

## Jude verses 5 - 10

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[ 0 : 00 ] There was a time, O Lord, when we looked at this world with Christless eyes, and it frightened us and worried us, and Lord, we know that for those around about us in the world today, as they look at society and as they look at a new government and as they look at all that's going on, they cannot see or view the world with hope, nor with faith, nor with confidence, nor with peace.

And Lord, we're so grateful, again, that when we come to you in prayer, again, we are recognizing that everything is under your hand and that our lives themselves are cared for, sustained, provided for, guided and led by you, our loving Heavenly Father.

We ask you to forgive us, Lord, when we become anxious and fearful, as we do, when things change, when problems arise, when we hear news of disaster or catastrophe, or when we face, in our own lives, loss.

We ask again, O Lord, that you would help us ever to lift our eyes and to set our eyes upon you and upon your Son, the Lord Jesus, who has passed through death and has brought life everlasting.

We do want to pray for our nation at this time. We pray, again, for our Prime Minister and for the cabinet that he will be forming even over these days.

[ 1 : 39 ] We pray that, again, you would provide us with a government that will, in your mercy and grace, be just the government we need.

We don't know exactly, Lord, what's the right government, but we know that you have given us this government. We pray, O Lord, that they may be influenced by some sense of your presence, of the heritage of this nation, and of their judgment, Lord, before you.

And we ask, O Lord, that they would make just and right laws. And we ask again for wisdom and help to live under this government in these coming years, that we may be lights shining in the darkness.

We again pray for those Christians in the Houses of Parliament. We know there are some. We pray that you would embolden them, strengthen them, and encourage them, that they may be good witnesses and bear a good testimony before their peers.

We do, again, remember the needs of our fellowship, and we thank you of Steve and his family. And again, we give you thanks for the opportunities he had to share the Gospel with his father before he died.

[ 2 : 49 ] And we again pray for his father's partner, Jane, and for other members of the family. Lord, Steve alone is the only Christian on that side of the family.

We pray again that this may be a means by which his grandfather, his brother, his uncle, and others in the family may be brought not only to hear the Gospel, but to receive the Lord Jesus.

Oh, please, even in the short time we have on Friday, make your voice to be heard and your truth to be clear. We do pray for the Gospel Music Convention, and thank you for the long history that it's had, the blessing that it's had.

And we pray again for these final days in preparation that all go well. And we pray that it may be, Lord, something that brings honour and glory to you and raises the Gospel in this town that people may be asking and questioning about what this is all about.

And again, for the Bible week following, we pray for Andy, that you would help him in his preparations, help him with his health, help him with the travelling and busyness, and pray that you would draw many, Lord, to question and to find out the reality, the truth of our origins, and therefore our relationship with God.

[ 4 : 03 ] We pray again, oh Lord, that you would be with those who are struggling at this time, with either ill health or with injury, those that are awaiting operations. We pray particularly for those who've got forthcoming operations.

This week and in coming weeks, we pray that those operations may not be delayed or postponed, but rather they might be successful and they might bring relief and greater ability. And we pray again for ourselves. Here we are, Lord, gathered, a small group of your people in this town, but we are many, Lord, because we are gathered with all your saints around this world. But we are gathered to hear your word. And we long that you would speak to us. And we long that you would give us understanding. And we long, Lord, especially that your word may change us so that we may be the people you want us to be. And that we might be those, oh Lord, who are a light upon a hill, a lamp upon a stand, that men and women may see what you've done in our lives and long and hunger for that work of grace in their own lives.

[ 5 : 08 ] Hear us then, we pray. Equip us and bless us, now we ask, for all that you have prepared for us in the week ahead. For we ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

Amen. I did forget then to pray about UBM, but just as I finished praying, I thought I should have prayed for that. But please, will you pray for that, as Emily shared this morning, the need for more folk to come and volunteer in sharing that work that we can have, not only ourselves, but other places can have the full amount of weeks of mission.

Well, let's sing again in our hymn books, 642. Great hymn of Wesley, 642. May the mind of Christ my Saviour dwell in me from day to day.

And then we shall come to those verses in Jude, which we read just a moment or two before. It's not... So then please turn back, if you would, to Jude and chapter 1.

Particularly those verses that we read just a little while ago, which were verses 5 to 10. James Cagney, most of you will know, but not some of the younger people, was an actor who starred in many films in the 20s, 30s, 40s and 50s, I think probably as well.

[ 6 : 42 ] And his most famous roles in those films was to play a gangster. And from... That was sort of his trademark in almost every film, but not all.

He was this gangster who came out with classic quotes like, you dirty rat, and top of the world, ma. Okay? That was... If you didn't know James Cagney, you were taken then to James Cagney, weren't you, immediately by those...

Never mind. And one of his most famous films, his best films, one that I like, is called Angels with Dirty Faces. And in this he plays Rocky Sullivan, a lifetime criminal, who had almost attained a sort of a celebrity status amongst the young people, the youth, the boys, of the neighbourhood in which he grew up.

They looked up to him, and some thought to emulate him and be a gangster like him with this sort of great name made for himself. But Rocky, after he meets them, he's caught committing a crime again, and this time he's sentenced to death in the electric chair.

He promises and says to the boys, even before then, that he'll die without fear. He'll die bravely. Bravely. And this, of course, makes them admire him all the more.

[ 8 : 00 ] However, at the last minute, as Rocky is being led away from his cell to the electric chair, the boys are listening in to the radio, which is being broadcast live from the prison, his execution.

And Rocky begins to cry and to say, No, stop, have mercy, don't let me die. And this has a devastating effect upon these boys who are listening. They lose all respect for him.

And more, of course, they lose the whole glamour of being a criminal, a gangster, and are turned away from that type of life. Why did Rocky crack up at the last minute when he swore that he wouldn't?

Was it because he was really a coward in the end? Well, no, it wasn't. See, Rocky had a close friend who was a priest who ran the youth club for these boys in his area. He'd asked Rocky, please, on the night before he was to be executed, don't go bravely to the chair.

Cry and call for mercy so that you can, if not undo the bad life you lived, can at least put off these young people from ever following in your example.

[ 9 : 08 ] Examples can be both good and bad, of course. Good examples show us the right way of doing things. They help us in how we're to speak, how to act or to live in such a way that's good, not only for ourselves, but for others.

But bad examples show us the wrong way to live. They affect the way we speak, act or live in a way that harms ourselves and is harmful to others.

We are particularly susceptible, of course, to those examples as we grow up, while we're young. But we still find that examples, even in adulthood, can affect us and can influence us for good or for bad.

But some bad examples can actually be good for us in that they present to us something to be avoided. They show to us a way that we should be warned from and turned away from.

As Paul writes to the Corinthian Christians in 1 Corinthians and chapter 10, he points out that many of those in the Old Testament were examples to us that we turn to avoid.

[10:18] In 1 Corinthians 10 verse 6, he says, Some people struggle when they read the Old Testament because of the atrocities and because of the evil things that are done there, thinking that God condones all of them.

But that isn't the case. Not everything that is done in God's name and everything that is done by God's people is something that God agrees with. It just states the reality of what happened.

And they are examples to us, often, of how not to live by faith, not to live in opposition to God.

Now, as Jude is writing to these Christian believers, he knows that they have within the church people who are bad examples to them. They are these teachers which we thought about in verse 4. Certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago secretly slipped in among you.

Remember I said they were like smugglers who were carrying contraband.

[11:26] In this case, false teaching. False teaching about the grace of God. And bad examples in the way that they lived. Jude is well aware that for most of us, the normal human failing is that we act like sheep and follow the crowd.

And so, it's not just unbelievers who do that, but Christians as well. We can be misled by those who we should be looking up to or think we should be looking up to, whose actions, whose thinking, whose practice is harmful and unwise.

These godless men sneaked in under the radar. They were setting a very bad example because of their immorality. We see that in verse 4. In which they were hiding under the pretense of God's free grace.

To drive home the point to these confused believers, Jude now launches into the real meat of his letter. Remember he had said at the very start, verse 3, he'd wanted to write about the salvation we share.

He'd wanted to talk about the blessings and the good things and the wonderful things that Christians have in common. But, he says, I felt I had to write to you. I was pressurized.

[12:41] I was constrained to write to you about something else. That to urge you to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. And now he comes to that. He writes to them about those things which he wants to warn them about.

Out of love for them, he warns. Out of love for them, he talks about those things which are hard to deal with. That are unpleasant in one sense, but necessary.

That is the sign of true love, isn't it? The sign of true love is not that we flatter all the time. Or we just say the things that people want us to say. Or we just do the things that we hope will make people happy.

Real love means sometimes we've got to be tough. Tough love, we call it. Tough love as parents at times with our children. Tough love with those around about us, our family. And those who are unsaved.

To speak of the realities of heaven and hell. And so when we get to verse 5, we find that here, all the way through to verse 19. Which, again, as I say, is the main meat of the sandwich, as it were, of this letter.

[13:51] There is a passionate plea from Jude to the believers. Not to follow the ways of these godless men, their heresy and their practice. And he does this in several ways.

And because it's a large section, we're not going to deal with the whole of the section, but simply verses 5 to 10 this week. And should it be possible, God willing, the next section next week.

As a preacher, a good preacher, he likes to have three points. Okay? That's how it's meant to be. Three points. Four too many. Five definitely. One is not enough.

Three points. And so he has three examples here. Verses 5 and following. To remind the believers about what he is telling them is true.

And it's something that they already know. Notice that verse 5. They already know all this. He doesn't mean they know all about the false teacher sneaking in. But about what he's about to say.

These were things that were common to them.

[14:46] These were almost certainly Jewish believers. Who'd converted from Judaism. And they would have known their Old Testament. They would have known about the things that have happened before. And so he says, I want you to remind you that what has happened before is happening now.

And again, we see, don't we, that the Word of God is always contemporary. It always speaks to us today. The problem of humanity is the same problem. It's sin. It always has been. It always will be until the Lord returns. And though the language in one sense may be old for us and the story is unfamiliar to us, yet the actual point of the whole message is absolutely spot on 21st century.

So he wants to remind them of these things. He wants them to be reminded of them so that they might avoid these bad examples. He wants to show them that this is how God has doubted before with those who've turned away from him and twisted his truth.

And that's how he will deal with all people in all days and ages. And therefore, if they would take God's Word and apply it, then they would be able to discern and understand what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is bad, what is from God and what is from Satan.

[16:06] And that's something, again, that, dear friends, we've got to recognize once more. That if we want to understand our day and age, if we want to know how we can live in this present society, then if we want to know whether something is truthful or erroneous, faithful or unfaithful, then we need to know our Bibles.

We're driven back to the Word of God. Just as Jude points his readers here to the Scriptures. And so he gives these three examples. The first one is probably the most well-known to us.

Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt. We've been doing that in Exodus, as you know. But later destroyed those who did not believe. God had done a wonderful thing, hadn't he, in the Exodus.

See, he'd come through Moses to his people who'd been enslaved for 400 years, and he brought them out into freedom and liberty on their way to the Promised Land. But we find that all of those who left Egypt, who were 20 years and older, never made it to the Promised Land.

They all died in the wilderness. They all died in the desert. And the question is, why? Well, Jude tells us it's because they did not have true faith.

[17:25] Don't need to turn there, but in Numbers in chapter 14, we find out the whole story about what happened. When the people got to the edge of the Promised Land, they sent spies in, who checked it out, reconnoitred, 12 of them.

10 said, you can't do it. There's giants there. We'll all be slaughtered. Don't go. Two of them, Joshua and Caleb, said, yes, we must go, because God's promised and he's faithful.

And they were turned against by the people. Here's what God says. Not one of the men who saw my glory and the miraculous signs I performed in Egypt and in the desert, but who disobeyed me and tested me 10 times, not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their forefathers.

No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it. The only two men who made it into the Promised Land, who were over what would have been then 60 years old, were Caleb and Joshua. So there's the situation. They disobeyed God to their own ruin and their own grief. They were delivered by God. God had done good things for them, but they did not have faith.

[18:42] They didn't live out their faith by their actions. That's the important thing. They did not live out their faith by their actions, but unbelief ruled over them.

That's the first warning. We'll come back to these in a moment and pick up some application as well. What's the second event? This one's a bit more tricky. Verse 6. What's that all about?

When God created the world, he created angels. He created a host of angels. A great number of angels. We don't know how many. At some time in history, again, we don't know for sure, at some time in history, Satan, Lucifer, the prince in one sense of the angels, rebelled against God and took with him probably a third of the angels to work for him and to work in evil in this world.

God, we're told, imprisoned many of them to await that day of judgment. So what's that all about? Well, Isaiah 14, you don't need to turn there, talks about Lucifer, the son of the morning, in pride and arrogance, wanting to take God's place, but being cast down by God.

There's a reference to it as well in Revelation in chapter 12, where it says this, the great dragon was hurled down, that ancient serpent called the devil or Satan, who leads the whole world astray.

[ 20 : 27 ] He was hurled to the earth and his angels with him. So there was this spiritual conflict, this heavenly conflict, in which the angels, along with Satan, rebelled against God, not happy with their position of honor, which they had to be the servants of God, wanting more than that, wanting to usurp their place, leaving behind, the sense here in NIV, abandon their own home, means leaving their own proper place, under God's authority, and God cast them down and put them into that place of judgment.

So that's the second example. The third one is even more difficult. Well, the third one's easy, isn't it, in one sense, because it's verse 7, and we understand this. In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah, we all know that story from Genesis, gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion.

They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire. We know what happens. Sodom and Gomorrah are still almost catchphrases, if I can put it that way, in our day and age, for wickedness, for evil.

They were destroyed in the days of Abraham when fire fell from God upon them. Lot alone and his two daughters were rescued and saved.

What had happened? Well, you don't need to turn there again, but Genesis in chapter 18 tells us that God spoke to Abraham and said, the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me.

[ 22 : 11 ] If not, I'll know. God saw their sin and their iniquity and it grieved him so much so that he destroyed them. What was their sin? Well, it's not something that you're allowed to talk about nowadays, but it's here very clearly in chapter 19 when two angels who looked just like men came to Lot.

We're told that they went to their house. Before they'd gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom, both young and old, surrounded the house. They called out to Lot, where are the men who came to you tonight?

Bring them out for us so that we can have sex with them. Homosexuality, the practice of homosexuality was that which God hated in Sodom and Gomorrah and for that reason they were destroyed.

What they had done is they had cast off all restraint, all of God's commandments and truth and they sought only to live for their own pleasure and their own lusts.

So those are the three examples that Jude gives us. Again, two of them we recognize, one of them a little bit more tricky to pin down, but they are there in the Old Testament. Why?

[ 23 : 25 ] What has this got to do with what's happening there in Jude's day? Well, he says, doesn't he, in verse 8, in the very same way. So he sets up these three Old Testament examples and he says, just like those, so these men are behaving in a similar way.

So these men are acting in a similar way. They are false teachers and they are bad examples. And Jude wants his readers to see the similarities.

First of all, he talks about them polluting their bodies. Clearly speaking of the homosexual practice of the Sodomites and their perversion. We're told that they reject authority.

Just like the Old Testament Israelites who disobeyed God when he told them to go and Moses told them to go but decided they knew better. Then he talks about slandering celestial beings.

What could this mean? Well, he gives another example to help us understand something of this meaning. Verse 9. Even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him but said, the Lord rebuke you.

[ 24 : 42 ] Yet these men speak abusively against what they do not understand, what things they do understand by instinct like unreasoning animals, these are the very things that destroy them. What is that all about?

And if you're thinking, they're thinking, I don't remember reading that in my Old Testament, you'll be quite right because it's not there. The event that Jude is referring to is found in the apocryphal book The Assumption of Moses.

In that book, it records how the angel Michael was sent by God to bury Moses' body but the devil tried to hinder him. Now the apocrypha is made up of a collection of books which were written

between the end of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament.

They were never accepted as being divinely inspired and so they were never included in the full Bible though there are some Bibles you might find who include them.

They were popular books in the day, particularly amongst the Jews and that's why Jude mentions them and refers to them because it's a story that sets an illustration just like the story I told at the beginning about Rocky Sullivan and so on.

[ 25 : 53 ] See, as we find in the New Testament Paul himself as he preaches in Acts 16 he quotes Gentile philosophers not because he believes that they're divinely inspired just as Jude doesn't believe this is divinely inspired it's a story to illustrate a truth.

We use those things even today when we teach. This story was not something which is equal to Scripture.

We'll find out later Jude uses this again this thought again when he speaks about Enoch in verse 14 another apocryphal book. He's bringing out stories that they were familiar with common with to help them understand his point.

So, back to this slandering of angels. The false teachers it appears made all sorts of arrogant boasts. They claimed that they had power over angels or even over demons tending perhaps to have the authority to exercise and to cast out demons.

A bit like if you remember those seven sons of Sceva in Acts 19 who got a little bit of a shock when they tried to do it without real faith in the Lord Jesus. And it seems that they were claiming special insight into spiritual truths heavenly realms describing their visions for again Jude calls them these dreamers calls them and speaks about the fact that they understand by instinct as unreasoning animals speak abusively against whatever they do not understand.

[ 27 : 27 ] They can tell that these were people who claimed to have some great insight into spiritual things which nobody could question. here's again another warning for us because sadly even in our own day there are those who are in the church camp if I can put it away who will speak in this way and say that God or an angel has shown me this or told me this and it's not in the Bible it doesn't confirm in the scriptures but there is no way that you can sort of say no God didn't say that to you because there's no basis for their authority it's all upon one person.

If you look into the beginnings of the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Mormons you'll find that's exactly how they began with men having so-called visions and insights which could never be qualified or quantified.

They were having ideas above their station somewhat like if you remember those angels who themselves thought that they could be better and should be better.

There's discontent ultimately. Discontent to be under the authority of God and under the authority of his word and so seeking to exalt themselves to teach what in fact they're entirely ignorant of says Jude claim visions which are really of their own imagination.

Now then what do we learn from all this apart from learning all these things and understanding I hope a little bit more about what Jude is going on about we learn some very practical lessons here first of all we learn that we need to be careful of who we follow or set up as an example to us you see if we set up examples which are human men and women even the very best of them will of course be failing but if we set up men and women who really shouldn't be examples to us then we can bring great harm upon ourselves even destruction look at verse 10 these are the very things that destroy them God doesn't put up with sin forever he's patient he's gracious but he's righteous to act in judgment as he does here in each of these examples God will judge sinful actions and we must be aware of that because we see that every sin that is spoken of here ended in destruction and judgment these people brought it upon themselves by their unbelief by their pride by their immorality but the outcome was always the same that they were judged by God and punished by God the second thing the third thing really is this is we need to be sure that we really are

[ 30 : 19 ] Christian believers Peter in his letter which is very similar to this letter of Jude when Peter says we need to make our calling and election sure because there is so much deception around about us because there is so much false Christianity being taught as there once there was we need to be sure that we truly have saving faith in Christ and that we aren't just going along with the crowds notice those people who were delivered from Egypt but later destroyed they had the blessings they were with the church if I can put it that way in the Old Testament with the church but because they did not have saving faith they ultimately were lost now Jude is not saying that once you're a Christian you can stop being a Christian or once you follow Christ you can lose your

salvation no but he is warning that simply having the outward sense or the outward blessing or the outward position is no substitute for a heart in which Christ really reigns we must be born again we see as well how easily pride can be the downfall of our lives I did mention before

Isaiah in chapter 14 which speaks we believe about Satan who was Lucifer one of the angels and about how his pride ended up with his downfall I'll just read it to you and you can look again yourself another time it's Isaiah 14 12 to 14 how you fallen from heaven oh morning star that's the word Lucifer son of the dawn you've been cast down to the earth you who once laid low the nations for you said in your heart I will ascend to heaven I'll rise my throne above the stars of God I'll sit enthroned on the mount of assembly on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain boasting pride pride and pride of course really is the the chief of sins at least it's the catalyst for all other sins self-confidence self-belief in the wrong sense of the word and of course boasting words we all know that proverb from proverbs 16 verse 18 pride comes before a fall or destruction is really the sense of the word let us see as well that here sadly the gift of sex is abused God made us to be sexual creatures he gave us sexual desires it's not wrong when they're channeled and used in the rightful place which is in a marriage between a man and a woman but they're not to rule us as they do many but we are to rule them our lusts are not to have power over us as they did these people and destroyed them and broke their relationship with

God what's the answer to all these things what are we really saying ultimately surely it's this Christ is our supreme example if we seek to look to him if we seek to make him as it were our hero the one that we want to emulate and be like then we shall be kept from falling into all sorts of heresy falsehood and bad practice the Lord Jesus Christ in his life was the one who was submissive to God the father who placed himself under the father's authority and even though he was God lay that aside Philippians 2 really of course is the prime example of that your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus verse 5 who being in very nature God did not consider equality with God something to be grasped but made himself nothing taking the very nature of a servant being made in human likeness and being found in appearance as a man he humbled himself there was no pride in the Lord Jesus Christ what he said about himself as being the son of God the one who came from heaven was true but there's no pride it was humility and condescension and of course there was great faith and faithfulness in the life of the Lord

Jesus when he knelt before his father in the day of on the garden of Gethsemane and prayed not my will but yours be done there's faith there that the father would justify him and raise him from the dead and there of course was holiness in the life of our Lord Jesus though he consorted if we can use that phrase with those who are sinful and who are wicked it was always that he stood as holiness he was never corrupted by those around about him he was never tainted by the world in which he lived rather of course we know that he took our sin upon himself and was treated as a sinner at the cross dying as we're told there obediently to death even death on the cross and the result of the Lord Jesus his life and this is why surely Paul mentions this in Philippians the result of the Lord Jesus his life with such humility and faith and holiness and such submission to the father was this God exalted him see the examples of Jude and of the Old Testament with this as they disobeyed God and lived on holy lives and turned away from his truth they were destroyed but Christ who lived for

God and put him first in his heart and life was exalted conclusion is simple if we live for Christ there is glory to come if we live for self there's destruction to come Jude writes these things that have a pastor's heart of love for a church that he longs to see living for the glory of God and looking forward to the glory of being with God so let me commend this letter to you again that we seek to be those who follow Christ in all things may God himself the God of peace sanctify you through and through may your whole spirit soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ the one who calls you is faithful faithful and he will do it the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you now and forevermore

[ 37 : 10 ] Amen Everything else is a long way of disappointing to you and with God that we can still take you by student casting to you and damit lot more honesty the one who calls all to you to we the datasets discusses con Wood de