

## **How to Identify Terrorists in the Church**

Scripture: Jude 8

Code: 65-7

If you would open your Bible to the little epistle of Jude, the next to the last book in the Bible, just before the book of Revelation. In our study of Jude, we have sort of identified this epistle with the title of The War on the Truth, fighting the war on the truth. It is drawn essentially out of verse 3 where we are called to contend earnestly for the faith. And in our study tonight, we're going to begin to look at verses 8 and following which I will read in a few moments, after some introductory remarks.

We are literally day in and day out drowned by the media with images of terrorism. Terrorists have the attention of all of us. They have the attention of the world. You see it on television, you hear it on the radio, you see images in the newspapers. Every time you travel anywhere, whether you go by boat or plane or train, you're made very much aware of the careful security because everyone is afraid of terrorists. They represent a new kind of war and a very deadly kind of war, very different than conventional war. And they are very, very effective. Our minds are literally filled with the images of their destruction and death and the fear of people in the wake of that kind of assault.

And what makes terrorists so dangerous and so deadly really comes down to two things. One, they are not easily visible. They operate clandestinely. They are hidden. They are unknown. They do not wear a uniform. We don't know who they are. We don't know where they are. We don't know what they're going to do or how they're going to do it or when they're going to do it. We usually don't find this out until the deadly attack is already over.

The second thing that makes them so dangerous is they are willing to kill themselves for their cause. This has escalated terrorism to a new level in the world. There have always been terrorists but the new suicide bomber takes it to another level because people who are willing to kill themselves for their cause are not subject to any threat. They know no fear because no legal recourse has any effect on them whatsoever. Protection from their deadly activity depends on discerning who they are before they attack because threatening them with something that we would do to them after the attack means nothing to people who will gladly blow themselves up for their cause. Unmasking terrorists then is critical. And the world is busily engaged in this, hunting them out, doing everything we can with all of our means to discover the terrorists before the terrorist acts. Our nation and other nations in the western world are in a massive effort that is costing uncounted billions of dollars,

millions of man hours, to try to find the terrorists before they act because by the time they act, it's too late. We have to discover them, unmask them, expose them and therefore protect people from them.

We understand that. We understand how important it is in this world and we as Christians, I think, are particularly concerned about this because we have a sense of what is right. We have a sense of righteousness and justice and a hatred for war. And we certainly support our nation's effort to engage in the war on terrorism because we know that Romans 13 says, "Government exists to protect innocent people from those who would do them harm." We understand that's a function of government. In fact, biblically that's one of the very few legitimate functions of government. The government bears the sword. That is to say God has given the government the right to kill in order to protect life. And I watch as evangelicals become very exercised over this and rightly so, how we will gladly proclaim our support of the President, our support of the war on terror, we will rise up in the name of righteousness and affirm the validity of this and the necessity of this. Yet at the very same time, Christian people and the evangelical church seems oblivious, unconcerned and indifferent to Satan's Al Qaeda who have infiltrated the church with the objective of blowing it to bits.

There is a spiritual war going on. There is a war going on inside the church being waged in terrorist fashion because the enemy is disguised as an angel of light, because he clothes himself in sheep's clothing. What makes him so dangerous to the church is the same thing that makes terrorists dangerous to our nation. One, we don't know who they are. And two, they don't mind blowing themselves right into hell forever with their lies. They're willing to be destroyed by their own bombs. And as I look at the evangelical church, I see parts of the city of God smoldering in destruction from the bombs of Satan's spiritual terrorists that have been planted here and there to blow people to bits and to blow the terrorists themselves into eternal hell as long as their targets in the church are destroyed. In fact, having thought all of this through, every time I see an image of a terrorist, it appears to me as a metaphor with what's going on in the church. And frankly, the terrorists who are hidden in the church are far more dangerous than the terrorists who are hidden in the neighborhoods of America and other places in the world because those terrorists can only kill the body, but the terrorists in the church destroy the truth and leave a rubble of lies that damns men's souls.

If it is important for us to fight the war on terror politically, socially, culturally, it is far more important for us to fight the war on terror spiritually. And yet we're living in a time when evangelicalism is very soft and very unconcerned and almost indifferent to what is going on in the church. Those of us who are true believers have been called by Jude in that third verse to earnestly contend for the faith, to get our focus on fighting the battle to protect the church from the deceivers who attack the truth. Verse 4 says, "They have crept in unnoticed," a classic terrorist tactic. We don't know who they are at first. And verse 12 says, "They are hidden reefs in your love feasts, they feast with you without fear." They're right there and because they're undiscovered, they're rubbing elbows with us in the church

and they're fearless. It is not obvious to most who they are, nor does it seem to be of much concern to most who they are. And because they don't mind blowing themselves up with their own lies, blowing themselves into eternal hell, they are deadly dangerous. They themselves, according to verse 13, are headed for black darkness. They themselves, according to verse 7, are headed for the punishment of eternal fire. It doesn't seem to bother them.

And so, we are dealing with terrorism in the church. And when I say church, I mean the broadest sense of Christendom, Christianity. I want you to hear what Jude has to say in describing these terrorists, in unmasking these apostate false teachers in the church. And I think it's very effective to just listen to this text and I want to read it starting in verse 8 and I want to read down to verse 16, just listen to how Jude describes them.

"Yet in the same manner, these men, also by dreaming, defile the flesh and reject authority and revile angelic majesties. But Michael the archangel when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, 'The Lord rebuke you.' But these men revile the things which they do not understand; and the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed. Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah. These men are those who are like hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted; wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever. And about these also Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied saying, 'Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones 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.' These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage."

Quite a description, isn't it? Amazing description. Clear, extensive, dramatic and frankly even startling and very parallel, by the way, to 2 Peter chapter 2...very parallel to 2 Peter chapter 2.

Now let me remind you that Jude is writing about apostate false teachers. Apostasy, meaning to defect, to depart, to abandon. Apostasy is defecting from the faith, hearing of the faith, knowing of the faith, knowing the true gospel, hearing the true gospel, maybe professing even to believe the true gospel, and then abandoning it. It is the most terrible of evils for which the hottest hell is reserved. To be exposed to the gospel truth and to reject it is to put yourself in the most severe place of eternal torment.

Now apostasy, or departing from the truth of God, departing from the gospel, departing from what God has said and what God requires is not new. In Deuteronomy 32:15 we read, "Israel forsook God who made him and scorned the Rock of his salvation." Israel as a nation scorned the Rock of salvation. Listen to 1 Chronicles 28:9, and David says to his son, Solomon, "Know the God of your father and serve Him with a whole heart and a willing mind for the Lord searches all hearts and understands every intent of the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will let you find Him, but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever." A warning that David gives to Solomon about the deadly danger of apostasy.

Listen to Jeremiah 17:5, "Thus says the Lord, 'Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength and whose heart turns away from the Lord.'" Cursed is the man whose heart turns away from the Lord. In the eighteenth chapter, there are a number of places in Ezekiel, but the eighteenth chapter and verse 24, "When a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity and does according to all the abominations that a wicked man does, will he live? All his righteous deeds which he's done will not be remembered for his treachery which he has committed and his sin which he has committed, for them he will die." You may on the outside attempt to live a righteous life. If you come to the place where you turn away from that, all that righteousness is demonstrated to have been nothing but superficial and you will die. The thirty-third chapter of Ezekiel essentially says the same thing.

In John chapter 6, coming into the New Testament, we read about many of the disciples who were with Jesus walking with Him no more, turning away. Like branches described in John 15:6 who are cut off and thrown into the fire. And Hebrews warns as we saw a couple of weeks ago, over and over and over again not to neglect so great a salvation, not to have been brought all the way to a full understanding of the gospel and to turn away and find it then impossible to be renewed again unto repentance. And again not to trample under your foot the gospel, the blood of the Covenant and thus bring upon yourself the sorest or severest eternal judgment.

Apostasy then is identified throughout the Bible as a defection from the truth, having heard it and known it and even professed perhaps to believe it. It is willful rejection of the truth that is heard and known. The most serious sin bringing the most severe eternal judgment.

Now of those who are apostate, Jude is addressing a certain segment. The apostate false teachers, those who become the instruments of Satan and while they have defected from the faith, they become deadly terrorists embedded in the church. They're like the world of terrorists today. There are many Muslims in the world, not all of them are embedded in society with the purpose of massacring as many people as they can and blowing themselves up in the process. And not all apostates remain in the church as terrorists, the agents of Satan disguised as angels of light, but

there are many, many, many of them. Sometimes they're dressed in backwards collars. Sometimes they're dressed in clerical robes. They're homosexual priests and lesbian pastors and liberal preachers. Sometimes they wear a cardinal's hat or sit on a Pope's throne. Sometimes they are the leader of a heretical sect. Sometimes they are professors in a so-called Christian university or seminary. Sometimes they are self-styled scholars writing on biblical issues for national magazines. Sometimes they're debating me on television. Sometimes they're TV preachers, television healers. These terrorists teach lies and these terrorists bring destruction into the church. And these terrorists blow up people's souls, as it were. They are the agents of Satan in the church to corrupt and destroy.

Listen to 2 Peter chapter 2 verses 1 to 3. "False prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you who will...and here's the key...secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves." They come in with their heretical bombs and blow themselves up in the process willingly. They are damned by their very own deceptions. Verse 2 says, "Many will follow their sensuality and because of them the way of truth will be maligned. In their greed they will exploit you with false words, their judgment from long ago is not idle. Their destruction is not asleep." Every time they're talked about in 2 Peter and Jude, the writers are quick to add their own destruction is built into what they do. No, they're very much like the terrorists. We don't know who they are, in many cases it doesn't seem like people care and they willingly damn themselves in their effort to damn others.

Second Peter deals with them and so does Jude. Second Peter very likely written before Jude. Peter says they're coming, Jude says they're here. Now in the words we read from verses 8 to 11, we have one of the really great sections in all New Testament literature. In fact, going back to verse 5 through verse 11 is a remarkably carefully crafted portion of Scripture. Here we have the unmasking of the spiritual enemies of our Lord, the spiritual enemies of the truth, the terrorists in the church, so dangerous as to require such vivid and such pungent language and such severe condemnation. And Jude is very, very structured here. In verses 5 through 7 you have three cases of apostate judgments. The first one in verse 5, the second in verse 6, and the third in verse 7. And then in verses 8 to 10 you have three characteristics of apostate nature. Three cases of apostate judgment in verses 5 to 7, one on Israel, one on angels and one on Sodom and Gomorrah. Then three characteristics of apostate nature, or disposition, verses 8 to 10. They are immoral. They are insubordinate. And they are irreverent. And then in verse 11 you have three comparisons of apostate influence: Cain, Balaam and Korah. It is a very carefully crafted series of threes...three threes. This indicates that the author has thought this out and summarized it aptly for us to grasp and remember. These help us to identify and unmask the apostates.

First, three cases of apostate judgment, verses 5 through 7. Let me just read it as a review because we've already gone through it. "I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all, that the Lord after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not

believe. And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds, or chains, under darkness for the judgment of the great day. Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them since they in the same way as the angels indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh," and, of course, he's talking about homosexuality, called Sodomy. "And they are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire."

Jude says, first illustration is Israel. God delivered them out of Egypt and then because they defected from Him, because they became immoral, insubordinate and irreverent, as we will see, God destroyed them all in the wilderness because of apostasy. And then the angels who dwelt with God in the heaven of heavens rebelled, abandoned their proper abode. And as we learned, came all the way down, once they became what we call demons, some of them came down and cohabitated with the daughters of men, as recorded in Genesis chapter 6, in one of the horrific expressions of the evil of the world that God drowned in the Flood. Angels literally fallen angels, possessing men and engaging with those men as spirit influences in marriage, demon dominated, that so affected families and children as to make God drown the world. And then there, of course, is Sodom and Gomorrah, the horrific sin there where the homosexual passions ran so hot that the men of the city tried to rape angels who came there to visit Lot. In each case there is judgment.

Verse 5 says those in Israel were destroyed. Verse 6 says the angels are kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of that great day. And Sodom and Gomorrah is awaiting the punishment of eternal fire. They were consumed by fire. They are now in burning torment and awaiting the final hell and Lake of Fire to come at the end.

Jude establishes then this about apostates, whoever they are be they Jews, be they angels, or be they Gentiles in Sodom and Gomorrah, apostasy receives severe judgment. And he speaks about their destruction in verse 10 and he speaks about it in verse 12 in the words "doubly dead and uprooted." He speaks about it in verse 13 regarding the black darkness to which they are reserved forever, and he spells it out specifically in verse 15, to execute judgment upon all.

So, in helping us to understand apostasy, we begin with three cases of apostate judgments. We come then to the second point, three characteristics of apostate nature. And this is where we learn why God treats them the way He does. This is where we learn why they will be judged. This is very insightful. And I confess to you that I'm going to try to get you through this with...and, you know, preaching is somewhat of an adventure for me, too. I'm not sure what I'm going to say, I'm going to try to say it the best way I can and the clearest way I can. This is very helpful if it's understood. And I just pray the Lord will help me to help you to understand what He's saying.

Look at verse 8, "Yet in the same manner...in the same manner, these men...what men?...these men identified in verse 4, certain persons who have crept in unnoticed, marked out for condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ...these men against which you must contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints, these men..." And he says this little phrase in English, "Yet in the same manner," it's one word in the Greek, likewise. "Likewise these men."

What is this saying? This is an interpretive key. The word "likewise" is a very important transition, it's an interpretive key, it unlocks the understanding. Israel engaged in immorality. Do you remember that one? When Moses came down from the mountain, they were engaged in immorality. They engaged in insubordination, they did not obey the Word of God and they murmured and complained against God. They engaged against irreverence, worshiping an idol and violating the very command that God had given on the mountain. The angels that fell engaged in immorality with the daughters of men. The angels that fell certainly fell because of their insubordination. They did not maintain their proper abode. They did not stay in the domain where they were created. And angels as well engaged in irreverence, they defied God led by Lucifer, they defied God, they would not give God the honor and glory to which God is due. And Sodom and Gomorrah, yes they engaged in immorality. Yes they were insubordinate to the truth of God that had been told to them by Lot and the Law of God which had been written on their hearts. They went against the Law of God in their hearts in their own homosexuality. They went against what Lot had told them about the true God. They engaged in horrific irreverence, even assaulting to rape holy angels who had taken on human form. Likewise is the key that pulls all of that right into the description of these men. "Likewise these men defile the flesh, reject authority, and revile angelic majesties." And he pulls the whole story of those three cases right into the discussion of the apostates.

Apostates are just like immoral, irreverent, insubordinate Israel, angels, Sodom and Gomorrah. Apostates do the very same thing. They defile the flesh, that's immorality. They reject authority, that's insubordination. They revile angelic majesties, that's irreverence. And there are the three characteristics of apostate nature. If you want to spot an apostate, look for those three things. They have to be unmasked as to their morality. They have to be unmasked as to their disobedience and rejection of the truth of God, the Word of God. They have to be unmasked as to their irreverence. And I am telling you, folks, those three tests will work every time...every time. Israel, angels, Gentiles were marked by the very same three characteristics. Immorality, insubordination and irreverence...you want another word for irreverence? Blasphemy...blasphemy.

Now one other thing strikes you, doesn't it, in that verse, verse 8? "Likewise these men, these apostates, also by dreaming," did you look at that and wonder what is that saying to us, by dreaming? Actually in the Greek, *houtoi(??) enupniazomenoi(??)*, big long word. It says this in the Greek,

"Likewise these dreamers," it categorically says that apostates are dreamers, categorically they are dreamers.

What in the world is that saying? What do you mean they're dreamers? Well, the normal word for dream is *onara* and it is used in the New Testament to speak about a dream. But this very long word is not the normal word. In fact, this word *enupniazomenois* is a word used only one other place in the New Testament and that one other place is in the book of Acts. Listen to this, chapter 2 verse 17, and in Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost, after the Spirit of God had come, and the people had heard the wonderful works of God in their own language, you remember, because God gave them the ability to speak in all different languages, Peter stands up and says, "Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, be this known to you and give heed to my words, these men are not drunk as you suppose, it's only the third hour of the day...nine in the morning...what you just saw was spoken of through the prophet Joel," and he quotes from Joel 2:28 and 29, this is what Joel 2:28 and 29 says, "And it shall be in the last days...God says...I will pour forth My Spirit upon all mankind and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams." And this is the word that's used here and only there. It's not the normal word for dream.

It's a word in the New Testament associated with visions and prophecies. So we say then it's selected because it refers to revelatory dreams, associated with visions and prophecies. There may be some uses of it for dreams as dreams, normal dreams. But the Holy Spirit was very careful to use this word in a special way because it connected to those dreams which by the prophecy of Joel and the affirmation of Peter have to do with revelation. What it's saying is, in the future prophecy which is now ceased and revelation which is now ceased and visions which have now ceased with the completion of the New Testament will come back again in the glory of the Kingdom and again there will be prophecy and again there will be visions and again there will be revelatory dreams, that is God will reveal Himself not only through visions and through prophecies when people are awake, but even through dreams. And, you know, He did that in the Old Testament, didn't He? Certainly Joseph is a great illustration of that.

So what we have here then at best is that false teachers, now follow this, false teachers inevitably have to have a source for their deception. And they have to have a source that's believable. They have to have a source that has some authority, or that is convincing. So they can't just say, "I think..." They can't just say, "I feel..." They can't just say, "We've got a committee in our group and we came up with this deal." The really effective false teachers and apostates will inevitably tell you God communicates to them in secret ways, in their dreams, in their visions. These are revelatory experiences. Apostate false teachers from Joseph Smith to Benny Hinn and everybody in between



claim that God speaks to them in their dreams, in their visions. And this, of course, transcends the necessity to be submissive to the Word of God which is not in their hearts anyway. And it gives them the illusion of authority and God gets blamed for all their aberrations. They reject the Word of God.

Now that is a fair way to interpret that. But even if you want to beg the question of revelatory dreams here and go another direction, you could interpret it this way, "Yet likewise these dreamers," and you could...we'll come down from that lofty claim to revelatory dreams and you could come down and say it this way, "What they teach is nothing but the figment of their own...what?...imagination." That's all it is. It's not anything more than that. And by the way, their own perverted, polluted, evil imaginations, and it could well refer to that as well. The term is big enough to capture all of it. These apostates with their evil corrupted minds who stay in the church to destroy, these spiritual terrorists controlled by Satan have nothing but perverted sensual ideas running around in their minds and they become the authority for their own deceptions. At its simplest, they reject the Word of God and base their lies on the musings of their own deluded brains. At its highest, they claim God speaks to them and God told them and God gave them the *Book of Mormon* and God gave them *The Science and Health and Key to the Scripture* and God gave them the revelation that told them to do this and to do that, and God spoke to them in a dream, a vision. But the bottom line is, they are unwilling to bow completely to the authority of the Word of God. They've rejected that. False teachers, as I said, have to have a source for their deceptions.

Let me take you to the Old Testament for a minute. Deuteronomy 13, you know, it's worth working our way through this carefully because the bottom line is, this is very, very important. Patricia and I have been reading with all of you through the Old Testament and admittedly we are a few days behind because she asks so many questions. And we have a lot of fun digging in to some of these things. But we were reading Deuteronomy 13 the other day and this is...this struck me as such an important passage in this regard, I wrote a note to myself. Look at chapter 13 verse 1, "If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams," there you go. This was so commonly the claim that false prophets made that God talked to them in a dream, that it was almost synonymous with the false prophet. "If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder comes true concerning which he spoke to you." You know, Satan can fabricate some things, can't he? "And it comes true to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods whom you have not known and let us serve them.'" False prophets, apostates, terrorists in the camp always want to direct you away from the truth and away from God because they're immoral and they're insubordinate and they're irreverent. He says, "Even if the sign or the wonder comes true," verse 3, "you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams for the Lord your God is testing you to find out if you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul." Wow, it's a test. You follow a false prophet, you follow a dreamer of dreams and you have proven that you do not love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul. Pretty strong, huh? Verse 4, "You shall follow the Lord your God and

fear Him...here we go...and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him and cling to Him," don't go walking off with some dreamer. Verse 5 then goes back to the dreamer, "But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams..." can you see this synonymous character of those two? "That prophet or that dreamer of dreams, kill him." That's right. "Kill him because he's counseled rebellion against the Lord your God who brought you from the land of Egypt, redeemed you from the house of slavery to seduce you from the way in which the Lord your God commanded you to walk. Purge that evil one from among you."

I don't know how you can say that any stronger, do you? Any dreamer of dreams, if anybody comes along and tells you God talked to him in a dream, cling to the Word of God. Do not follow that dreamer.

Look at Jeremiah 23. I'm already getting frustrated because I'm not going to be able to teach the rest of this next Sunday night because it's Easter and we have a baptism. So I'm going to have to trust your memory to hold on to some of this for another week. Jeremiah 23 is a chapter that pronounces judgment on false shepherds. Verse 1, "Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture...pasture, woe to the spiritual terrorists, they've always been around, nothing new. Woe to them, you've scattered my flock, you've driven them away, you've not attended to them. But I'm about to tend to you." Go down to verse 23, "Am I a God who's near?, declares the Lord, and not a God far off? Can a man hide himself in hiding places so I do not see him?, declares the Lord. Do not I fill the heavens and the earth?, declares the Lord." He's saying, "Look, I know what's going on, you might think you're hidden in the love feast, you might think you've crept in unnoticed." Verse 25, "I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy in My name." And what do they say? "I had...what?...I had a dream, I had a dream." How long, God says, how long is there anything in the hearts of the prophets who prophesy falsehood? Even these prophets of the deception of their own heart, it is nothing but the wicked musings of their own depraved heart. And they claim to have had a dream in which God has revealed this to them. All they want to do, verse 27 says, is make My people forget My name by their dreams. "The prophet who has a dream may relate his dream, but let him who has My Word speak My Word in truth." Don't be listening to anybody who's telling you God talked to him in a dream. You listen to those who teach you the Word of God.

The New Testament warns us about this in Colossians chapter 2 in verse 18. This kind of expands it a little bit. Christians get suckered by these people, they lead real Christians astray, no question. And here's a warning. Verse 18, Colossians 2, "Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize." Literally, "Stealing your eternal reward by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen." Boy, I'm telling you, when somebody says they have a vision, I write them off right now. That's the end. There is a liar and a deceiver. Because of people who make such claims, Christians are led astray. We are warned again and again about that. They lead

people astray. And 1 Timothy 4 says, "The Spirit expressly says in the latter times some will fall away from the faith because they pay attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons by means of the hypocrisy of liars who are seared in their conscience." They are unconscionable liars. Beware of those people who are dreamers, either they're telling you God is speaking in their dreams, or they're concocting out of their own minds their own view of everything.

I always think of that priest who said, "Well, my Jesus loves everybody." And off the air I said, "You don't have your Jesus, He's not yours and you can't make Him into what you want Him to be. He is who He is. It doesn't matter what you think. It doesn't matter what anybody thinks"

I was reading in the paper today about the fact that a jury in the Methodist church fully acquitted a lesbian minister. They did this because they wanted to maintain the love of the Christian church. Their opinion is that when the Bible speaks against that sin, it's not from God and it's not authoritative. They have another view that's come out of their own imagination.

Inevitably these dreamers, we'll go back to Jude, inevitably these dreamers are immoral, insubordinate and irreverent. Now let me hasten to say, not all the poor, witless people who may be true Christians who follow along after them are the same as they are. They are...they're being taken, they're being had, they're being made merchandise of. But inevitably though not always public visible, these people are immoral and they are insubordinate to the Word of God and they are irreverent, blasphemous. They may cover it up and you may never know them. It's not like it used to be in the world. If you heard somebody speak, you were there and you heard them and they maybe lived in your community and you knew the reality of their lives. But now they're in a box or on a radio or in a book and you don't know anything about their life. Somebody does and those who do know these are characteristics.

Let's spread that out, those three things. Those are the three characteristics of the disposition or the nature. Look at characteristic number 1, back to Jude verse 8, "These dreamers defile the flesh." Flesh means here the body, physical body. It's not talking about the essence of depravity in Romans 7, you can't defile that, it's already defiled. This is talking about *sarx*, the actual body. And the word defiled is from a verb *miaino*, it means to stain, to dye something, like you dye clothing, material. It means to pollute, it means to corrupt. And when you link staining, polluting, corrupting with the word *sarx*, or flesh, it speaks of sexual sin and immorality. Apostate false teachers are inevitably immoral. It may not be publicly visible, because they cover it up. But the corruption is unrestrained, it has to be because they have abandoned the truth. Verse 19 says, and this is very noteworthy, "They are devoid of the Spirit...they are devoid of the Spirit." They do not have the Holy Spirit, therefore there is no divine power to restrain their flesh. Apostate false teachers are immoral, at heart and in conduct. There is no work of regeneration and there is no work of sanctification in those who are devoid of the

Holy Spirit. They may claim to be virtuous, they may claim to be righteous. They may wear the clerical garb. They may take the title of priest or minister or preacher or whatever. But they love lust, they love darkness, Jesus said, rather than light because their deeds are evil, John 3. They're soiled, they're polluted. They're like Israel, committing adultery at the foot of Mount Sinai. They're like the angels, coming down, taking human form and cohabitating with women, leaving their own appropriate estate. They're like Sodom and Gomorrah and the homosexuality there. They may mask it for a while, but they are immoral.

Second Peter chapter 2, and by the way, we're never shocked when the scandal finally breaks, are we? I think about this when I see these people on the television, when I look at liberal theologians, when I look at the scandalous activities in the Catholic priesthood, I look at the way these people conduct themselves, my heart goes out to them because they have no ability to restrain the flesh. On the other hand, they're deadly dangerous. But in 2 Peter 2:10 it says of them, "They indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires." They indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires. And Peter doesn't just say that. Down in verse 18 of 2 Peter 2 he says, "They entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality." I mean, this is the way they are described. They are immoral, inside and outside. And eventually they are revealed to be so. I've said through the years, time and truth go hand in hand. Given enough time, the truth comes out. They are of the flesh, and so they do the deeds of the flesh.

And do you remember what Galatians 5 says? "The deeds of the flesh are immorality...first one...impurity, sensuality," first three. That's where it all starts. It was for immorality that Israel was left in the wilderness. It was for immorality that the angels were bound in chains. It was for immorality that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed.

Second, they reject authority...they reject authority. Obviously if you're going to live an immoral life and love your lust and love your sin, you're going to have to reject authority, that is divine authority. This is very interesting. They reject authority, verse 8, reject is *atheteo*, to do away with something that is established, that is to say they reject the established authority. The word authority, this is very interesting, *kurioteta*(?), in the Greek, related to the word *kurios*. Does anybody remember what *kurios* means? Lord, they reject lordship. They reject lordship. They reject any rule over them. It is even a word used of angels in Ephesians 1:21 and Colossians 1:16, angels are called authorities, rulers. But this isn't about angels. They reject singular authority. They reject lordship. And we know exactly what lordship they're talking about because we went back to verse 4, right? "They deny our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ." They will not come under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are their own self-styled authorities. This is arrogance, this is arrogant reaction to God's rule and authority and the lordship of Christ over His church.

As a...as a Christian, I am not against my will bound to the authority of Christ. I am blessed and delighted and joyously committed to the lordship of Christ as my greatest desire. These people are not. They do not submit to Christ's revealed lordship, revealed through Scripture. But rather they have their own theology and their own views, spun out of their own dreams, their own imagination. This is so arrogant. Every time I hear some liberal say the Bible isn't true, Jesus isn't who He said He was, didn't do what He said He did, and spout some ridiculous opinion of his own, I'm reminded how they reject lordship. Israel rebelled against Christ because Christ was the rock in the wilderness, 1 Corinthians 10 says that. The angels rebelled against the Lord Christ who was the Lord of heaven. Sodom and Gomorrah rebelled against the divine sovereign of heaven who shares His rule with His eternal Son, according to John 5. It's nothing new to reject lordship. Israel had contempt for God's rule. They complained, they murmured, they disobeyed, they sinned and they worshiped an idol. Angels had contempt for God's rule. Satan and his followers mutinied in an effort to dethrone the holy sovereign. Sodom and Gomorrah had contempt for the true Law of God and the true God. And immorality and insubordination always go together, don't they? Because if you're a subordinate to the Word of God and the authority of God, and you submit to the lordship of Christ, then you're not going to be immoral because you're going to do what He tells you to do. The false teachers are like the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23, on the outside they're painted white, on the inside they stink, they're full of dead men's bones.

This issue of lordship, as you know, and I don't want to get too carried away with this, but I have been fighting on this front for many, many years...for many, many years I have tried to uphold the fact that Jesus is Lord in the church. And it's relentless. You would think that sort of a given, wouldn't you? Since you can't be a Christian unless you confess Jesus as Lord, Romans 10. But for decades I have tried to uphold the Lordship of Christ against its detractors in the church. And not all of them apostates, some of them Christians led astray. And the battle still goes on today. I wrote a book, *The Gospel According to Jesus*, a book on His lordship. I wrote another book, *The Gospel According to the Apostles*, another book on His lordship. Basically, every book I write signals the lordship of Christ because it brings to bear upon the church what Christ has said. Once when we started this battle for protecting the lordship of Christ, the argument was, "Well, you know, if you just ask Jesus to save you from your sin, you don't have to believe He's Lord, you don't have to make Him Lord. You don't have to confess Him as Lord. He doesn't ask that. That's asking too much. That would be a work."

And a lot of good Christian people bought into that. And I was so suspicious of that, I want to go to the core of where that was coming from because that smacked, that theology to me was a theology invented by antinomians who wanted to accommodate their sin and who wanted a Jesus who didn't put any pressure on them. I dug into it. There were two particular sources of that here in America, one at a Bible college in Florida and the leader of that was an avid exponent of this. And as it turned

out, he was having illicit relationships with female students for years. Well sure, if you're going to do that, you don't need Jesus to be Lord, you don't want to put that intimidation on your back. And the other was a very popular pastor here in Southern California who was the leading advocate on that and with whom I discussed it numerous time and interacted on many, many occasions and found out that he had been engaged in the most wretched kind of relationship with the young daughter of missionaries for 17 years in a deviant sexual relationship.

If you're going to live an immoral life, you're going to have to find a false doctrine to salve your conscience. And so, inevitably those people who are apostate are immoral and insubordinate to the Word of God because the two go together, right? Because immorality is disobedience. So the lie that Jesus is not Lord is a comfortable lie for immoral people who reject biblical authority and want to feel better about their sin. And, of course, that fits the modern liberals and fits the phony-baloney preachers who live immoral lies. It also bothers me, and this is just a footnote, that fewer people today would say that they don't believe Jesus has to be Lord, they don't believe in lordship salvation. People say, "Oh yes, He's Lord, but pragmatic, seeker-friendly survey market-driven churches live as if He's not the Lord of that church because they replaced the truth of Scripture with the wisdom of men. That's another subject.

Let me mention the third, and I'll stop. We won't go into it because it's rather lengthy. Third in the list of characteristics, they revile angelic majesties. Revile is the word, are you ready for this, *blasphemeo*, they blaspheme, present tense. They blaspheme. They blaspheme. And in that little interesting phrase "angelic majesties," that's strange, isn't it? It's even stranger if you knew the Greek. The Greek is *doxas* from which we get doxology, it's a word that means glory. They blaspheme glories. And it could refer to the glories of God, it could refer to the glories of Christ. It could refer to the glories of divine truth. But I'll tell you this, the word "blaspheme" is clear enough in its intention to be identified with anything that is holy, or sacred. To blaspheme is to basically curse what is sacred. They're irreverent. I get sometimes squeamish when I hear certain so-called clerics or biblical scholars talk about Jesus in a blasphemous fashion. I literally feel sick when I see Jesus misrepresented in some stupid fashion in a ridiculous movie which takes away His glory. These people who claim to represent Christ and claim to be the scholars of the New Testament who are going to help us find the real Jesus, are really blasphemers. Certainly the angels did that. They blasphemed the glories of heaven. Certainly Sodom and Gomorrah did that, they blasphemed the very holy angels. Certainly Israel did that, they blasphemed God when they made that idol and worshiped it. Very serious.

But there's more to this. I'm going to leave you with this, the translation of glories, *doxas* angelic majesties is the right translation and I know a secret that you don't know. Why it's the right translation. It is absolutely the right translation. And what it's talking about here is how false teachers

and apostates blaspheme angels and they do. And if you come back in two weeks, I'm going to tell you how. Sorry, but I need to hook you. Is that helpful? I hope it was. All right, let's have a word of prayer.

Lord, this is...this is just so important for us. We just grieve over the rubble in the church, over the immorality and the insubordination and the irreverence by those who claim to represent you. Help us to be discerning and faithful and arm us to be effective in earnestly contending for the faith. We love You, we long to serve You effectively and these things we ask with great gratitude and everyone said. Amen.

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