

Contend For The Faith

Feb. 19, 2020 Lesson #6 Character Of False Teachers

Why Must I Contend? 2 Basic False Teachings For Which We Are To Be Aware & Contend
Certain men would bring about in the church a departure, an apostasy in two directions:

1. Blatant Immorality
2. Denial Of Jesus Christ

Jude 1:4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men,

II Pet. 2:1d; 3b bring upon themselves swift destruction. whose judgment now of a long time lingers not, and their damnation slumbers not.

Character Of These Men:

A. Before of old ordained to this condemnation

- ❖ Greek = #4270 prographo = pro: openly; plainly + grapho = write; written before
Literally: to write for public reading, publicly portrayed, announced on a poster
To write previously or before
- ❖ Krima = damnation, sentence

Kenneth Wuest: This is a "reference to the prophecy of Enoch with regard to these false teachers."

Jude 1:14-16 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, ¹⁵ To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

These are inveterate murmurers (grumblers) who complain [of their lot in life], going after their own desires [controlled by their passions]; their talk is boastful *and* arrogant, [and they claim to] admire men's persons *and* pay people flattering compliments to gain advantage. [amp]

Their judgments were previously prescribed by Scripture:

II Pet. 3:7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men

Jude is declaring that judgment was published or declared in writing ahead of time. Jude did not write that these men were ordained to BECOME apostates as though God were responsible for their sin. They became apostates because they WILFULLY turned away from the truth.

- ❖ God did ordain that such people would be judged and condemned.
- ❖ OT prophets denounced the false prophets of their day.
- ❖ Jesus Christ and His apostles pronounced judgment on them.

*Beware Of False Teachers: They And All That Follow Them
Are Heading Toward Eternal Destruction*

Peter uses the word "destruction" 5 of the 18 times that it appears in the NT

II Pet. 2:1 "destructive heresies" and the "swift destruction," which the false teachers will bring on themselves.

II Pet. 2:3 "their judgment from long ago is not idle and their destruction is not asleep."

II Pet. 3:7 in reference to "the day of judgment and the destruction of ungodly men"

II Pet. 3:17 false teachers twist the Scriptures "to their own destruction."

II Pet. 3:6 as a verb to describe how God destroyed the world through the flood.

Contrary to what some teach, the destruction of the wicked does not refer to their annihilation.

Rather, it refers to their eternal punishment in the lake of fire

[Matt. 25:46; Rev. 17:8, 11; 20:14, 15; 21:8].

Question: Why should these men be judged by God/

- They denied His Son.
- Defiled God's people by teaching them that God's grace permitted them to practice sin.
- Derided the doctrine of Christ's coming. Where is the promise of His coming?
- They mocked the very promise of Christ's coming and the judgment He would bring against the ungodly. [II Pet. 3]
- They did all these things under the guise of religion.
- They deceived innocent people so they might take their money and enjoy it in godless living.

Remember: The fact that these wicked men's judgment is from long ago means that God declared judgment on false teachers in the Old Testament, centuries before. [Jer. 29]

The phrase, "their destruction is not asleep" personifies destruction as an executioner, always ready to administer God's sentence on those who teach and follow false doctrine.

Note: Peter is not talking about minor doctrinal differences, but rather about false teachings that lead people to damnation. He does not seem to hold out any hope that these false teachers could be reclaimed for the truth.

II Pet. 2:4 "For if God didn't spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness reserved for judgment, and if God didn't spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; and if God condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly thereafter."

The point is that if God did all that to those who turned away from the truth, you can be sure he's going to keep His pledge to the apostates throughout all of history. Their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not sleeping. Their judgment is now pending.

Perdition waits for them with unsleeping eyes. The verdict was in long ago.

Note: Isaiah wrote about the damnation of apostates, Isaiah 8, Isaiah 9, Isaiah 47.
Jeremiah wrote about the damnation of apostates, Jeremiah 5:13-14, 30-31;
Hosea 9:7-9; Zephaniah 3:1-8.

Isaiah 8: Warning of Coming Judgment

1. Isaiah warned Israel of future judgment when Assyria would conquer Syria and invade both Israel and Judah. He included the time when Babylon would take Judah into exile.
2. Isaiah used 3 contrasts to show the rulers of Judah the mistake they were making by trusting Assyria instead of trusting the LORD.
 - a. Isa. 8:5-10 They chose a flood instead of a peaceful river.
 - b. Isa. 8:11-15 They chose a snare instead of a sanctuary.
 - c. Isa. 8:16-22 They chose darkness instead of light.

Background: Isaiah's prophecy:

- ❖ Isaiah's name = Jehovah is salvation = remind the people to trust the Lord for deliverance
- ❖ His oldest son = a remnant shall return = a word of promise when it looked as though the nation was destroyed.
 - Believing remnant did return to Jerusalem from Babylon. They were encouraged by what Isaiah wrote in 40-66.
- ❖ Younger son = quick to plunder, swift to the spoil. It pointed to the fall of Syria and Ephraim.

Isa. 8:16 Bind up the testimony, Seal the law among my disciples.

- The law is the Law of Moses, and the testimony is the words of the Prophets.

Note: After announcing the approaching apostasy, Paul commended the Ephesian church to the Word of God, "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

[Acts 20:32]. Isaiah commends the Word of God to those who find it precious in dark days.

One of the motifs of the Book of Isaiah is the contrast between the Remnant [Jews who believe] and the non-Remnant (Jews who do not believe).

- One crucial difference between the two groups is the place that the Scriptures have in their lives. The nation rejected Isaiah's message, but the remnant received God's Word and treasured it in their hearts.
- The remnant believed that which Moses and the Prophets declared: it is the foundation of their faith, and their final authority.
- Non-Remnant rejects the Scriptures as the final authority and seeks to make God more "real in their experience" by going toward idolatry and looking at gods and goddesses they could see, feel, and touch, creating a more visual picture while they worship.

Isa. 8:17 And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.

- By faith, Isaiah and the remnant waited patiently for God's Word to be fulfilled. [standing on the promises of God]

Isa. 8:19-20 And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? ²⁰ To the law [Law of Moses] and to the testimony [words of the prophets]: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

Warning: Do not go after counterfeit spirits and teachers *that chirp and mutter.*

- To pray to the dead, departed spirits instead of to the living God is utter folly.
- Loss of faith in God results in an increase in superstition.
- Israel was consulting demons [v. 19]. This increased their moral and spiritual darkness.
- The increase of the occult is evidence that people are deliberately rejecting God's Word and turning to Satan's lies.

The unfaithful in Judah were encouraging their brethren to seek advice about the future from mediums, wizards, and spiritists-instead of from their God [Lev, 19:31; Lev. 20:6; Deut. 18:11] Their unusual speech, used to call up spirits, portends unreliable revelations. How ironic it is to consult the dead for information about the living [I Sam. 28:6-8].

- Those who go after those who chirp and mutter could have a great testimony of experiencing a supernatural feeling that is joyful and great.
- Do not pursue supernatural things: Not all supernatural is from God!

Isa. 8:20b if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

- Necessary to TEST the spirits to know who is telling the truth.
- It is not valid. God's Word is the final authority.
- The Law = Law of Moses The Testimony = Words of the Prophets
- God's Word > only dependable light in this world's darkness. [Ps 119:105; II Pet. 1:19-21]
- The only hope is in the living God.

Isa. 8:21-22 They will pass through the land hard-pressed and famished, and it will turn out that when they are hungry, they will be enraged and curse their king and their God as they face upward. ²² Then they will look to the earth, and behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish; and *they will be driven away into darkness.*

Contains a dismal picture of those who are frustrated, desperate and angry even to the point of cursing God, all because they refused to accept the truthfulness of what Isaiah had predicted regarding the nation's future hardships.

The end of such occult advisers is difficulty, hunger, frustration, distress, darkness, gloom, and anguish. They will look up to their leaders and curse both their king and their God because things did not turn out as they foretold [Isaiah 8:17; Revelation 16:11; Revelation 16:21]. They will look down to their fellows and find no help. Frustration meets them wherever they turn.

B. Ungodly men = #765 asebes = irreverent, wicked

While they Profess To Serve God, they live contrary to His purposes.

- Lack of interest in the things of God and a behavior and lifestyle consistent with such an irreverent attitude. In simple terms it is choosing to live as if God did not exist and without regard for Him.
- Asebeia was used by the early Church fathers to refer to atheists and heretics. They do not worship nor fear God.

Jude describes the apostates as ungodly & as those who use God's grace as a license to commit unrighteous acts.

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|---------|------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. V. 4 | Ungodly | 10. V.16 | Grumblers |
| 2. V. 4 | Morally Perverted | 11. V.16 | Fault finders |
| 3. V. 4 | Deny Christ | 12. V. 16 | Self-satisfying |
| 4. V. 8 | Defile the flesh | 13. V. 16 | Use Arrogant words/false flattery |
| 5. V.8 | Rebellious | 14. V. 18 | Mockers of God |
| 6. V.8 | Reville angels | 15. V. 19 | Cause Divisions |
| 7. V.8 | Ignorant about God | 16. V. 19 | Worldly minded |
| 8. V.10 | Proclaim false visions | 17. V. 19 | Devoid of the Spirit/unsaved |
| 9. V.10 | Self-destructive | | |

Peter's 22 Attributes of False Teachers - II Peter 2:1-19

1. 2:1 They infiltrate the church. Secretly bring in alongside
2. 2:1 They come in secret.
3. 2:1 They deny the work of Jesus.
4. 2:2 They blaspheme the truth.
5. 2:3, 14 They are greedy and selfish.
6. 2:3 They use our words but not our dictionary. They use salvation, inspiration, etc.
7. 2:10 They follow the flesh.
8. 2:10 They are presumptuous and self-willed.
9. 2:10-11 They do not want to be under anyone's authority.
10. 2:12 They exhibit peace on the outside but are like untamed beasts on the inside.
11. 2:12 They speak more evil than good.
12. 2:12 They are ignorant.
13. 2:13 They love to deceive others.
14. 2:14 They are full of adultery. Seductive & Immoral
15. 2:14 They cannot cease from sinning.
16. 2:14 They prey on unstable new believers.
17. 2:15 They intentionally speak lies.
18. 2:15 They are out for monetary gain. Devise clever lies to obtain your money
19. 2:16, 18 They talk a lot but say nothing.
20. 2:17 They make grandiose promises but never deliver.
21. 2:18 They use alluring thoughts to provoke attention from their audience.
22. 2:19 They make promises they cannot deliver.

John Jowett: THIS is a dark and appalling chapter. There is nothing quite like it elsewhere in the entire book. The misery and desolation of it are unrelieved. It is so like some wide and soddened moor, in a night of cold and drizzling rain, made lurid now and again by lightning-flash and weird with the growl of rolling thunder. Everywhere is the black and treacherous bog. The moral pollution is over whelming. I confess that I have stood before it for months, in the hope of seeing my way across, and even now I am by no means confident of a sure-footed exposition. The gutter conditions are ubiquitous. The descriptive language is intense, violent, terrific. There is no softening of the shade from end to end. It begins in the denunciation of "lascivious doings"; it continues through "pits of darkness," "lawless deeds," "lust of defilement," "spots and blemishes," "children of cursing"; and it ends in the gruesome figure of "the dog turning to his own vomit and the sow that had washed to wallowing in the mire." It is an awful chapter, borrowing its symbolism from "springs without water," and from "mists driven by a storm," and recalling the ashes of "Sodom and Gomorrah "to enforce the urgency and terror of its judgment.

New Testament Examples: Titus, a Greek believer ministering to the people on the isle of Crete, had his share of problems with the people. Paul instructed him to silence the False Teachers.

- A group of false teachers was trying to mix Jewish law with the Gospel of grace. [1:10]
- Some of the Gentile believers were abusing the message of grace and turning it into license to sin. [Titus 2:11-15]
- Titus faced a mixture of Jewish legalism, man-made traditions, and mysticism.

Their Character:

- Unruly; rebellious: They would not submit to God's Word or to the authority of God's servant.
- Vain talkers: Their words impressed people but they had no substance or content. They excelled in talking, but not in doing.
- Peddlers of Error: Claimed to be teaching truth but DECEIVED people by their false doctrines. Titus 1:11 "teaching things they ought not to teach."
- Carnal & worldly: Titus 1:12 liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons; lived for their own appetites. They lived it up at the expense of their followers. Their followers loved it!
- Abominable = detestable, disgusting
- Disobedient = they cannot and will not be persuaded
Their minds are made up and they will not face the truth.

Titus 1:16, They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate. [= cannot pass the test]

Their Deeds:

- Told lies from house to house and upset the faith of the people
- Taught Jewish legalism which Paul rejected
- Taught Jewish fables

Wiersbe: "There is no need to find deeper meanings to the plain teachings of God's Word."

Why They Did It

- Main motive = make money "for filthy lucre's sake" [Titus 1:11]
- Use religion to fill their own pockets
- Their mind and conscience had been defiled [Titus 1:15]
- Happens when a person lives a double life. The deceiver's love for money caused them to teach false doctrine and live false lives. Result: conscience that didn't convict them.

Paul to Titus:

1. Exhort and convince them by means of sound doctrine [Titus 1:9]
 - The only weapon against Satan's lies: Thus saith The Lord! The End!
2. Stop their mouths and prevent them from teaching and spreading false doctrine. [1:11]
3. Rebuke them sharply! [1:13]

Purpose: Protect the church from their false teachings.

Get the false teachers "sound in the faith."

"False doctrine is like yeast; it enters secretly; it grows quickly; it permeates completely."

Teachers Who Promote Gain Rather Than Godliness Are Not From God.

Religious false teachers down through the centuries have known something in common, namely, that religion can be fun and profitable—for them, at least. Some, like Reverend Ike, openly flaunt their materialistic greed. His creed is, "I don't want pie in the sky when I die; I want cash in the stash here and now!" Asked how much his church is worth, Ike replies, "A lot of money. This is a very successful, prosperous, multimillion-dollar operation, and I'm very happy to say that." He claims not to know his personal salary, but explains, "It's whatever I need." (Newsweek, Dec. 20, 1982.)

Spiritually Sound Healthy doctrine is not focused on personal gain, either for the teacher or the pupil, but on godliness.

I Tim. 6:3-5 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

⁴ He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

Marks of the False Teachers: Promote Gain Through Wrong Content

1. Refuse to adhere to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to Godly teaching
 - ❖ Satan begins his attacks through wrong thinking. Wrong theology leads to wrong living. Most American theology is not only man centered, but also subjective and relative.
 - ❖ One's experience of God takes precedence over the objective truth about God.
 - ❖ God is not seen as an objective, absolute Being with certain unchangeable attributes and with absolute moral laws which stem from His nature.
 - ❖ God is however you experience Him. So professing Christians say things like, "If you're into a God who judges sin, that's okay for you. But my God is a God of grace and love."

Wiersbe: "False teachers find it easy to seduce people who do not KNOW their Bible but who are desirous of "experiences" with the Lord. It is a dangerous thing to build on subjective experience alone and ignore objective revelation from God's Word."

Recall: Isaiah's first test of any teacher was "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. [Isa. 8:20]"

John MacArthur: False shepherds talk much about God's love, but not His wrath and holiness.

- Much about how deprived of good things people are, but not about their depravity
- Much about God's universal fatherhood toward everyone, but not much about His unique fatherhood toward all who believe in His Son
- Much about what God wants to give to us, but nothing about the necessity of obedience to Him
- Much about health and happiness, but nothing about holiness and sacrifice

Note the two standards Paul uses to measure sound theology by:

A. Sound Doctrine Centers On The Lord Jesus Christ.

- II Cor. 4:5 Christ Jesus as Lord
- Col. 3:11 Christ is all
- I Cor. 1:23 Christ crucified
- I Cor. 1:24 Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God
- Col. 1:27 Christ in you, the hope of glory
- Col. 1:28 Every man is complete in Christ

The centrality and supremacy of Christ are the themes Paul majored on. Whether he lived or died, Paul's goal was that Christ would be exalted [Phil. 1:20]

Sound theology does not center on man, but on God and His eternal purpose in Christ.

JC Ryle: "Without Christ crucified in her pulpits, a church is little better than a dead carcass, a well without water, a barren fig tree, a sleeping watchman, a silent trumpet, a dumb witness, an ambassador without terms of peace, a messenger without tidings, a lighthouse without fire, a stumbling block to weak believers, a comfort to unbelievers, a hot-bed for formalism a joy to the devil and an offence to God."

B. Sound Doctrine Conforms To Godliness

"Godliness" means conduct in line with God and His revealed truth [Titus 1:1], especially as revealed and taught by the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, when you hear someone promoting man-centered theology, where God exists to please man, and subjective, relativistic theology, beware! They are promoting gain, not godliness, through wrong content.

1. Teacher's attitude is proud, yet he has nothing to be proud about.
 - ❖ This conceited attitude causes a teacher to argue about minor differences. The result is envy, quarreling, malicious talk, evil suspicions and constant friction. [I Tim. 6:4-5]
 - ❖ Tragedy: The people are robbed of the truth [I Tim. 6:5] while they think they are discovering the truth.

False teaching starts with man, centers on man and builds up man. People love it because we desire teaching that makes us feel good without confronting our sin.

Truth: Godly teaching always humbles our pride, exalts the Savior and promotes holiness.

Consider: A believer who understands the Word will have a burning heart, not a big head.

True ministers: minister to help others grow in their faith

2. Motive For Teaching: I Tim. 6:5-10
 - Godliness is a way of financial gain. It is a religious business.

Paul warned Timothy about the dangers of covetousness:

1. Wealth does not bring contentment. [I Tim. 6:6]
 - ❖ Contentment = an inner sufficiency that keeps us at peace in spite of outward circumstances
 - ❖ True godliness comes from contentment in the heart; not wealth in the hand.
2. Wealth is not lasting. [I Tim. 6:7]
 - ❖ When someone's spirit leaves their body, they take nothing with them.
3. Our basic needs are easily met. [I Tim. 6:8]
 - ❖ We are so glutted with luxuries that we have forgotten how to enjoy our necessities.
4. Desire for wealth leads to sin. [I Tim. 6:9-10]
 - ❖ Riches are a trap; they lead to bondage and sin, not freedom.
 - ❖ Riches create additional lusts that must be satisfied.

Result: Harmful desires...plunge men into ruin and destruction. [I Tim. 6:9]

Wiersbe: It is a dangerous thing to use religion as a cover-up for acquiring wealth. God's laborer is certainly worthy of his hire, [I Tim. 5:17-18] but his motive for laboring must not be money.

That would make him a "hireling" and not a true shepherd. [John 10:11-14].

Defend The Faith: I Tim. 1:18-20 This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; Cling to your faith in Christ and keep your conscience clear. For some people have deliberately violated their consciences; as a result, their faith has been shipwrecked.²⁰ Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

❖ Charge: an urgent command handed down from a superior officer [I Tim. 1:3]

❖ Timothy was serving in pagan Ephesus, but he was under orders.

Paul warned Timothy:

1. The only way to succeed was to hold fast to faith and a good conscience.

2. It is not enough to proclaim the faith with our mouth; we must practice the faith daily.

A man said of his hypocritical pastor: "He is such a good preacher, he should never get out of the pulpit, but he is such a poor Christian, he should never get into the pulpit."

3. A good conscience is vital to a good ministry. A man with a good conscience will do the will of God in spite of who is watching.

II Tim. 2:4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.