loyal to Jesus Christ. Be faithful in fighting for the Faith. Expect

opposition. Resist false teachers. Oppose apostasy. Refuse to compromise to the spirit of godlessness in the world. Apathy assists apostasy. Care enough to confront. Truth conquers. Holiness matters. Jude describes false teachers and he calls us to defend the Gospel. Here is an anatomy of apostasy and the antidote to apostasy. Solus Christus! Sola Gratia! Sola Scriptura!

Contend Earnestly for the Faith

"Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to those who are called, sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ: Mercy, peace and love be multiplied to you. Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the Faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." Jude 1-4. Jude writes to the sanctified, those who are called and preserved in Christ Jesus. The Faith is like solid rock granite foundation. It is settled and we are to fight the good fight of Faith. We are to resist apostasy by being devoted to truth and faithful Biblical exposition.

The Faith is Under Fire

There is a need today to contend earnestly for the Faith. The Faith once delivered to the saints is so clear in the Scriptures and in the Creeds and Confessions of the Church: the Nicene Creed, the Apostles Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Creed of Chalcedon, the Synod of Dort, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Heidelberg Catechism, the London Confession of Faith of 1689 and from many other great gatherings of Godly leaders who have put together a clear definition of Biblical Faith. Yet much of this has been neglected or thrown out by some moderns. Some people may say, you do not need to defend the Gospel. However, there are many commands in the Bible to defend the Gospel, to fight the good fight of Faith and to contend for the Faith.

Denied, Defiled and Degraded

We are facing World Council of Churches apostasy, liberalism, skepticism and syncretism in many theological seminaries. There is a corruption and defilement of the Gospel. It has been diluted, distorted and outright denied. In other places it is being undermined. There are certain antinomians who deny the grace of God, pervert it and twist it. There are those who deny the Lordship of Christ. They say that the Law of God does not apply to them. Antinomians despise God's Law, but then make an idol of man's law! They lift it up and demand that the Great Commission must be subject to man's regulations. These men have made man sovereign and lifted up human idols above the Word of God.

Examples of Divine Judgement

"But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the Judgment of the great Day; as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Jude 5-7

The Seriousness of Sin Demands Judgement

Jude reminds us of the seriousness of sin and apostasy. After the Lord rescued up to 3 million Hebrews, out of Egypt, to become Israel, God destroyed every one of the adults, as He condemned them to wander in the wilderness for 40 years (1 year for every day they were scouting the promised land) because of their unbelief and rebellion against God. Only two of the adult generation, Joshua and Caleb, entered the Promised Land. The vast majority of those that God saved from slavery in Egypt were condemned to wander and die in the wilderness. The Lord reminds us, as the people He has saved, that if they were condemned for their lack of faith and for their disobedience, how can we think that we can get away with such blatant apostasy?

The Fallen Angels Are a Warning to Us

God condemned a third of the angels for their rebellion. How can we think He will do otherwise with our apostate generation?

The Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah Stands as a Warning

Fire and brimstone came down out of Heaven and annihilated all who lived in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Only Lot and his two daughters survived. Lot's wife, longingly looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt. Only three people were saved. There were violations of God's Laws. Sodom was full of perversion, being sexually immoral and going after "strange flesh". We know there was homosexuality and all kinds of vileness, including rape. The "strange flesh" refers to people having sexual relations across racial lines, not "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." Degenerate, miscegenate and eradicate.

Defiled and Disrespectful

"Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority and speak evil of dignitaries. Yet Michael the Archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, 'The Lord rebuke you!' But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves. Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit and perished in the rebellion of Korah." Jude 8-11

Dreamers and Character Assassins

Those who have a dream which is not from God, need to keep it to themselves. Some people have a ministry of criticism, they slander and are defiled and degrading. Those who venture into gossip and character assassination speak evil of others. The people of Israel wanted to have a funeral ceremony and burial for Moses when he died, in such a way that the people could make a pilgrimage to his gravesite, but God hid his body, so that the people were not able to idolise Moses' grave. Joshua was commanded to bury him quietly without anyone knowing where, but the devil was trying to obtain the body of Moses to return to the people of Israel. Even the most exalted Archangel, Michael, dealing with the most degraded creature imaginable, the devil, did not lower himself to a reviling manner. There are many who speak evil of those in authority, speaking about things they do not know. They damn to hell great people of the past, about whom they actually know nothing.

Cain, Balaam and Korah

False prophets are compared to the way of Cain who presumptuously thought that his grain offering was good enough for God. When God was pleased with Able's blood offering, which was not the fruit of his

own hands and labour, Cain's jealousy and hatred lead him to murder his brother, Able. People who are greedy for profit, who prophesy things for financial profit are like Balaam. Balaam's donkey had more spiritual discernment than the prophet did. Balaam's donkey saw the danger and saved the life of the wicked prophet who was willing to take money to place a curse on God's people. Korah was the rebel who gathered many people of Israel to protest against Moses as chosen one to lead. So, God sent an earthquake and Korah and his followers disappeared into a crevice in the ground. Clearly, God judges false teachers. Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. Envy results in destruction. What you sow is what you will reap.

Clouds without Water

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

Unfruitful and Unreliable

This describes false teachers. They promise so much and deliver very little. What good is a Christian who does not have the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Those who are not born again will not only die a physical death, but an eternal death in the lake of fire on the Day of Judgement. Those who are born again will only have to die once, a physical death, not a spiritual or eternal death. Twice dead is unregenerate. A human being who is cut off from his roots, his history, ancestry, genealogy, past, nation, people, denomination, all the different things that make us what we are. Being rootless will kill any tree. The sea foams and has crashing waves round a barrier or stone edifice. Many people have shipwrecked their faith like stormy waves on the rocks which foam up to their own shame. The Southern Cross star is something that you can bank your direction and life on, in the blackness of a dark night in the wilderness. But, a shooting, or wandering, star is unreliable for finding direction.

God Will Judge Those Who Speak Evil of Him

"Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, 'Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute Judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.'" Jude 14-15. How often have we come across people speaking evil things of God? God judges false teachers, idolaters and blasphemers. They are dangerous and useless. The Lord will come in Judgement. It may sometimes look like evil is succeeding and people are getting away with murder, heresy, deceit, falsehood, scams and enriching themselves in corruption. You may ask: Where is the Justice? God is giving themselves enough rope to hang themselves.

Great Swelling Words of Boasting and Flattery

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

warnings of different kinds of false prophets. We need to be aware and avoid false prophets. We need to resist false teaching and false teachers, by remembering the teachings of the Apostles contained in the New Testament and the writings of the Prophets as contained in the Old Testament. This is the rock solid foundation we need to build upon. The day will come when the rain will fall, the floods will rise and the storm will rage. Any house that is built on sand will collapse. The house built on the Rock will stand! In Eternity, we will find out how good our foundation has been. We need to remember the Words and promises of Jesus and His warnings against false prophets.

How to Identify False Prophets

The first 19 verses is an exposé of false prophets. They can be identified by the fact that they are proud, boastful and self-serving. They lack the fear of God. They are selfish, full of grumbling, complaining and scoffing. They denigrate and slander God's servants who were faithful in years past. They are flattering, divisive, worldly and display pretended spirituality. They are fruitless, they claim special revelation but lack Biblical fruit. They are faultfinders, lawless hypocrites. They claim authority but they are not submitted to God. If you are not under God's authority, you have no authority. They are short-lived and unreliable. You cannot make life decisions based on a wandering star. They are dangerous and useless.

Christian Duty

"But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy Faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh." Jude 20-23

Balanced Discipleship

It is important that we build our life and work on the solid rock of God's Word. Praying in the Spirit. Be Bible-based. Good, balanced Christian discipleship can be seen in the shape of a Cross: The vertical beam of the Cross symbolises us speaking to God in prayer and Him speaking to us through the Word of God. The upper beam represents praying to God in prayer and praise. The lower beam symbolises being rooted in the Word of God, both the Old and the New Testament. The horizontal beam can represent responsibility for believers in fellowship and relationship, our responsibility to unbelievers in evangelism. We need to be involved in Bible study, building up our holy Faith, in prayer in the Holy Spirit. We need to have fellowship with believers and we need to evangelise, rescuing the perishing. We need to be discerning. Some will only come to the Lord because of the terrors of hell and fear of the God. Others may need a more compassionate approach.

He is Able to Present You Faultless

"Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our Saviour, Who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen." Jude 24

The Ultimate Inspection in Eternity

The ultimate inspection is the Day of Judgement. In military training, we completed the obstacle course over and over again. When the day came that you were being watched by the Commanding Officer, you did not want to stumble or slip. You wanted to be flawless and make the best time ever, bearing in mind

the whole team. If the Army was that strict, what will the Day of Judgement be when the Lord comes and inspects our life, faith and works?

Summary

Be diligent. Be faithful. Be courageous. Contend earnestly for the Faith. Expose false teachers who turn the grace of God into godlessness and lewdness. Refute those who deny the Lord Jesus Christ. Fear God alone. Remember that our God is a righteous God. Remember the wrath of God against Egypt, against rebellious Hebrews, against Sodom and Gomorrah and against fallen angels. Those who go after strange flesh and practise sexual immorality, will suffer vengeance and eternal fire, like Sodom and Gomorrah did. Those who defile the flesh, reject authority and speak evil of what they do not know corrupt themselves, they are defiled and are defiling. Beware of false teachers who go the way of Cain, who run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit and perish in rebellion. Beware of the self-serving. The Lord will come again in wrath to execute vengeance on the wicked and on those who have spoken evil of His Name. The grumblers, complainers, boasters, mockers, the lustful and divisive, will face Judgement. Build yourself up in the most holy Faith, on the rock of God's Word. Pray in the Spirit. Keep in the love of God. Have compassion. Make distinctions. Be discerning. Be a soul winner. Rescue the perishing.

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