

Immorality, Insubordination, and Irreverence

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[0:00] In America, we have become very aware of how devastating a terrorist among us can be.

! We know that first hand in Oklahoma. The Murrah Building. I went down there a few weeks after that and they had a big fence up. I just wanted to kind of get a feel for it because I was heading security up for Phillip 66 and there was a letter on the fence. They had a fence with thousands of teddy bears and there was a letter. I walked up and I read it and it said, Grandma, I'm five years old the other day. And I'm thinking, oh, that little boy wrote a letter to his grandmother. She was killed in the Murrah Building, you know. Her mother's going to make sure he remembers his grandmother. Kept reading and said, all the kids in the nursery came to my birthday party and Jesus brought a cake. Oh my gosh. I almost collapsed. I mean, I tear up and that was a long time ago. And I remember telling that to Dr. McBride and all he said was, you bet he did. He brought him a cake, you know. But then, since then, of course, we've had other major terrorist attacks and I think of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and thousands of our citizens have been murdered. Countless lives changed by terrorists that live and plot among law-abiding and usually unaware people. It's very difficult to get on the inside of a terrorist cell and know what they're going to do next. Well, 1900 years ago, Jude recognized that terrorists had infiltrated the church. And there were deadly results from that. And he also realized that these terrorists that infiltrated the church back then were not a passing fad.

They would plague the church for as long as the church existed on earth. And Jude had a name for these terrorists. They weren't Al-Qaeda or some of these other groups. They were called apostates. And he realized the immense danger that apostates posed to truth and to the purity of the church. And that is why the Holy Spirit commanded all of us through Jude's writings to contend earnestly for the faith. That is a command just as pertinent in the 21st century in the United States as it was back in Jude's day, 1900 years ago. The challenge that was issued was to expose these terrorists, apostates, because they had crept in to the church. And then Jude used a really interesting language.

[3:25] He said they crept in unnoticed. Very interesting. They were able to get in unnoticed. The role of church leadership is to expose the apostate before he can inflict irreparable harm to the church or on the church.

Now, to expose the dangerous apostates among the true church, it was necessary to know what they looked like.

You have to know what you're looking at. And the best and perhaps only way to do this was by knowing the characteristics of the apostate's nature.

And I think by now you'll realize what an apostate is, but if you don't, an apostate is someone who's been exposed to the truth, sat under preaching that was true, hang out with the church for a period of time, and then depart from the faith.

Now, the problem is, often when they depart from the faith, they don't depart from the church. They hang around. Was it the scarlet letter where she had to walk around with a, was that an A?

[4:41] Was that one? I didn't read it. I'd depend on the girl next to me to get through the test. But maybe we need an A for apostate. Just beware, I'm an apostate, so don't approach, you know.

Here's what the scriptures say in Jude 8 to 10 about the characteristics. Yet in the same way these men, also by dreaming, that's interesting, 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.

Michael didn't go after the devil verbally. But he said to him, the Lord rebuke you. Remember those four words. Okay?

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.

[6:08] Now we looked at a variety of apostates last week. We talked, if you recall, about apostate Israelites and apostate fallen angels.

We examined the debauched society of Sodom and Gomorrah. Now, the apostates in those cultures gave off certain characteristics.

The passage talks about these false believers dreaming. That means they had a phony vision for the church.

They were daydreaming about how they would like the church to be. How they would lead the church. And I would suggest to you, there are a lot of churches in America being led by apostates. There's churches being led in this town by apostates. So, they had a phony vision for the church.

[7:07] False teachers, even in our day, put a lot of stock in dreams. I mean, you can go to some of these TV channels. I'm not recommending it, but they're talking about dreams and visions, and I saw this, and whatever.

They believe that these dreams they're having are authoritative and are a new revelation from God. I had a little discussion with one not too long ago, and I said, maybe it's indigestion.

I mean, how do you know it's from God? At least one church in this town has a dream interpreter on its paid staff.

And he'll tell you, a dream is God talking to you. These new truths are really nothing more than lies and distortions designed to lead people astray.

In using such devices as dreams and visions, the apostates are able to substitute their own counterfeit authority over that of Scripture or godly leadership.

[8:09] We had a guy disappear from Bartleville years ago. There were billboards around going to Tulsa, you know. His wife went to, really, the wife of a friend of mine who is deep into this stuff, and she got the dream interpreter at their church, and they talked and everything.

And they all came to me, and they said, he's been killed, and his body is under the dam that Skytook Lake.

So I said, well, maybe he'll rest in peace as long as the fish can't get to him. Well, they were upset. No, no, you need to tear down the dam and recover the body.

Because in our vision and dream, we saw him there. And I said, I don't think the Corps of Engineers are going to let us do that. To which she said, we've already been to the Corps.

And they said, yeah, you can do it. It'll be \$16 million that the Bartleville taxpayers will have to foot the bill. And I said, well, we're not going to do that. And they looked at me like, how cruel can you be?

[9:29] I mean, and of course then, as Oscar said, he was later found in Rapid City living with a rich woman. I mean, if you're going to run away, you might as well be with a rich woman. Who disowned him, by the way, when she found out he was still married.

But that's these dreams and visions. I mean, this stuff's going on. Part of the pattern of substituting dreams for revelation is the use of imagination.

And apostates are able to do this at will because they've already rejected the Word of God. And they've come up with these outlandish claims because the Word of God doesn't mean anything.

It hasn't been rejected as the sole ground of truth. And we've got to remember that behind the apostate's thought process is a mind that has been captured by Satan and by demons.

Once they reject Christ, they fall victim to this. The void will be filled. And Satan comes in. In the Old Testament, the concept of a dreamer was often associated with false prophets.

[10:47] And Moses gave a stern warning. 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 what he spoke to you, saying, let us go after other gods whom you've not known and let us serve them, 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, you shall follow the Lord your God and fear Him.

And you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him. But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death because he has counseled rebellion

against the Lord your God who brought you from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery to seduce you from the way in which the Lord your God commanded you to walk so you shall purge the evil from among you.

It's a pretty strict punishment in the Old Testament, right? If we return to that, it would probably clean up some of the TV channels. You know, when these guys were making these outlandish claims of visions and dreams and wonders.

The Apostle Paul, who by the way wrote Colossians, said, let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels taking his stand on vision he has seen or visions, plural, he has seen inflated without cause by his fleshly mind and not holding fast to the head from whom the entire body being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments grows with a growth which is from God.

[12 : 42] So that's quite a contrast that Paul gives us. So Jude then, he comes along and mentions to us the apostates are the false dreamers that infiltrate the church.

They come in and infiltrate the church. I remember a lady came here one time and she was going to she said, God told me I'm going to preach Sunday in your pulpit. And she said, we're going to have a healing ministry and I'm going to your congregation is going to be totally healed.

He said, I'll tell you what. Walked her outside and he said, is that a big building? Yeah, that's Jane Phillips Hospital. Go clean it out and come back and talk to us. She started walking and she said, you just don't understand.

You just don't understand. Oh lady, you didn't understand. Jude talks about these who infiltrate the church and he goes on to outline three characteristics of their true nature.

Three characteristics of apostates in the church. Their immorality, their insubordination, and their irreverence.

[13 : 55] Very interesting. First thing he talks about is their immorality. He says, these men defile the flesh.

That's really interesting language particularly for me right now. I'll get to that. The word flesh in the original language, which was Greek, the New Testament written in Greek, means to pollute, contaminate, soil, or corrupt.

Now, in context, it is referring to a moral or physical defilement connected to sexual sin. One common factor among apostate teachers and preachers is their immorality.

It will eventually come to the surface. We've seen some high profile guys fall, haven't we? We live in a day when such immoral behavior has plagued the church. And of course, in our day, such failures spread across the globe through television and the internet.

They go at the speed of light. Now, the interesting thing here for me is the lesson tonight is dovetailing with my Sunday morning lesson.

[15 : 11] Oscar's in there with my Sunday morning lesson, which I'm presently preparing. I'm preparing next Sundays. our class is going through the book of Galatians and we're examining the deeds of the flesh.

Both Paul in Galatians and the Lord Jesus in Mark's gospel list the deeds of the flesh. Let me read these passages to you.

Galatians 5, 19 to 23. Now, the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like that, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

I told the class yesterday, there's two operative words there. Practice, they make a practice of it, and they will not, or they're not going to inherit.

That's the things to focus on in that section. Well, the Lord, though, in Mark said this, Mark 7, that which proceeds out of a man, that is what defiles the man.

[16 : 45] For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of covenanting, and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness.

All these things proceed from within men, and defile the man. Now, if you're curious as to the scriptural definition of all those, immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, and so on, then come by my class Sunday after church, and we'll have some extra things out here, because that's what I'm going to be doing next Sunday morning.

Defining all those terms. the problem with an apostate is they have nothing with which to restrain the flesh, and the flesh is strong, guys.

The flesh and its immoral appetites are strong. I've actually played that tape in here, I don't know if you remember, but when Jimmy Swaggart fell, Dr. MacArthur did a brilliant one-hour presentation to the students at the Masters Seminary, and he said he tried to begin in the Spirit in some sort of fashion, and then complete it in the flesh.

You can't do that. If you're going to try and complete your walk in the flesh, you're going to leak all over. You're going to leak all over. We begin in the Spirit, we complete in the Spirit.

[18:31] And that's the lesson there. And you know, I want to say something too. All those things I listed, MacArthur put something in there that I thought was really good. He said, don't think for a second that true believers can lapse into that stuff and camp out there for a time or a season, but the Holy Spirit will be hammering at us and convicting us to the point of confession.

1 John 1-9, where we confess our sins, that he's faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and cleanse us of all unrighteousness. So, we have to keep that in mind.

But apostates don't have the ammunition to restrain the flesh. They're the ones who live by the passions of their lust. Jude explains that their problem later in his letter when he describes these apostates as devoid of the Spirit.

The Spirit's not there. Why isn't the Spirit there? They're not believers. The Spirit comes into a true believer and dwells, never leaves, convicts. Spirit isn't there.

Absent the Holy Spirit, there is no ammunition to control the fleshly appetite of the apostates. Peter said such men are free to indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires.

[20:00] It's only a matter of time before such fleshly desires come to the surface and manifest itself in ways that are destructive to the fellowship of the church.

So the first thing that comes to light is their immorality. And let me tell you, when it comes to light, in my little experience with that, those guys never leave alone.

They take people with them. And usually the pastor of the leadership gets accused of being unloving. And you know, you really, I don't know if you should or should not get up on a Sunday morning and say, this is what happened.

A few of you would know the name Vincent Cynthia Smith. They're in Raleigh. Wonderful Christian people, members of this church, black folk, who Vince called me and he said, my gosh, we went to church in the past.

Well, before we start, I want you to know that Brother Ron Williams has departed the church. He is living with another man in sin and he wouldn't repent. And so we give him the right Buddha fellowship.

[21:14] And then he mentioned another guy who was in with another woman, not his wife, and Vincent I've never heard of such them. They cleansed that church. The second thing that comes to light is their insubordination.

Now, our passage makes it abundantly clear. The apostates reject authority. That's Jude 8, the part toward the end.

They reject authority. authority. Anyone in love with their own immorality will naturally reject authority.

This is especially true when it comes to church authority. An apostate by its very definition is one who rejects the lordship of Christ.

In fact, they will have no one rule over them, especially the lord Jesus Christ. Especially Christ. But here's the real danger.

[22:22] Here's the danger of the apostate. They pull it off subtly. They don't come and hold up signs. You know, this is my coming out today.

I'm going to announce to you all that I'm really an apostate. They don't announce that to the church that the new apostates have gotten onto the scene. And that is why Jude says they creep in unaware.

We're just not aware of them. Jesus himself had to deal with such men when he was on earth. Of course, he had a benefit we don't have, right?

He can look into the very heart. But he had to deal with these. And Matthew 23, here's how he dealt with them. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appeared beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all

uncleanness.

So you too outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. mess. I don't think Jesus would be received very well in some venues because he was unloving.

[23 : 46] You know, MacArthur gets hammered by the homosexual community in California and the politicians because his stand on homosexuality. And he has a bad answer to him. He says, is it less or greater love to tell man or woman you're going to die in your sin and go to hell?

That would be the ultimate unlove. So it just kind of silences his critics. Jesus says here that apostates are pretty on the outside.

Nice to look at, but once inside they spread disease and corruption. They're a cancer that has to be cut out.

And you know, if you have to do that in your own body, we've had members go through that recently. Pastor, you've been getting treatments. It's painful, and it's painful in the church when we have to do that, but it's necessary because their corruption will spread.

So apostates can be known because of their immorality and their insubordination. I made a short lesson so we could watch the World Series tonight.

[24 : 57] I wanted Kansas City to win in seven games. I'm sure the owners wanted to win in seven games also. I found out the people sitting in the Met Stadium, that was \$65 million of tickets in that stadium.

Apostates are also known for their irreverence. Jude 8 to 10. 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.

You know, that is really an important and an interesting passage. many years ago, 25 years ago, one Sunday night after church, Diane and I were watching Christian TV, so-called, and it was a church in Virginia, and we had no exposure to what I would call the extreme charismatic at that point.

And we started watching this thing, and we watched the whole thing. We wouldn't do that now. but I was fascinated, and I was keeping tabs, because this really was, I suppose they would have called this a Holy Spirit worship service.

[26 : 40] Never once was the name of Jesus mentioned. Not one time. Christ wasn't mentioned, the Lord wasn't mentioned. Let me tell you, that grieves the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is there to reveal Christ, and Him crucified, and resurrected, and coming again. Now, we are probably not very familiar, in fact, let me say we're unfamiliar, with this phrase concerning the reviling of angelic majesties.

by the way, I brought up that Virginia church for a reason, and I dropped the ball. It was a whole service on how to revile the devil.

How to rebuke the devil. And what does it say about the number one angel in heaven? Don't do that. Let the Lord do that. We'll get to that in a minute. The word revile here means to blaspheme. The holy angels, who did not fall with Satan, have been devoted to God's holy glory ever since.

[27 : 58] They have always played a very special role in establishing God's moral order among humans. Angels communicated God's law.

And there I say that's written in Hebrews, in the book Hebrews. They will be involved in the judgment of the wicked at the end of the age. By their conduct, apostates blaspheme holy angels and through them they are blaspheming God.

After Lucifer fell, he became Satan. God worked through Michael, his most powerful angel.

He is referred to as a protector of God's people. Michael is a display of angelic wisdom. He's brilliant, smarter than any one of us, except for maybe Wes, but he's really smart.

Wes, you're really smart and I buy you. You had two boys that are really smart. Took after their mother and really wonderful boys. Michael's really smart and with all that wisdom he had from God as a direct creation by God, he did not dispute with Satan over the body of Moses.

[29 : 30] He didn't dispute. But he did something that we should all remember. he called upon God to rebuke Satan.

That's how he handled the situation. When you find yourself in a situation and you have to do anything, call upon the Lord to do the work.

Just call upon the Lord. I remember the late now and wonderful black preacher from California, E.V. Hill. Born in the Texas Hill country, Dr. Hill, a great man of God.

A lady in his church came to him and said, oh Dr. Hill, the devil's been after me all week. He said, the devil's not after you. You haven't done anything to threaten the devil. Wouldn't you like to be able to do that?

You're no threat to the devil. I know you're too well. He didn't dispute. He merely called upon the Lord to rebuke Satan.

[30 : 38] And let me tell you, Satan's got no power over the Lord. None. You know what the opposite of God is? He has no opposite.

People say, Satan, no, no, no. Satan, nothing. Rebuke him for me, Lord. This is a great lesson for the modern church. We have churches now that spend their time rebuking Satan.

I've seen her on their marquee, come tonight, we're going to rebuke Satan and you're going to get a healing. Why are healings on Sunday night and not on Monday morning? I've never understood that. First of all, we're not called upon to engage in that activity.

No word does it tell us to do that. Let God do the rebuking. Second, we don't have power over Satan. He's strong. Only the Lord has that power and make sure he's in you and you're walking with him.

We need to spend our time reverencing and praising God in Trinity and let him handle Satan because he's the one with all the power.

[31 : 55] Right? He's got all the power. And then Jude throws this in. He says apostates are like unreasoning animals. What does that mean?

They operate by instinct. I never could make my wife understand these little dogs we have.

Remember Mike and the dachshunds and she thought they had this tremendous thought process.

Honey, they're animals. Oh, no, no. They, you know, okay, you know, I'm not going to argue. You think I would argue with Diane? Apostates can put on airs as they teach, but in the end, Jude says they're like brute animals, devoid of reasoning, and they're operating by instinct.

They are fools in the hands of Satan, and in the end they will be destroyed. Their lying will destroy them, their deceiving heresies are going to destroy them, obviously the rejection of the word of God and of Christ will destroy them.

They bring judgment upon themselves. And it's coming, like a freight train, and they can't slow it down, they can't stop it, can't derail it.

[33 : 19] judgment is coming. Judgment delayed is never judgment denied. If we think because we've been here over 2,000 years, it's delayed, it's never denied.