

Apostates Exposed
Jude 11-13

Well, as you're making your way to the book of Jude, which is where we'll be for our time this morning, I just want to throw out a question for you to think about. If you had to guess, were you to survey any random person, pick someone just randomly out of the United States of America, and say, what characteristic or character quality is Jesus most known for? What do you think the average person would say? If you had to guess, I would think, I would bet, that the average person would probably say Jesus is most known for His love. Probably the most common answer you would get, that Jesus's a loving person. Whether or not they believe that He's actually the Son of God and what He did, they would still say that He's probably well-known as being that guy who gave up His life. You know, people wear the cross around their neck. There's lots of churches that put the cross everywhere. So, He's known for giving up His life for other people. Whether or not they believe that, they would probably identify that, and say Jesus's known to be a loving person. He taught a lot about love as well, so that's probably what He's all about.

It's interesting because, I'm going to read some verses to you, and want you to try and see if you can understand these verses through the filter of Jesus being a loving person. Matthew 23:27-28; this is what Jesus says, "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like white washed tombs which on the outside appear 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." You might hear those verses and go where's the love in that? I don't know if I can really see those two lining up there. But when you consider the context, and you consider who Jesus was ministering to, what the situation was, and the day that He was alive. When you had the religious leaders, these people called the Pharisees, the scribes, the people that knew the law so well that were supposedly leading the nation of Israel, and Jesus, I think it's fair to say and clear to say that out of love, He felt the necessity to address these people, to protect His own people that were being led astray by these blind guides as He also called them.

In fact, it's a loving thing for Jesus to warn, to sound the alarm for His people, the Jews that were being led astray. And they had no idea that

hypocrites were over them and among them, and they were their role models. But Jesus saw right through this, obviously, being God, and He knew something needed to be done, something needed to be said, and thus you have these words, right, exposing who these leaders were. And initially you think, well, that's not very loving, but then you start to consider the context of why He's doing this, and He is loving His people. He is loving these people that are being led astray. He's protecting them. He's warning them. It's a necessary thing that has to be done, and it's done in love.

And I think we'll see today that Jude really does the same thing. I mean, when you think about what we've been looking at in the book of Jude, if, as I remind you, if you just look at Jude verses 3 and 4, the whole point of the book of Jude is to contend earnestly for the faith. He's making this appeal to the church; you need to rise up and contend, all right, eagerly agonize for the faith because people have come in among you; they, in a very stealth like, hidden fashion, they are among you, and you don't even realize it. These people are ungodly people. They really don't follow Jesus Christ with their life. In fact, they have withdrawn spiritually, yet they are still among you physically, and it's a danger. It's plaguing the church. It was plaguing the people of Jesus's time, and that's why He has to expose these people to the Jews. And so in the same way, Jude is exposing these false leaders. He's exposing these apostates, these people that have crept in unnoticed to the church. And so that's what we get to see, really, in our verses this morning.

But before we read those verses, let me just remind you, also, briefly, of what we have covered in verses 5-8. In verses 5-8, we saw the certainty of the judgment of these people just like the Israelites who were led out of Egypt and then wandered for forty years and died because of their rebellion; and just like the angels who did not take their position seriously but left it and mixed with the people of mankind, and now they're reserved for destruction and judgment; and just like Sodom and Gomorrah and how they're destroyed by fire. So too will these apostates and false leaders certainly be judged. There's no question. It is a done deal in God's mind. So Jude communicates that.

And then, he goes on in verses 9 and 10 to talk about the seriousness of what they are doing, and what they have done, and that they are blasphemers. They are blaspheming the name of Christ, so that the gospel is stunted, and it doesn't go out. They're hindering the truth from going forth, and they are

slandering the very name of Christ and His word and even His people. And so, he warns about that, and he's ramping up. He's helping his audience to see the seriousness, the significance, of this issue. And as we just looked at all the Old Testament, we saw Jesus warning that these times would come. People would come; they'd be lovers of themselves. They would be apostates. Paul warned about this as well. Peter even warned about this. And then we get here to the book of Jude, and he's saying they've arrived. We're at this time right now, and we need to rise up, contend for the faith and not let these people come in and detract the mission of the church - God's people.

So that brings us to Jude verse 11, and I'm going to read these verses and as we do, just be reminded of Jesus's words that we already considered when He said, "Woe to you scribes and Pharisees..." So here we have Jude 11; "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 are the men who are 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." This probably is the most vivid portion of the book of Jude. He just heaps on imagery and illustration after illustration to, really, we would say, expose these apostates for who they really are; much like Jesus had to do with the scribes and the Pharisees, so now Jude is doing with the people, the apostates, the ungodly men, that are unnoticed in the church.

So in verse 11, we will start there, and we'll see a progression that takes place, the progression that takes place with these apostates. And it's kind of three fold as he uses three different examples from the Old Testament once again. He likes threes. He keeps doing that throughout the book, but we now focus on individuals. As in before, in verses 5-8, we had kind of groups of people, now we're focusing on specific individuals, and how there's this progression that apostates have taken. So, verse 11; "Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain..." Cain is our first individual that is mentioned, and this is the first step in this progression of apostasy, really, the way, the way. There becomes a point when someone has to kind of make a decision. Are they going to live for righteousness? Are they going to seek after that, or are they going to continue in wickedness? There's a starting point for all

this, and a perfect example is Cain because as you know, if you were to go back to Genesis 4 and read about this, you see how Cain is known as a farmer. He's a tiller of the ground, and so he's growing these crops. And then you have Able his brother who's a shepherd, and he's keeping the flocks. And, apparently, God had required a sacrifice from them, and so they both brought a sacrifice to God. Able bringing the first born of his flock - God being pleased with that. Cain bringing some of the fruit of the ground that he grew - God not being pleased with that.

We don't have the full details, but, obviously, Cain knew what he ought to do, but he did not do it. Hebrews 11 helps us as well; it says, "By faith Able offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain..." Cain knew, but for whatever reason what he brought was not satisfying to God, and that's not where he went wrong, really. I mean that he should've known, but still God gives him a choice at this moment. He brings a sacrifice to God that God's not pleased with, and then Cain gets downcast, and this is where the moment of truth comes. God says this, "If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it." So, there it is. God lays it out before Cain. You have options. You have options right now - two options. You can do well, right, and you can choose to walk the path of righteousness, or you can continue down a path of wickedness. The choice is yours because "...sin is crouching at the door," and if you do nothing about it, it will master you, and you will continue down this path, and it will really set the course for your life of wickedness. So God puts it out there.

And then we read right in the next verse what Cain decides to do; "Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him." Obviously, he let sin master him, and he becomes known as the first murderer here throughout human history in killing his own brother Able in the field. So, it really just, recalls the simplicity of Psalm, chapter 1. If you think about it, in Psalm, chapter 1, you're given two options - the righteous man and the wicked man. The righteous man meditates on the word of God and does it. The wicked man chooses not to. He scoffs. He mocks. He despises the word of God. And essentially, you get two ends for both ways. Psalm 1:6 says this, "For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish." And that's essentially what we have with Cain, the beginning of apostasy where he has the option put in front of him; God Himself telling him here

you go, two different paths you can take; and Cain deciding to go down the way of wickedness. That's the decision he takes.

It doesn't stop there though. There's a second step, obviously, in this progression, then you see the error. So, not only is it the decision to walk in wickedness rather than righteousness, there is then an error. There's a motive that kind of comes out in this, and we learn this from a different individual of the Old Testament; His name is Balaam. Jude 11 goes on to say, "and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam..." ... "...for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam..." Balaam, we have a little bit more information about when you read the book of Numbers. You could actually read all of Numbers 22-24, and you get this whole saga of Balaam coming on to the scene and kind of what he's most known for. And to really summarize it as best as I can, it all comes down to Balaam being a magician, a soothsayer, someone who practices divination. And so he has this ability, and at that time people utilized it. They utilized it for the possibility that he could curse people, and it would work. So, what happens is there's a King named Balak. You think, all right, we're already confused. There's two guys with the same name, kind of, almost. Balak ends with a "k;" he's a king. Balaam ends with a "m;" he's a magician. Kind of separate those two.

All right, so Balak is the king of Moab, and so he's looking around and he sees the nation of Israel coming. God is granting them success, and Balak the king of Moab is getting scared. He's looking out and seeing Israel, this massive nation traveling right around him, and he's scared. He wants to do something about it, so he gets a bright idea, and he tries to hire Balaam the magician to come and curse the people of Israel. That's the whole plan, the grand scheme. It's interesting though because when you read the story, Balaam actually consults God, and asks God should I go? Is this something I should do? And God tells him no, initially, and so Balaam says no, at first. Balak tries again, and offers even kind of more dignified messengers to bring this and offer him money. And then Balaam asks God, and God actually lets him go. So Balaam goes down and then it turns into a bit of a comedy because Balak says all right, now, here's what I want you to do. There's the nation of Israel. Go ahead and do your sorcery and curse them. And Balaam goes about this, and he says I can only say whatever God tells me to say. And Balaam ends up not cursing, but blessing Israel four times. Four times almost in a kind of a comedy of just display of God's

sovereignty, Balaam, this magician, is blessing, blessing, blessing, blessing Israel. So how does Balak the king of Moab feel? Well, he's mad. He's dissatisfied. That's not why he hired this magician, right? He wanted more out of him. He wanted him to curse the people of God, not bless them.

So, we take a step back and go, well, then what is the error of Balaam? What's the error of Balaam? Because you read that story, and you think that sounds pretty good to me. He actually blessed the people of God. He actually asked God what he should say. Where is Balaam in error? I don't really see it. Well, you actually find out as you read on in Scripture. In fact, after Numbers 24, you get to Numbers 25 and you learn that the people of Israel started to mix in immorality with the daughters, the women, of Moab. So the people of Moab start to mix with the people of Israel. They start to engage in acts of immorality and even idolatry. Israel gets introduced to foreign gods. They start to worship them instead of Yahweh, their God. And what does God do? He responds by sending a plague upon Israel. Well, here's the question, where did Moab get that idea to mix with the people of Israel and throw them off? That idea came from Balaam. So Balaam was pretty successful in actually asking God what he should do and actually blessing Israel, but then before he leaves, he gets a bright idea, and he gets it because he wants the money. He wants the money from Balak the king of Moab. And so he says, you know, I know I just blessed these people, but I have an idea for you. What if you encouraged your young women to go and actually infiltrate the camp of Israel and mix with them? See what happens. I bet you Yahweh won't like that. I bet you their God won't be too happy with that. And sure enough, that's exactly what happens. Balak takes the advice of Balaam, and they mix with Israel, and God is not happy, and a plague comes upon Israel.

Why did Balaam do all of it? For the money; for pay as our verse in Jude says, "for pay." We know this for sure if you read other places, too, in Scripture. Later on, it helps clarify. Numbers 31:16 says, "Behold, these [women] caused the sons of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the Lord..." So the counsel of Balaam was to do this. Revelation 2:14 also tells us about this, "But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel..." So, this is the error of Balaam - started out okay but then he saw the money. He got greedy. He was selfish, and thus he followed after that, and he gave the

advice, the counsel, to Balak to mix Moabite women with Israelite families as, obviously, Israel was not supposed to do, and a plague came.

Well, this is really a characteristic of apostates and false teachers as well. There's still greed that is a driving motivation for why people do what they do, unfortunately. It's for greed. It's for selfishness, selfish reasons, that people will depart from the path of righteousness and go down the path of wickedness. 2 Peter 2:15 says, "...forsaking the right way, they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness." He knew it was unrighteous, but he saw the wages that came with it. He saw the pay that came with it, and thus he acted. So, this is a warning, obviously, all throughout Scripture of how to understand greed, finances. 1 Timothy 6:9-10; Paul says, "But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs." So there it is, a connection here with those that wander away from the faith, those that apostatize, you could say, those that turn their back on the path of righteousness. And you learn about the motive, the error, the reason; it's for money. A big reason can be just greed, greed and selfishness. As it was with Balaam, so it is still today with those who are apostates, ungodly people, that are among us physically but not spiritually.

We then look at the third progression, and we see the rebellion, the rebellion, in our final Old Testament example that Jude mentions. So, obviously, there's picking the way of Cain which is the way of wickedness. There's the error of Balaam which is greed. And then, he says they have "...perished in the rebellion of Korah." They have "...perished in the rebellion of Korah." So we get another example from the book of Numbers. Numbers 16; we learn of a guy named Korah, and he was a Levite, so he actually had the privilege of being around the tabernacle, being around some of the furnishings, maybe carrying them, taking part in the sacrificial system; however, he was not a priest, but he was very close and very privileged to be a part of the sacrificial system that God had set up.

Well, at one point, Korah looks and he sees the way that God is using Moses and Aaron to lead the nation of Israel, and Korah gets upset. He doesn't like that. He thinks that's unfair. He's not happy with the way that God set it up.

He doesn't like the idea that Moses gets to be the mouth piece of God, and Aaron gets to be the High Priest. He doesn't like that, and so, he rises up and he gathers people with him, and he rebels. And here's what he says to Moses; "You have gone far enough, for all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is in their midst; so why do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?" It just sounds a lot like the description of apostasy that we've actually already seen in Jude. They "...deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus [Christ]." They deny the authority of God. God has set up a system in Israel for Moses and Aaron to be the leaders over the nation, and Korah doesn't like it. So it's not just a rebellion against Moses and Aaron, it's a rebellion against God Himself, and that's exactly what apostates are doing; they're rebelling against the very Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

Well, what happens to Korah? It's actually a pretty dramatic story as you read on in Numbers 16:32-33; "and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who belonged to Korah with their possessions. So they and all that belonged to them went down alive to Sheol; and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly." Definitely, you would think that'd be a lesson to all of Israel at that point; do not rebel against God, nor His servant Moses. So this is what happens to Korah. He perishes in this rebellion along with two hundred and fifty other people that are consumed with fire. And then, as you read on, you find out that some of the people of Israel didn't even like that. They thought, hey, that's not fair. That's not fair that the earth opened up and swallowed them. That's kind of wrong of you Moses. That's wrong of God. Well, then God sends a plague and fourteen thousand seven hundred more people die because they still don't get it. They still do not submit to God's authority.

It's interesting to notice this, the progression, as we're coming back to the choice of path either righteousness or wickedness, and Cain, obviously, to choose wickedness. Maybe the reason and what continues you down the path - the motive for greed as Balaam choose, and then here the, really, the end, the result of it all, is you perish. You perish. It's destruction. That's what happened with Korah. And I like how Jude phrases it here. I don't know if you caught this. He said, "these men" He's describing them, and then he says, "and perished in the rebellion of Korah." Not that they will perish, but they perished. It's past tense. It's past tense. It's something that's

already happened, and it's not just referring to the event of Korah, but it's also saying that these men are included in that perishing. And so, really, in Jude's mind, and you could say in the Holy Spirit's mind, and God's mind, this is a done deal. Their condemnation, their judgment, their punishment, is sealed. These people, they think they are duping God. They think they're getting away with something. They think that, somehow, that they're playing the game, and they got away with it, but Jude says ahh, not so fast. In God's mind, they're already perished just like Korah and the two hundred and fifty others.

So this's the progression of apostasy. It begins with choosing the path, choosing the path of wickedness. It continues, as the motive of greed and selfishness, propels one down that path, and then the end is pretty clear; it's destruction. It's perishing as Korah. So this is the progression here of the apostates. And then we go into this picturesque section in verses 12 and 13. We get the pictures, the pictures of the apostates. So as we read through this, you just see, like I said, illustration after illustration, and what is the point? Why? Well, much like Jesus protecting the nation of Israel, much like Jesus trying to help people wake up and exposing the Pharisees and the scribes, Jude, in the same way, is exposing these apostates. He's exposing them for who they really are to protect the church, to help the church see these men for who they really are even though they might look like they have it all together on the outside.

So as we get into it, we see many illustrations. The first one in verse 12, "These are the men who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear..." So they are wrecking reefs, wrecking reefs. He describes them as "...hidden reefs..." Once again, the word hidden, ah, kind of fits with how he's already described these apostates. In verse 4, he describes them as those who have crept in unnoticed. All right. They're among the church physically, but they're unnoticed. Just like a hidden reef, you look out over the water and you wouldn't see it from the land, or from the shore, or even from your boat, until your boat actually smashes into it. All right. It's hidden. It's underneath the water, but barely; it's shallow, and so, in the same way, these people are hidden. And he goes on to say that they're at "your love feasts" They're feasting with you at "your love feasts" And you might go what is a love feast? What is that a reference to? And really the simplest way to understand is a potluck, just picture a potluck. Back in that day, there was the idea that you would, in the church, they

would gather together and they would, obviously, not just hear from the teaching of the word together, maybe sing some songs, but then they would even eat together much like probably some of you are going to do with each other after the service, right? You go out and you eat and you gather together, and it's more time to, obviously, visit with one another in fellowship. So it's really what's happening here.

So these people, they blend in so well, that they're doing everything with the church, and they're even eating. They're eating right next to you is what Jude is saying. They're right next to you eating at your potlucks, at "...your love feasts," and you don't even realize it. Matthew 15:7-8; going back to the words of Jesus again when He's addressing the religious leaders. He says, "You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, 'This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me.' " That's kind of the idea, obviously. There's these apostates, they can eat alongside of us in the church. They can sit right next to us and they can be here, and they can even say things that sound great. People have a really good ability to speak Christian-eez, right, to talk in the language that sounds like they're a Christian. People are good at that. It happens, right? We all kind of get this kind of way of talking about us, and so someone could just blend right in, but the key is the heart.

And Jesus was pretty perceptive and obviously able to reveal that to the Pharisees in His time say, you guys, your heart is so far, so far, from God. You can talk all the talk you want to talk, but your heart is not there. He goes on to say and I think this phrase is interesting, that "they feast with you without fear" They're alongside of you feasting with you at "your love feasts" ... "without fear" There's just, there's no reverence at all. They have essentially become so good at blending in and playing the game, that they've seared their conscience completely. It's like they flipped the switch off and they have no conscience. They have no prodding that's telling them, or alerting them, or warning them, of the fact that God knows their heart. They just have essentially turned that system off, and they found a way to continue in their error, to continue to blend in because of, obviously, what they're gaining from it whether it's money or some other selfish gain. Paul warns about this in 1 Timothy 4:1-2, also talking about the issue of apostasy; "But the spirit explicitly says that in the later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a

branding iron...” This is what happens. These people get so good at playing the game. They get so good at acting, at kind of looking and even talking like a Christian, and, really, they’ve just shut down their conscience altogether because they’re faking it. It’s a complete fake. So, Jude is exposing them for who they are even as they’re alongside of the church, blending in.

He goes on to describe them as wicked shepherds, as wicked shepherds. You might think, I don’t see the word shepherd in here; maybe in your version you do, maybe not, but you really see it in the next simple phrase, “caring for themselves” ... “caring for themselves,” and you think, okay, where do you get shepherd from that? Well, the Greek word, literally, for caring is shepherding. That word is shepherding themselves; that’s what they’re doing. And what do shepherds do? Well, obviously, they protect the flock, and then they lead the flock to graze and to obviously get the nourishment, the sustenance, they need. That’s obviously on the shepherd to do that. And so what do these people do? They have no desire to care for others. They have no desire to shepherd the flock of God and care for the flock of God. They just care about themselves, so they feed themselves. That’s what they care about. It’s almost kind of like Israel’s day. Ezekiel the prophet warned about this when God told him, “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, Thus says the Lord God, ‘Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock?’ ” It’s simple. It’s pretty much common sense; that’s why this illustration that Jude uses makes all the sense in the world. They are shepherds for themselves, not for the flock, thus you see the selfishness completely in everything they do. It’s completely opposed to what the shepherds of God’s people ought to be like. 1 Peter 5 tells us about that. Verses 1-3; “Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.” It’s really the opposite of that. Everything that Peter’s just written there screams out serving and putting others first rather than abusing your authority over people and feeding yourself, which is how these apostates are described.

A third illustration is that they are waterless clouds, waterless clouds. Kind of important, especially when you think about the importance of rain even much more so back then, but even still now we kind of need water. Water's important; we know that in California. He goes on to say they are "...clouds without water carried along by winds." And you could just imagine, especially when you're trying to provide for yourself, you have your own crop, and you see clouds coming, and you get this hope stirred up in you that, yay, precipitation is coming, and it will give us what we need. We will then have food to eat, and we can thank the Lord for that, but then clouds just come, keep passing over and leave, and not a drop of water. How disappointing. Right? How empty, right? Anticlimactic to see these clouds, and to see, and expect, and then to get nothing. And that's really what these apostates offer. They offer nothing. They're empty. Right? These false teachers are just completely vain in what they give. Proverbs 25:14; "Like clouds and wind without rain is a man who boasts of his gifts falsely." So, they're a lot of talk, and then really when you boil it all down, it's nothing. It's really nothing that they're giving, and you can see this really all throughout; like a lot of just teaching that comes forth.

And unfortunately a lot of churches in America, all right, a lot of churches are bringing forth teaching that is more about catering to what people want to hear and what they want to feel rather than actually feeding them nourishment and food and sustenance and what they need, right, which is the word of God. So instead, people start to teach other things like, hey, God wants you rich, so pray for that special car, because, Jesus, if He was here, He'd be riding in a special car. So, so should you. Right? So, wealth - make wealth the most important thing. You want good health? Pray for that, and if you're not getting it, it's because you don't have enough faith - something that's definitely not taught in the New Testament either. God wants you happy, not necessarily holy. You know, dealing with sin is hard, but, you know, you need to be happy. That's the best thing for you, and that's what God wants. Here's a quote from a pastor's wife in her church. When she was in front of the congregation, she said this, "I just want to encourage every one of us to realize when we obey God, we're not doing it for God. I mean, that's one way to look at it. We're doing it for ourselves because God takes pleasure when we're happy. That's the thing that gives Him the greatest joy. So I want you to know this morning, just do good for your own self. Do good because God wants you to be happy. When you come to church, when you worship Him, you're not doing it for God, really, you're doing it for

yourself because that's what makes God happy. Amen." And the whole congregation applauded. So, sad, very sad, because what is that teaching going to do for the people of God? Is it going to feed them? It will not. It'll make them feel emotionally good, potentially, at best. That's the best result you get from that, but then what happens when the trials and the tribulation comes? Is that idea of, you know, doing things for yourself, is that really going to get you down the line?

And more importantly, in the eternal scheme of things, does that please God, really? Do we know what the Bible actually teaches about what God wants and what He doesn't want? Do we know that God does want holiness? Yeah, we do know that, so we should strive for it as the Bible teaches us to. So, unfortunately, these apostates, these false teachers, are just coming to these people and giving an appearance like they're going to bring something of substance when really there's nothing, just like a cloud without rain, also described as worthless trees, you could say withered trees if you'd like but worthless trees. He says they're "...autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted." Jesus warned about this. He says, "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits." It's pretty simple. How does the life, what does the life manifest? What does it result in? What does it bring forth? And Jude says well, nothing. It's like coming to the point of autumn, the very end of the harvest, and you've given this fruit tree as much time as it needs, and you're at the end of the harvest and still nothing, still nothing. It's a worthless tree. It's a withered tree, and so Jude describes it as "...doubly dead..." You think, how's it "...doubly dead..."? Well, not only is it dead in the sense that it's a fruit tree not bearing any fruit, it's also dead in the sense that it's going to be uprooted because there's no more purpose for it. You have a fruit tree because you want something from it; you want it to bear fruit. So it's "...doubly dead..." because it's not bearing fruit, and its end is, really, being uprooted.

The next illustration we see is "wild waves" - "wild waves." He says they are "wild waves of the sea casting up their own shame like foam." And so, rather than we look at, well, what do they produce? Well, nothing, they're failing to produce anything that's good, anything that feeds the church, anything that is actually resemblance of a follower of Christ, instead, what are they producing? Well, like "wild waves," and maybe you've seen this, a beach after a high tide or a storm that comes through and you have a ton of

driftwood and there's junk on the shore of the beach; and that's what happens; these "...wild waves," they just toss up on to the shore everything that's nasty that you didn't even realize was in the ocean. Isaiah 57:20 says, "the wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet, and it's waters toss up refuse and mud." A whole lot of nothing; so not only are they a tree that fails to bear any fruit, they're like a wave that's just foaming up worthless immorality. 1 Timothy 5:24; Paul warns of this, and he kind of helps in saying almost the same thing; "The sins of some men are quite evident, going before them to judgment; for others, their sins follow after." So you identify these apostates, these false teachers, simply by their lives, their lives. Given enough time, the truth will come out, and their lives will show, really, where they are.

Lastly we see Jude describe them as "wandering stars" ... "wandering stars" Some people say that this is a reference to a shooting star that comes and goes. Other people say this is a reference to planets that are off course. Either one really suffices for a description because other Scripture affirms both of those ideas, really, about false teachers and about apostates. But here's what Jesus has to say, "...they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit." So they are off course, and the unfortunate thing is it's not just for them, it's going to affect several other people just like with Korah, just like with Balaam. It affects other people, and both will then fall into a pit; both will be destroyed. So what do we take away from this? In some sense, well, in one sense, take heart because God is sovereign. Although these apostates and false leaders are there, God is sovereign. He's building His church and purifying His church and ultimately, Galatians 6:7 says, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked." ... "God is not mocked." So while these people might look like they're getting away with something, they're not because God knows all things, and they will be punished because God is a perfect, just judge, and He will take care of it.

Additionally, what about us? Let's just reflect for a second and maybe consider this as we get to leave and converse throughout the day. Are we simply talking the talk of Christianity, or are we going the next step and fulfilling what we ought to be doing and that is walking the walk? Right? Are we actually living it out, what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ, or are we just really good at talking about it? Is that it? Because that is a sad place to be, and it's actually a scary place to be. So, hopefully, that's not us.

Hopefully, we're not just talkers, but we actually walk it out; we live it out as God would have us to.

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