***Warnings of False Teachers - Jude 4

JD05-01***

We are studying Jude 4 as look at warnings regarding false teachers. This letter has been written by Jude who was the half-brother of Jesus Christ. We have found that Jude was going to write a rather general letter, perhaps on the subject of salvation--a letter of praise and a reviewing and remembering of what God has done. However, the doctrine of inspiration teaches us that there is not only a human author, but there is also a divine author. The divine author entered the picture and changed the plan. So Jude, instead of writing about salvation, found himself compelled to write about the subject of contending for the faith in the face of apostasy. The faith here stands for the body of doctrine which we have in the Word of God. Apostasy was existent in Jude's time, and that's why he wrote about this subject. It is even more in evident in our day.

**Light**

As we said in the previous session, when the light of the Word of God is held up, something happens. As Dr. McGee said, "When you walk into that barn, the birds that are there in the rafters will start to sing, and their hearts break out in joy in the presence of the light. However, the rats scurry." The only place the rats can go is out into the darkness, though they may think they're going out into some other area of light. However, God is not deceived as men are prone to deceive themselves. The most deceived person in the world is an apostate. That's exactly what he is doing. He is scurrying from the revealed light of the Word of God.

So we begin at Jude 4 with the words, "For certain men." In the Greek, the words "there are" are not present. It simply is a pungent expression, "For certain men crept in unawares." The word "for" introduces the reason that you and I as believers have to contend for Christian truth that he spoke of in Jude 3. We have to be contending by being firm with a clear declaration of Bible doctrine. That's how we contend. "Certain men" refers to apostates who existed already in Jude's day among the local church members. These apostates will be unsaved people, but they will also be, in a certain variant form, believers who act in the pattern of apostates. So they would not exactly be called apostates.

Luke 8:13 describes these apostates in the parable of the sower and the seed. There Jesus describes them as "they on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who for a while believe, and in time of testing fall away." They are on the rock. They received the Word of God with a certain enthusiasm, but they had no root (that is, they had no belief), and consequently, there is no conversion. In time of temptation, they fall away. The word "fall away" here in Luke is another form of the Greek word "apostasy." They apostatize in time of pressure because they never had any root.

In Luke 8:13, the Greek word for "received" there is different than the word for "receive" in Mark 4:20 where you have these described as "good ground." It uses the English word "receive" again, but this time it's a different Greek word which means "to receive to your side," or to the heart, and to the mentality. These are people who have received the Word in such a way that they are saved. You can sit and listen to the Word, and receive it, in a way that does not bring salvation. However, there is a way to receive it by a commitment of faith in Christ and of an act of your will such that it is received as good ground. This one produces fruit: 30-fold; 60-fold; and, some 100-fold. So the apostates are not said to respond with positive volition to the Word or to produce fruit. There is no life in them. There is no root in Jesus Christ. So an apostate professes belief, but in time he falls away from what he professes, and thus demonstrates what he really was.

**Apostasy**

So now the first thing we need to do is to summarize exactly the doctrine of apostasy. What is apostasy all about? We need to give some basic facts so that you will have an understanding of this crucial doctrine, especially as it exists in our day. We will look up a few verses as we go along.

1. Apostates are not born again, but merely professors of faith in Christ. They have received light, but not life. 2 Peter 2:1: "But there were false prophets also among the people even as there shall be false teachers among you who secretly shall bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." The Lord Jesus Christ died for them. The price of sin has been paid for them. However, they have rejected Him. Yet, as apostates, they have instruction to give and they have doctrines to teach. They are participants but they are mere professors.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:10, Paul says, "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved." This is another description of an apostate who is a religious participant, but not born again.

1. An apostate deliberately rejects the revealed truth of the Bible to which he once gave intellectual assent. There are people who give intellectual assent to the Word of God, and in time they fall away and reject this agreement. 2 Timothy 4:3-4: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts they shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." This is an apostate who rejects the Bible as the revealed Word of God, and he turns to fables.

In 1 John 2:18, John says, "Little Children, it is the last time, and as you have heard that antichrist shall come, even now there are many antichrists by which we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us. For if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us. But they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." An apostate leaves because he is not part of the body in the first place. He is an unbeliever.

An apostate departs from the faith but not from the outward profession of Christianity. In 2 Timothy 3:5, we have the statement, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power of it, from such turn away." An apostate stays with the outward profession of Christianity. He remains in the church. He remains in his church membership, but he departs from the faith.

1. Apostasy is not to be confused with mere indifference to the Word with error through ignorance as you have in Acts 19:1-6: "All heresy as a result of the snare of Satan." In 2 Timothy 2:25-26, we read, "In meekness instructing those that oppose them, if God perhaps will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil who are taken captive by him at his will." It is possible for a Christian to fall into doctrinal error because of ignorance as was the case of those disciples of John in Acts 19, or even as the result of the snare of the devil to fall into heresy as a Christian. This is not to be confused with apostasy. An apostate is an unbeliever who has a mental pretension that eventually leaves.
2. Apostates can influence genuine believers to heresy. In 2 Peter 2:2: "And many shall follow their pernicious ways by reason of whom the way of true shall be evil spoken of." Apostates can influence people into false doctrine. 1 Timothy 4:1: "Now the spirit speaks expressly that in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons.

Apostates teach false doctrine. 2 Timothy 3:6 says, "For of this sort are they who creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with various lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." Apostates teach false doctrine.

Apostates pass themselves off as apostles; that is, they who have authority in spiritual things. 2 Corinthians 11:13: "For such are the false apostles, deceitful workers transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness whose end shall be according to their works." They pass themselves off as authorities in spiritual things.

Today you find these authorities in such bodies as the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches. Some surveys were recently run on their delegates. These are ministers who attend the conventions of the National Council of Churches. Questions were posed, such as: "Are you sure there is a God? Do you have some doubt, or do you have no opinion?" I think it was something like one third of these ministers check the answer, "I'm not sure there really is a God." Relative to life after death, 50% of them said, "I'm not sure there is life after death." And right down the line, on the major things that the Bible says, "These things are so," these men by their intellectual approach and their rejection of faith in the authority of the Word of God, have gradually found themselves (because they are unbelievers to begin with) deteriorating and moving away more and more from the faith once delivered to the saints. So when we talk about apostates, here is the powerful group of leaders we're speaking of, and they pass themselves off as spiritual authorities.

1. Apostates are motivated by demons. In 1 Corinthians 10:20-21, here is Satan's communion table. "But I say that the things which the gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God. And I would not that you should have fellowship with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons. You cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of demons." An apostate is at Satan's communion table.
2. Apostates have deceptive personalities. They have a phony front; they hit you with a mouthful-of-teeth smile; and, they love to call you "brother" until they have been crossed. Then they call you other things. 2 Timothy 3:1-5 describe various characteristics of these personalities, and then ends with verse five, "They have a form of godliness. They deny the power thereof." Apostates are usually very personable people. As a matter of fact, they have to be in order to con people. These who go around as religious leaders have to be pretty sharp personalities to play the role of apostates, and yet to delude people into thinking that they have something genuinely, religiously, and spiritually to deliver.
3. Apostates are guilty of hypocrisy. They wear a mask of religion in order to cover up their real views. Matthew 23:27-28: "Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like white sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."
4. Apostasy will increase in the local church as the age of grace nears its end with the return of Christ in the rapture. In 2 Timothy 3:1, Paul says, "This know also that in the last days, perilous times shall come." 2 Timothy 3:13 says, "But evil men and seducers shall become worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. 2 Timothy 4:3 says, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." 2 Timothy 4:4 says instead seeking "to turn unto fables."

Jude says, "For there are certain men crept in unawares." The word "crept in" here in the Greek is "pareisduo." "Pareisduo" means to slip in by the side door. They infiltrate the congregation secretly. They worm in. Somebody doesn't walk in and enter a church congregation and say, "I'm from the National Council of Churches, and I'm here to give you some advanced thinking concerning God. Instead he slips in, and you don't know what he thinks. He sees himself as an undercover agent. This is the very word that you would use to describe somebody who works for the CIA. As he goes about his spy business, he worms himself in. He infiltrates. These people creep in. It's in the aorist tense which means they do it at a specific point of time. That point of time is when they find some Christian who will listen to them. 2 Peter 2:1-2 speak about that. If people know the Word of God, an apostate will have a very difficult time infiltrating. The apostates receive this ability to infiltrate from Satan (2 Corinthians 11:13-15).

**False Teachers**

This business of infiltrating a congregation is a common technique of false teachers. That is what Galatians 2:4 speaks of when it says, "And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in secretly to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage." The liberals in this way actually were able to capture whole denominations from orthodoxy. They were not satisfied to go out and form their own groups. Actually they were able to capture whole churches. So today, what happens in a liberal church? These are the liberals who today preach universal brotherhood of man. They also preach the universal fatherhood of God, in spite of the fact that John 1:12 says, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the children of God, even to them that belief on His name" (Galatians 3:26).

These are the perversions of the Word of God that are common to apostasy. So these men, Jude says, have crept into the local church unaware. They have wormed their way in until people have confidence in some of the things that they have to say and do. These men, it says, "Were before of old ordained to this condemnation." It is not "before of old ordained." The word for "ordained" there is actually the Greek word for writing: "prographo." "Prographo," you can see from the word "graph" there, means "to write," and the "pro" means to write beforehand. These men were written up beforehand in the Old Testament Scriptures. If you read books like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, you will read whole Old Testament books that deal in a major way with the subject of apostasy. They tell you a great deal in those two books alone about people who fall into the role of apostates.

So Jude is saying (because that was the only Scriptures they had--the Old Testament), "Long ago, the kind of people I'm talking about had been already written up in the Word of God." It's in the perfect tense which in the Greek means it was done in the past, and now this information continues to this day. It's passive. It was writing about the apostates as God informed the writers about them.

These, having been written of old in the Scriptures, are condemned to this condemnation or this judgment; that is, this is what God has in store for these who infiltrate and pervert the truth. He calls them, here in Jude 4, "ungodly men." "For certain men crept in." They wormed their way in unawares into the midst of the congregation who were before "of old" written up in the Scriptures to this condemnation of being destined to be with Satan in hell. They were ungodly men. The Greek word for "ungodly" is "asebes," meaning impious, with no reverence; no respect for God; and, producers of their human good (2 Timothy 3:5). They profess to believe in God, but not the God of the Bible. They profess to love, but they reject the wrath that the God of love has against sin.

It also says, "Turning the grace of our God." That means perverting ("metatithemi"). It means to pervert the grace of God. Well, how are they perverting the grace of God? Well, they are using grace as a freedom or a justification to do evil. Galatians 5:13 warns us, "For brethren, you have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." By the filling of the Holy Spirit, serve one another. Grace provides the believer with a very glorious liberty, but it is a liberty to do what? To do right (Romans 8:21, 2 Corinthians 3:17, Galatians 5:1). God has never called us to come into a liberty so that we may do evil.

Yet, this is what's happening among many people and many believers today--the perversion of grace. This is the idea that grace permits a Christian to do what is wrong. This is why sometimes people are hesitant about the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins for temporal fellowship. They say, "If you teach people that, they'll say, 'Well I can just sin. I can do anything. I'm under grace. All I have to do is confess it, and God forgives me.'" And that's true. He does, except that your attitude in the committing of that sin brings discipline. If you persist in some willful path of sin, sooner or later, discipline comes from God. We are not really able to pervert the grace of God. The problem is that many Christians don't know about it, and others misunderstand it.

Here's a brief summary of what grace is all about. We need a quick review of grace because this is what the book of Jude is about--people who are taking grace and perverting it.

**Grace**

1. Grace is all that God is free to do for undeserving mankind on the basis of the cross (2 Corinthians 8:9, Galatians 2 20).
2. The opposite of grace, or unmerited favor, is merited reward. If it is not grace, it's something you deserve (Romans 4:4).
3. Grace cannot be earned or deserved. It's absolutely free (Romans 3:24, Romans 5:15). Grace means this is something that God offers that you receive.
4. When human words are substituted for grace, they will frustrate the blessing of God (Galatians 2:21, 5:4, Romans 11:6). This is why it is hard for people to accept grace. They think that God will be kind to them if they win His favor. They feel that if they can just do something to cause God to be kindly disposed toward them, then they will stand in His favor. However, grace says that if you try to bring in human works, you have destroyed what God will do for you.

And by the way, please remember that God the Father has a plan for mankind. The plan that God has for mankind is called grace. That's the name of His plan. If you frustrate the grace of God by violating these principles that we're going over, then you are stepping out of the place that can bless you through His plan.

1. Grace depends upon who and what God is, and does not depend upon man's character or actions (Titus 3:5-7). It is through what He has done. Through His mercy He has saved us, and not through something that depends on us.
2. Grace is a way of life that came by Jesus Christ, even as law as a way of life came by Moses (John 1:17, Hebrews 12:18-24).
3. Grace freely justifies the worst man (1 Timothy 1:15, 1 Corinthians 6:9, 11), as the law utterly condemns the best (Philippians 3:4, 9).
4. Grace is God beseeching and bestowing (2 Corinthians 5:18, 21). The law was God prohibiting and requiring (Exodus 20:1, 17).
5. Grace is offered by God to everyone. No one is excluded from this heritage (Romans 11:32).
6. The grace of God is received by faith. (Ephesians 2:8). It's something you believe.
7. Grace is the only way to salvation (Ephesians 1:6, 2:8-9). This is why it's very dangerous, I think, to ever suggest to a person to do anything along with his salvation. There's something inherent in the human heart, because of the old sin nature, that wants to do something to gain God's favor. So if you tell people, "If you want to be saved, please raise your hand," you have interjected something that man may do, and he thinks, "If I do that, I've got it." If you ask him to walk down an aisle to be saved, he thinks, "If I walk that aisle, I'll get with God." We interject things between people and their salvation, and often deceive them so that the very person who would reach out for eternal life is given a bum steer.

God says that the only way to salvation is through grace. You cannot interject some human action upon which man is basing some confidence. You may go up to some people and say, "Are you saved?" They may say, "Yes, we had an evangelist at our church two years ago and I went forward in a meeting." Immediately you can be suspect that you are not really sure that person is born again. God says that the moment you interject one piece of human works, grace is out the window. God will never save a person on any basis except grace. I'm afraid that there are a lot of people who think they are right with God who have never been born again, because at the point of making a decision for Christ, somebody interjected some human action, and that's what they're really depending upon--not the fact that God has done it all, and it doesn't depend on them in any way at all. Grace is the only way to salvation.

1. Grace gives the believer power to conquer sin through the indwelling Holy Spirit (Romans 5:21, 1 Corinthians 10:13, 6:19).
2. Grace helps in times of trial (2 Corinthians 12:7-9, Hebrews 4:16).
3. Grace is the guiding principle for life during the church age (Romans 5:1-2, Romans 6:14). God not only saves us by grace, but He constantly deals with us in a way that we don't deserve. His constant treatment of us is in grace.
4. What are God's motives in acting in grace toward us? Why does he do this? This may be for three reasons that we may discern:
	1. Because of His love for man (Ephesians 2:4-5). God is motivated by his love to treat us in a way that we don't deserve.
	2. Secondly, to show the exceeding riches of His grace to all intelligent creatures (Ephesians 2:7). This is why we sometimes refer to ourselves as trophies of the grace of God. People who, before the days of their salvation, had a life deeply immersed in sin, when they do come to Christ, are actually even more spectacular trophies of what God can do through His grace in that He saved people of that kind. God is showing His riches through the fact that He could take sinners such as ourselves who deserve hell, and make us citizens of heaven.
	3. Then the third reason is to enable the redeemed to produce divine good (Ephesians 2:10, Hebrews 12:28). God is interested in our good works. He is very much interested that we should be concerned to participate in producing His good.
5. There are certain principles which cannot coexist with grace:
	1. You cannot have any recognition of human guilt that will restrict God, or it's no longer grace (Romans 3:23-26). You cannot say, "This person is so bad, that the grace of God is restricted."
	2. Secondly, there can be no recognition of human obligation to repay God (John 10:28, Romans 6:23). If you take an offering to church, don't bring it because you want to repay God for all the kindness that He's done for you, and for all the blessings that He has given you. The minute you've done that, you've ruined the offering you could bring. What are you doing? You're trying to repay God. If you ever do one thing to try to repay God, you have violated grace. God says that He cannot act on us on the basis of our deserving, and we cannot act toward Him on the basis of our owing him anything to repay Him. We bring it out of our love for Him--not out of payment to Him.
	3. And thirdly, another principle that cannot coexist with grace is that there is any recognition of human nature that deserves God's blessing. There can be no demerit that disqualifies us, and there can be no merit that qualifies us (Romans 3:9, Romans 11:32).

These people who crept into the congregation with Jude took this grace of God that we've been describing, and they turned the grace of God into lasciviousness. The Greek word for lasciviousness is "aselgeia." "Aselgeia" means sex. What these people did was substituted lasciviousness for grace. Lasciviousness is sex of the kind that is illicit, wrong, and out of the boundaries that God has set. Consequently, it is the kind of sex that builds calluses upon the soul. There is a kind of sex that ennobles and advances a person's spiritual life. There is a kind that builds calluses upon the soul and gradually depresses the life of the believer. What these apostates regularly do is to encourage sensual indulgence of every kind. It connotes an insulant attitude that will not be restrained in its evil.

This is the idea of freedom today--the idea that my liberty asserts that nobody can restrain me on the sensual level. So, there is a certain barnyard morality called the new morality that recognizes no relationships. Grace teaches us that we are to reject this spirit of lasciviousness. Titus 2:11: "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age, looking for that blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of our great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. In Galatians 5:13, the apostle Paul writes, "For brethren, we have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love, to serve one another."

What the world is doing is they are taking this word "aselgeia" (lasciviousness), and they are translating it as "love." It is not "love." It is a perversion. Apostasy begins with an indifference toward the Word of God. We may believe that the Word of God is even a reality, but we are negative in our response. That's what James 1:22-25 speaks of--this failure to do the Word. So along comes this spirit of anarchy to throw off all authority and to promote the quality of lasciviousness. Lasciviousness is this quality of unrestrained and perverted sex. God wants us to be acquainted with evil, but not by personal experience. He wants us to learn about it from His Word. God is interested that we should protect those for whom we are responsible from the evils that lead to sexual expressions.

**Christian Education**

This is one of the things we pointed out at the academy open house the other night. Why do we have a Christian school? We have a Christian school, in part, because, as parents, we are responsible to recognize that there are two school systems. God has a school system in the Christian school system, and the world has a school system in the public school system. In the public school system, our children are exposed to all kinds of lasciviousness. They are exposed to all kinds of influences that are perverting influences. There is no state law; there is no state regulation; and, there is no good teacher that can control this. Several parents have enrolled their children in our school this year after the school year began, and their statements have been almost united along the line, "I thought we could make it; I realized I was mistaken; it was worse than I thought it was out there; and, I will have this no more. Even my children are objecting."

This is a very hideous thing--to take a child, that precious life that God has given you responsibility for--and send it over to Philistia Grade School or Philistia High School for training. This is what poor Lot did. Poor Lot thought he could be out there in the world's system, and he sent his kids to the public schools of Sodom, and they had such nice wonderful programs. And what happened? His daughters ended up having perverted sex. They went right down the line, straight down the middle, into lascivious perversion. You're hoping it won't happen to you, aren't you? You're hoping the contamination will wear off. You're hoping desperately that somehow there will not be a twist and a warp in your child's mind, so that someplace down the line as a teenager or a young adult, he makes a move that was the result of something he picked up way back there. Take care. You're asking a lot. God says we are to protect those for whom we are responsible from this.

Our conscience will awaken to warn us. If we have a conscience that's been filled with doctrine, it will warn us when we're getting off base. It is an alarm system that God has built in. If we have not abused it, it is working. However, we can reject this; we can rationalize and justify; and, we can explore sin. We don't need to go too far. Then what we have done is that we have focused upon a sensual point. We come to a sensual focus. Then we have mental sins. Some of you think it's alright if you play with mental sex sins. After all, who can get hurt that way? You can sit there and daydream all day long. But this shows that you don't understand what we've been trying to teach you about the working of the human mind.

What you daydream has a way of eventually becoming reality. What you envision becomes overt action. This is the time that conscience is yelling at you, "Ease off, man. Ease off." Bring your mind into a total submission to Jesus Christ through the Word of God. If you persist in developing a sensual focus, there will come a violation of your conscience and an open act of sin; temporary fellowship is going to be broken; and, you enter a state of carnality. Then what happens? You get guilty because the Spirit of God is grieved and the pressures are put upon you.

By the way, this a terrible thing. You can't live with pressures. You can't live with emotional tensions. You weren't built to live like that. Anywhere along the line when you are stepping out of the realm of the Word of God, you're unhappy. You're going to be under tension. If you are going to play the role of the rat when the light comes into the barn, you're going to be under emotional tension. God says there is no way out of that except for you to turn around and say, "God, you are right. I am wrong." You make confession of sin; straighten things out; and, change your course.

Positive response to the awakening of guilt is going to be confession. However, some people instead prefer to respond to their carnal state in the wrong way. They're not really sorry for the consequences. They're not really regretful of what they did. However, the consequences they don't like. So here is what they do. Frequently, a Christian who is carnal on a physical level will begin compensating with religious activity. He leaves confession out, so he has a sense of guilt, so he intends to make up for this by getting out there and inflicting hardships upon himself. He gets into all kinds of social actions. He makes sincere attempts to turn over a new leaf, but he discovers that he can't control the sensual focus that he has developed in his life. Instead, he just goes on.

So the next thing he has to do is to try to find relief by changing his convictions. He begins to think, "You know, the Bible is not exactly all that much. After all, it was written a long time ago. It's a book that doesn't apply to our era." So what does he do? He redefines his moral convictions and he changes the standards. He goes to constant mental efforts to justify his conduct. He reinterprets what he thinks the Bible says, and he uses the Bible as a book that can cover the very things that the Bible says are wrong. He demonstrates this. You can sort of spot this in a person because he becomes argumentative over doctrine. He becomes argumentative over points of proper Christian conduct. He wants to redefine the Bible to justify his misconduct.

In his reprobate condition, so to speak, he gets a pseudo religious attitude, and he begins debating what the Word of God has to say. There is no way out from the pathway of "aselgeia," that is, from lasciviousness. If you have taken the grace of God; if you've taken your security in Jesus Christ; if you've taken the temporal fellowship forgiveness that's available to you through confession of sin; and, you have violated it like an apostate would, and converted into a sensual focus, God says you only get deeper and deeper in the shovel until confession is made and you turn around your course.

**Gnosticism**

So Jude says that these ungodly men have turned the grace of our God into lasciviousness, denying the only Lord, our Lord Jesus Christ. In the early church, this apostasy expressed itself. What was, perhaps, Jude specifically speaking of? Well, one of the grievous apostasies was a thing called Gnosticism which comes from the Greek word "gnosis" for knowing. This was a cult that claimed to have a superior knowledge about God, and it was given to those who were members only. They tried to explain the creation of evil. How is it that there is evil in the universe? They came up with the idea that if God is God, then He would never create anything that is evil. So they said that evil resides in matter. That's the problem. Anything matter or anything physical has evil in it. This is an old platonic idea.

So they taught the existence of a principle of evil independent of God. What they said was that God sent forth an angelic being called "ions." As each ion (a kind of a personality) went out from God, this deity, this supreme being, he lives there and sends out these ions. As each ion went out, it produced another one. Finally, these personalities got so far from God that they came in contact with evil, and then one of them, called the demiurge, which is equated with the God of the Old Testament, created the world. Because he was part good and part evil, he created matter that inherently had evil in it.

So the gnostic says, "The reason there is evil in the world is because of physical things." So they said, "Here's how we will solve this lasciviousness." They did this in two ways. One was rigid asceticism--the trend of good that's in the old sin nature. They would reduce contact with matter to a minimum; eat vegetables; punish the body; reject all sensual desire; abstain from marriage; and, refuse the normal care that the body needs, on the theory of reducing all barriers to spiritual life by imposing hardships upon the body. For those who had a dominant side in their old sin natures toward asceticism, this appealed very much.

However, on the other hand, the gnostics said that there was another way to remove this expression of evil that Jude speaks of here that is such a perversion. That was unrestrained licentiousness. There was to be no authority to be recognized. This is the trend toward evil in the old sin nature. The idea was to indulge in unrestrained sex in all of its perverted forms. What this was, of course, was a revival of the phallic cults. So here in the New Testament among Christians you have Gnosticism taking its root through the apostates, and Christians being brought back to the old phallic cults with all of their perverted practices. We have looked at this before--all that was involved in these sex worship cults.

So we have behavioristic psychology today. Do whatever you will so that you will be happy. Those who have a dominant side of evil in their old sin nature, they love this. This was big stuff in Corinth in the Corinthian church. So Gnosticism entered Christianity. It is these apostates who brought this kind of attitude of converting the grace of God into this sort of lasciviousness, that Jude says are denying the only lord; that is, they are disowning and renouncing God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ (God, the Son) as deity: "Jesus our Savior, God our Father, Christ, the anointed one." These men are taking grace and using it in such a way that instead of people being drawn to our Savior, they are being driven away from Him.

That's why Jude was alarmed over apostasy. This is what apostasy does. It takes mouthful-of-teeth smile personalities who have crept in and wormed their way in among the congregation. They bring in damnable heresies, and then the people of God are taken and moved away from, of all things, God our Father and our Savior Jesus Christ. These are the false prophets. These are the apostates.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1973

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