

The Apostates – Their Past Judgements

Jude 1:5-7

Pastor John Miller

The text is verses 5-7. I want you to follow with me in your Bible. Jude says, "I will therefore put you in remembrance..." now the entire passage today, verses 5-7, is basically that Jude is reminding us of past apostates and how God judged them. "...though you once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not." So, God brought them out of Egypt, but then He judged those who did not believe. Notice verse 6, second illustration. "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." So, God created angels; they rebelled, they fell. God has them reserved in darkness, and one day God will judge them for their pride and their rebellion. Notice verse 7, "Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire."

As we saw last Sunday, the book of Jude is a call to arms, and in the third verse, Jude gave us this exhortation. He said we must earnestly contend. That's where we get the idea of the call to arms. Are we putting on the boxing gloves? We are putting on the boxing gloves and we are contending for what? Jude says it in verse 3, "...the faith, once and for all delivered to the saints." Every word in that statement is important. It's "the faith," the body of truth that true Christians believe. It has been once and for all delivered to us and entrusted to us. In other words, no new revelation is going to come down the line; no new understanding, no new book of the Bible, no new revelation from God is going to supersede or replace the once and for all revelation God has given to us in His Word that the Bible is the Word of God; that Jesus is God in human form; one person, two natures, human and divine; that Jesus died for our sins, a substitutionary death; that He was buried and three days later bodily physically rose from the dead, that He ascended back into heaven, and that Jesus Christ is coming back in power and glory. We will read about that tonight. And that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone—easy to remember. Anyone that denies that, that is not Christian doctrine, that is not Christian truth. That is apostasy. You turn from the faith once and for all delivered to the saints.

So we saw the enemy in verse 4. We saw that the enemy comes with subtlety, and we also saw that they were ungodly. They were enemies of God's grace. They turned the grace of God (verse 4) into lasciviousness. In other words they say, "God is a God of grace. We can live however we want to live. Because of the grace of God, it doesn't matter what I do with my body." They turn God's grace into a license to live however they please, and they reject (verse 4) the truth about Jesus Christ. They deny our only Lord God, Jesus Christ. They have a faulty Christology, or doctrine of Christ. Understand who Jesus is. Anybody who varies from that truth, and you reject that, is being unbiblical, heretical, and a lie from the pit of hell.

Now, what exactly is apostate. I don't know if I've given you a clear definition, and I want to do that. I think one of the best is in the book of Jude, verse 19. "These be they...", these apostates are they, "...who separate themselves..." That's an apostate. He leaves doctrine and truth. He says, "I don't believe in Jesus. I don't believe we are saved by grace. I believe that you can do whatever you want with your body. You can live a sexually immoral life, it's not sinful, God loves you. We're all going to heaven. All paths lead to God. They join hands with all religions and all faiths saying there is no absolute truth. Everything's okay, but yet they still claim to be Christian. They are an apostate. They separate themselves. Then notice in verse 19, they are "...sensual...", not spiritual but sensual, "and they have not the Spirit." I can't emphasize that enough. These apostates are not born again. They do not have the Spirit. It doesn't take a lot to believe that sometimes a pastor gets in the pulpit, but he's not born again. That's an apostate. That a priest, or bishop, or an elder—whatever you might say—is not born again. But even in the pew, there are many people who profess to be saved and are not. Let me explain what an apostate is. Listen to me very carefully.

I want to give you a parable of Jesus. Everyone likes a good story, right? Jesus was a story teller. He said one day a man went out to sow seeds. In those days they sowed seeds, so it was a very common picture. They would take their long oriental robes and they would roll them up in front. You could hold your robe forming a kind of basket in front of you. You get the picture? They would fill it with seed and would walk down the furrows of the field throwing their seed. They didn't have a little Scott's seed spreader. You see the guy pushing this little green thing, you know. No. They had to throw the seed. Well, when they threw the seed, Jesus said some of the seed landed on a hard beaten path. It was like seeding your front yard and some of it lands on the sidewalk. It's not going to grow there, right? And then He said that some of the seed landed on soil, but the soil was shallow with rocks underneath. So, it took root, but when it sprang up, because it lacked depth, the sun beat down upon it, and it withered and died. So the first two seeds really didn't go anywhere, one on hard soil, and the other on shallow soil. We could preach a whole sermon on this, and I'm trying to keep in short.

The third seed, it's really the parable of the soils not the parable of the seed, but the third seed fell on crowded soil. It had weeds. Have you ever tried to plant grass and weeds come up with it? The weeds choked the seed, and it died. So, it took root, started to grow, but it got choked and died immediately. Then the fourth seed landed, praise God, on good soil. It wasn't hard, it received the seed. It wasn't shallow, it went deep. It wasn't crowded, it was clean, and the seed came forth and brought forth fruit; thirty, sixty and a hundred fold. Notice there are degrees of fruitfulness. Only one (and here's the big point I want to make) of all four seeds produced fruit. Now, it's my conviction that only one was truly saved. I don't believe that the shallow seed was truly saved. I believe it was emotional response. "Yes, I want Jesus. Yes, that sounds good." Oh, I start coming to church. But the minute the sun begins to beat down upon my faith, and trials, trouble, tribulation and hardship..., and my car won't start, the toilet overflows, and the dog runs away... "I thought God loved me. I thought the Christian life was wonderful." Do you know that sometimes even Christians' dogs run away? I'll never forget, years ago we lived right down the street from the church in Highland, and our dog ran away. Do you know where it went? It went to the church. I thought, "Now, that's a spiritual pastor's dog!

He goes to worship God, ruff ruff ruff.” The church called me and said, “Do you have ayeah, that’s our dog. He was trying to come down and have communion or something, I don’t know.”

The parable of the sower and the seed is the parable of the soils, four kinds. What are the soils? The human heart. Some are hard, some don’t receive the gospel. Some are shallow, they receive but there’s no repentance, there’s no genuine faith. They get a Bible and come to church. They go forward at a crusade or an altar call, but then they fall away. Then there are those that are in the weeds. Do you know what Jesus said the weeds are? The cares and the deceitfulness of riches of this life, and it chokes the seed and it bears no fruit. Now, I believe that soil #2 and soil #3 are apostates. At first, they look like Christians. They talk like Christians. They smell like Christians. They act like Christians. People say, “Oh, praise God they’re saved! Oh, they’re coming to our church.” Then a few months later...”Where’d they go? What happened to them?” “Oh, they don’t believe in Jesus anymore. They turned their backs, they walked away from God.” Now, I’m not saying that a true believer can’t backslide, that can happen. That’s why ultimately only God knows a person’s heart. But, I am saying biblically—and it’s all through scripture, the entire book of Hebrews is written about this—don’t go back. The writer of Hebrews said to the people that had started going forward, and then they started going back, that if you go back to Judaism, there’s no sacrifice for your sins. It is only going to be found in Jesus Christ. The entire book of 2 Peter (read 2 Peter, that’s your homework for this week) is about apostasy. Don’t go back! Don’t be like the sow that is washed and goes back to wallow in the mire. Don’t be like the dog that has vomited and then goes back sniffing around his vomit. That’s an apostate! It’s all through the Bible in the Old Testament.

Now, we’re going to see three examples of apostasy, all taken from the Old Testament. An apostate is one that is sensual, has not the Spirit, and the seed (the Word of God) doesn’t really have depth, so it gets choked out and does not bring forth fruit. An amazing thought is these apostates did not regard themselves as enemies of the church and of Christianity, they regarded themselves as “advanced thinkers,” or as we say today, they are called progressives. They regard themselves as the leaders, not the corrupters, of the church. I went on YouTube this week and watched a lot of debates between evangelical and liberal Christians about the idea that the Bible is not the Word of God, Christianity is not true, and all paths lead to God. Many of them were clergymen with collars, some were bishops, there were those in charge of churches, and pastors claiming to be Christians. They seemed so nice. They even talked nice. And they would smile—everything’s happy. But, they are apostates! Don’t be deceived, Jesus said, beware of wolves who come in sheep’s clothing but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. And do you know that even in our own congregation I’m not so naive to think that everyone in this church is saved, that everyone in this church has been born again, that everyone who comes on Sunday morning is going to heaven. Jesus said it like this, He said there would be tares among the wheat. Many times we can’t tell the difference. We have to wait until the end of time when the Lord comes, and He will separate the wheat from the tares. There’s coming a day of reckoning when God knows the hearts of who are truly saved and who are not.

Now, here are our three examples. Let’s get into it. The first is the people of Israel, the second will be the angels that fell, and the third will be Sodom and Gomorrah, verses 5-7. All of them,

corporate groups not individuals; Jews (Israel) verse 5, angels verse 6, and unbelieving gentiles, verse 7. So the point Jude is making is that God judges apostates and those who reject His Word, those who reject His authority, and those that practice sexual immorality, verse 5. Let's go back and read it. Jude says, "I will therefore put you in remembrance..." he's going to go back to the Old Testament and give us an illustration of apostasy, "...though you once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward..." here's the judgment, He, "...destroyed them that believed not." I want you to notice right up front that the problem was unbelief. Unbelief. How are we saved? By faith, by believing. So, these people didn't really believe. They didn't trust God. They came out of Egypt, which I know you can say speaks of redemption, but they didn't go into the land of promise. I believe that their destruction in verse 5 was physical. This is essential. This is why these verses are so challenging to interpret. There is a lot of controversy around them, and I can't go into all the arguments, pro and con, but let me say this. Their destruction was physical. It didn't mean necessarily that they didn't go to heaven. Do you know that even Moses didn't go into the promised land? If you want to put him in that category, then you'd say that we're not going to see Moses in heaven. But Moses didn't get to go into the promised land. He came out of Egypt. He was leading the gang. He was leading the party, but he didn't go into the promised land. So, it doesn't mean that they didn't go to heaven. It means that they didn't go into the promised land. You can't take this Old Testament illustration and make it walk on all fours or read into it some of the things you want it to say. You have to compare all scripture with scripture.

So, here is the story. It says that God saved the people (verse 5) out of the land of Egypt. That's the Exodus. Everybody knows the story of the Exodus, right? God brought the plagues upon the Egyptians and Moses' famous statement, "Let my people go," the passover plague, and then finally the people of God came out. That's one of the greatest high points in the history of Israel. They always looked back to their redemption from slavery; that they came out by a miraculous, powerful, wonderful miracle of God. But then notice the next phrase in verse 5, "afterward destroyed them that believed not." That's recorded in Numbers 13 and 14. What happened? They came to the border of Kadesh-barnea, and they were looking into the promised land which God promised them, which means, God will give us the strength to take what He's promised us. God always gives us the ability to do what He calls us to do. Don't forget that. God never tells you to do something but what He gives you the strength and the ability to do it. If God's calling you to do something; love your wife, submit to your husband, resist temptation, God will give you the strength to do it. No excuses! God gives you the strength.

Instead of relying on God's power and wisdom in going in to take the land, they said, "Well, let's just spy it out first. Let's send 12 spies in, one from each of the tribes, and let's just check it out. Let's make sure that where God wants us to go is really a nice place. I know we've come from slavery, but at least we had leeks, onions and stuff to eat. I know the job there really stunk, but this is kind of scaring me. We've never been there before. Let's send some spies in, and let's check it out." Immediately I'm thinking, "Bad Idea!" God already said, "I'm giving it to you, go get it." It's a bad idea to begin to question God. Twelve spies go in and you know the

story, right? Two spies, Joshua and Caleb, which were the only ones over the age of 20 that came out of Egypt that got to go into the promised land. They said, "Man! It's awesome! There's these big ol' hunkin' grapes the size of basketballs! You can eat for a week on one grape!" I picture this big grape, and they're cutting the sucker like a watermelon, you know. The grapes of Eschol! Joshua and Caleb are bringing them back, "Check this out! This place is awesome, and it's a land flowing with milk and honey! Come on, put on your swords! Let's go get it!" They're all psyched up. But, there were 10 other spies. They were saying, "Huh! There are giants in the land! Giants! They're big! They're huge! They should be drafted with the LA Lakers! Maybe they can do something with these guys. And, we're like grasshoppers! They're going to squish us between their toes! Like, Oh those Israelites, squish! They're huge! They're scary! This is a land that eats up it's inheritance. If you go there, it's going to be miserable, so let's go back, LET'S GO BACK!" And they started a new song, "Let's go back to Egypt, let's go back to Egypt!" It started playing on the radio, "Let's go back to Egypt, let's go back to Egypt!" And they're crying, "Let's go back to Egypt!" Joshua and Caleb ripped their clothes and they began to cry, "No, no! To go back after God has delivered us? This is apostasy to go back." And so God says, "Okay, you want to go back? Forty year death march for everyone over the age of 20. You're going to die in the wilderness. Your carcasses will lie in the wilderness." Wow. For forty years they marched in circles until all that generation died off.

Unbelief is a thief! It robs us of the blessings that God has promised to us. They wanted to go back. Many people will begin to follow Christ, but it's not deep or genuine. There's no Godly sorrow. There's no conviction of sin. There's no repentance. There's no salvation. It's just an outward facade, and when trials and difficulties come, and when they're facing giants, they want to go back to Egypt. Egypt in typology represents the old life, by the way. There is so much you can draw from that story. I love the idea that Egypt is flat as a pancake. Egypt is flat. Now, no offense to those of you that are from states that have no mountains, and everything is flat. When I go to Texas I'm like, "Where are the mountains?" It's just flat. You can't see anything, you know. They have a little bump and they say, "There's Mt. Mountain." "That ain't a mountain! That's a bump!" Egypt was flat. You know what that means? The old life is flat. It's dull. Guess what the promised land was. It's a land of hills and valley's. It's a land flowing with milk and honey. That means the Christian life is exciting! It's adventurous, and there's high points and low points. Yet, God supplies our needs and He takes care of us. The Christian life has its hills, the Christian life has its valley's. That's better than flat. So they were brought out of Egypt, but now they want to go back. So what does God do? He judges them. It says that afterward He destroyed them that believed not. Read the story, Numbers 13 and 14. They rejected God's Word. They let fear come in rather than faith, and afterward, even though they saw and experienced the power of God, they would not enter into His blessings. Here's the message, God judges apostasy.

Here is our second illustration, verse 6. It says, even as the angels, "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Now, Jude goes way back past the Exodus, past creation in Genesis 1, and he goes back to the fall of angels. Now, listen to me carefully, angels are real. They are throughout the Bible. Someday I'm going to do a sermon series on angels.

But, where did they come from? God created them, Colossians 1:16. The Bible says that He created all things by the word of His power. In other words, before anything else existed, God existed. In the beginning, God...period, Genesis 1:1. So, before anything else existed, there was God in three persons; God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit from all eternity. So, anything that exists came from God. He's the source of all things. He created angels. When were they created? The Bible doesn't say, but Job 38:6-7 indicates that they were created before Genesis chapter 1, before the creation of the heavens and the earth. They were created holy, Jude 6; they were created with intellect, 1 Peter 1:12; they were created with emotion, Luke 2:13; when the messiah was born in Bethlehem they rejoiced. They had joy. They have will, Jude 6, and they were created as spirit beings, Hebrews 1:14. They do not die, Luke 20:36, and they have great power, 2 Peter 2:11. This is just a little background biblically about who angels are. The list could be quite longer.

Notice verse 6, the angels who did not keep their position, but abandoned their proper dwelling. The King James says, "Kept not their first estate." I believe there are a lot of different views about what Jude is alluding to, so I don't know that anyone can be absolutely dogmatic about what he was referring to when he says, "...angels kept not their first estate." I believe that it's a reference to the fall of satan when he drew one-third of the other angels, which became demons, and it's the angelic rebellion and satan's fall. I don't believe it's Genesis 6, angels in the form of men cohabiting with women producing the ungodly line of Seth, the giants in the land. I don't hold that view or interpretation. So, I believe it's when satan rebelled against God, Isaiah 14, his five "I will's," and other angels fell with him, Revelation 12:4. Why did they fall? Why did they rebel? Pride and rebellion.

The first example, verse 5, is unbelief. The second example, verse 6, is pride and rebellion. Fallen angels turned into demons. Some of them, 2 Peter 2:4, are in chains. They are being kept. Notice verse 6, "He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness..." This is consistent with what Peter said, that some of these angels, so fierce, so wicked, so bad that He has them incarcerated. Remember when the demons would say to Jesus, "Don't throw us into the abyss?" They didn't want what their friends received. "Don't put us into the abyssos. Don't chain us up!" They wanted the ability to roam and still be free. But there are some demons that are awaiting future judgment. With Israel, the judgment of God played out in their history. They all died in the wilderness over forty years. With the angels, they are kept for future judgement. The next verse, verse 7, Sodom and Gomorrah, they had immediate judgment from God. Fire from heaven came down and destroyed them. Different groups, both had light and knowledge which brings responsibility. They rejected the light. They rejected their knowledge. They rejected their position and privilege, and it brought them judgment. So, notice at the end of verse 6, "...unto the judgement of the great day." What is that referring to? It's talking about a future judgment. Anybody that tells you that God will never judge sin, it's a lie from the pit of hell. It's not biblical, it's not scriptural. God is a God of grace, a God of love, a God of mercy. He has provided salvation in Jesus Christ, but the Bible says the soul who sins shall surely die. And God is also holy, and He hates and will judge sin. We need to get a complete picture of God in the Bible.

Now some of the lessons we learn from verse 6; that is, of beings of higher order than man could fall and be judged by God, then so will we be judged if we in pride and rebellion turn from God. The angels had great knowledge. They had great privilege. They knew and yet turned away from the truth of God. God's attitude has not changed, He still hates and judges the sin of apostasy. We also learn from Jude 6 that a future day of judgment is coming. Those who reject the cross, which is God's judgment of sin for salvation, and reject their only hope of salvation in Jesus Christ, will be judged for their sin. God is no respecter of persons, even of angels who are greater in power and authority. Don't mess with angels. Man was made a little lower than the angels and are going to be judged one day by God. So, what he is reminding us of (remember in verse 5 he says I need to remind you of something) God judged Jews, Israelites. They didn't get away with it. God judged angels; high-ranked, high-ordered, power privileged. They didn't get away with it. You think God is not going to judge you? So don't go back. Don't fall away. Don't follow the false teachers.

Here's our third example, verse 7. Sodom and Gomorrah. What pastor wants to preach about Sodom and Gomorrah? Did you know it's all throughout the Bible? Genesis 18 and 19, two whole chapters, there's your story, and all through the prophets in the Old Testament. It's mentioned in Matthew, Luke, and in the Pauline epistles. It's mentioned in Hebrews and in the book of Jude. Sodom and Gomorrah. Let's read the text once again, and I want you to see it in your Bibles. "Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them..." not just Sodom and Gomorrah, Sodom being the largest chief city, "...and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to..." here they would go, fornication, they went after strange flesh, they are set now "...for an example of the suffering of the vengeance of eternal fire." Not just the immediate temporal destruction, but eternal fire. Eternal is not mentioned in verse 5 for the Israelites. I believe theirs was a temporal, physical destruction. They perished in the land. I believe these angels, who cannot be redeemed, are going to be punished and separated by God for all eternity. I believe that the sodomites, verse 7, will be judged by God, rejected by God and separated from God for all eternity. So we have three categories; we have unbelief, pride and rebellion, and we have sexual immorality. In some respects, I don't know that I really need to say anything. All I need you to do is read that verse. Either you believe what God says in His Word, or you don't believe what God says in His Word. People of Sodom are an example of suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. And, as I said, the story is told in Genesis 18 and 19.

I read through that story last night just to refresh my memory; how Abraham greeted the three strangers, he fed them, and then they told him that Sarah would bear a son. And, then the Lord stood there talking to Abraham. Of those three strangers that visited Abraham in Genesis 3, one of them was the Lord Jesus Christ. It was what's called a Christophany. That is an appearance of Christ in the Old Testament. More strictly speaking than a theophany, just God, it was the second person of the Godhead, Christ, appearing. Not an incarnation, but a manifestation. He told Abraham that they were going to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Do you remember what Abraham did? He started bartering with the Lord and praying for the people. He said, "Lord, if there are fifty people, will You spare the city?" The Lord says, "Ya! No problem! Fifty people? I'll spare it." And Abraham said, "How about forty-five?" "Ya, forty-five is cool." I am paraphrasing this, the Lord didn't say cool, okay? "Forty-five

is good. I can spare the city.” “Uh, how about forty? Can you spare the city for forty?” “Yes, I’ll spare the city for forty.” “How about thirty? Thirty people there, You’ll spare the city?” “Yes,” He said, “I’ll spare the city.” “How about twenty.” “I’ll spare it for twenty.” I’m making a long story short. Abraham said, “Now, Lord, I’m going to ask You one more time. Don’t get upset with me, but if there are ten people. If there are ten people in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, will You spare that city?” Do you know what God said? If I were God I’d say, “No way! I’m gonna smoke it! I’m gonna roast ‘em all!” You can be glad I’m not God. God said, “Yes. For ten righteous people, I’ll spare the cities.” It makes me think about the United States of America. I think the only thing holding back the wrath of God in the United States of America is the church, God’s people, the bride of Christ. But there weren’t ten people in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. There was only Lot, his wife, and his two daughters.

Now, you know the story, two of the men were angels. They looked like men and they walked down into Sodom. Lot encountered them and said, “You know, you can’t sleep in the streets. This is a bad town. You guys haven’t been here before, right? Nobody sleeps in the streets of Sodom. It’s a bad place, so come on into my house.” So they got in his house. He’s entertaining them when, bam..bam..bam, a knock at the door. Lot goes outside and shuts the door behind him. All the men of the city, young and old, are gathered there in front of Lot’s house. They said, “Send out those two men that we may know them!” They didn’t want to give them the key of the city and welcome them to Sodom. They wanted to rape them. This is homosexual rape, this is sodomy. Now, I’ve heard all the arguments. The reason that God judged Sodom was because it was gang rape, or the reason that God judged Sodom was because it was a lack of hospitality. You read the Bible, taking it in its literal sense, and you can come up with no other understanding. And, our Jude passage is very, very clear. I want you to go back to Jude 7 for just a moment. It says they gave themselves over to fornication, they followed after, going after. It means a complete abandonment of any of God’s standards and morals, strange flesh. I don’t think this is bestiality, I think it’s homosexuality. And they’re set forth then as an example of the suffering of the vengeance of God.

Sodom and Gomorrah are proverbial. Do you know that inscribed or scribbled on a wall in Pompei, before the eruption in 79 AD, archeologists found this piece of stone with the words Sodom and Gomorrah? It was proverbial, and it is proverbial. I had a friend in college who had two big coed dorms. It was just crazy what was going on, and he used to call the two dormitory buildings: Sodom and Gomorrah. It’s proverbial. We know what that implies. We know what it says. Here in the text it says, “...giving themselves over to fornication...,” porneia, sexual immorality. And then it says, “...going after strange flesh...” Now, here is what one Greek scholar said. He said it’s an out and out surrender to extravagant sexual lust. It’s going outside God’s moral law. This is none other than “homosexuality.” His name is Edmond Hiebert. He’s one of the greatest New Testament scholars, a Mennonite man, whose commentaries are amazing. They gave themselves over to strange flesh. They wanted to sodomize those men. They wanted to rape those men. And, Lot says, “No. No.” To show you how sick, degenerate and perverted that culture had become, Lot says, “I have two daughters. They are virgins. I’ll give them to you. You can do whatever you want with them.” “Thanks a lot, Dad!” I mean that is just disgusting! But, you know what? We live in a culture today that is not far off. Did you

know that Jesus used Lot and his wife and Sodom and Gomorrah as a picture of the last days before the second coming? When we have people openly flaunting their sins and totally disregarding God's moral law; when we have the Supreme Court of the United States in absolute defiance of God's moral standards, perverting and changing what God has ordained, we are in big trouble as a nation, big trouble. And, again my heart breaks to think of where America has come to and where it's going. Years ago, Billy Graham said, "If God does not judge America, He owes Sodom and Gomorrah an apology." How can we go on any longer in our sin and expect God not to judge us for our sin. The New Living translation renders verse 7, "...filled with immorality and every kind of sexual perversion..." So, Israel, unbelief; Angels, pride and rebellion; Sodom, sexual perversion.

Now, I suppose I could skip these couple of points real quick because I'm touching it on Wednesday nights right now, but I'd like to be as black and white as I can. When the Bible uses the word porneia, we get our word pornographic from that. It is a general term for sexual immorality. I want you to think with me for a minute. If there is such a thing, and it is all throughout the Bible as porneia, sexual immorality, then what defines sexual immorality? Let me make it real clear, okay? Any sex outside the covenant relationship of marriage is porneia, sexual immorality. Now, you can call it love. You can call it the times we live in. You can call it whatever you want; he turns me on, she turns me on, she lights my fire, whatever it is, you know, I really like them, they meet my needs, whatever. It's perversion, it's porneia, it's sexual. It's anything outside the covenant relationship of marriage. Sex is designed by God to be experienced in the covenant relationship of marriage. So this is what it means, it means premarital sex is sinful and wrong. For how long in our culture have we grown to accept the fact that, "Oh ya, if you really love each other and you commit to each other, then you can have intimacy with each other." God says, "No. That's for marriage." Anybody who wants to have sex with you and they're not willing to marry you, run for your life! In Genesis 2, we have covered it well on Wednesday night, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." That's marriage. God made it. God designed it. God created it. It involves severance, leaving your father and mother. It involves permanence, one mate for life—you're glued together. And, it involves intimacy. They were both naked, the man and his wife, and they were not ashamed.

I want to give you just two verses to write down, and then I'll wrap this message up. Hebrews 13:4 says, "Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." It goes well with verse 7 of Jude. Here's the second verse to write down, 1 Thessalonians 4:3 says, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification...", that is your holiness, you're being set apart, "...that you should abstain from fornication." The word is porneia. This is God's will, that you live a holy life, that you practice abstinence from sexual immorality. How much clearer can it be? You ask, "John, why are you getting so amped about this?" Because Christians are buying into the lie of the world, that it is natural, that it is normal, it's okay, and that God won't judge. If they want to get married, let them get married, and that's okay. God condemns this sin. God condemns all sexual immorality. And, hardly a week or two goes by as a pastor of this congregation that it surfaces in our own midst. Christians who do not hold their vessels in honor, but dishonor. "Ya, but Pastor Miller, we're sleeping with each

other, we're having sex. We're gonna get married. We think we're gonna get married. We may be getting married." I hear it over and over again. So, understand. If I'm amped about this subject, why I am. Because the Bible clearly teaches this subject, and it seems like God's people don't get that.

Remember, whatever God calls you to do, He gives you the strength to do it. If you're not married, God will give you the strength to practice abstinence. If you're married, God will give you the strength to be faithful in your relationship. One mate for life in a monogamous, heterosexual relationship. One man, one woman glued together for life. Anything outside of that, adultery or homosexuality, is sinful behavior. You say, "Well, they can't help it because they're born that way." I haven't said this on Wednesday night so I wanted to throw this out. There is no scientific evidence that a person is born a homosexual. No biological scientific evidence. Years ago that was the big push. They dropped that, and now they're pushing this civil rights issue. It's not a civil rights issue. You choose to follow that lifestyle. It's not the color of your skin that you couldn't help. A black man and a white woman, or a white man and a black woman, or brown or yellow or whatever you want, are a male and a female. You got that? They are a male and a female, and anyone that would reject that kind of relationship isn't reading their Bible. They are male and female. God made them male and God made them female. A man and his wife, it doesn't matter what color their skin is. That's not it. These are all smoke screens, silly stupid arguments that they blow out and then they take the Bible and come into church claiming to be ministers and they twist the scriptures. It's unbelievable the scale to the degree of what is happening in the professing church today.

Why do I say this? Because we have to put on the boxing gloves, in love, and stand for the truth of the Gospel. Stand for the truth of the gospel. We're not hostile, we're not hateful, we're not homophobic. God loves them. They can repent. They can believe. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he said such were some of you, and he included homosexuality, but now you are washed. Now you are cleansed. Now you are forgiven. Some of you were in that lifestyle, but now you're washed, cleansed and forgiven. Now you're a new creation in Christ. And, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things pass away, all things become new. Before I got saved I used to cuss and swear. I got arrested as a teenager for stealing and was thrown in juvenile hall. When I became a Christian, old things passed away and all things become new. Some of you used to do drugs. You used to do other things. You used to be two-timers, adulterers and God has forgiven you. God has changed you, cleansed you and washed you, and you are new creations in Christ. Amen? What a blessing that is! The power of God to forgive and to change a life!

Now these are three very frightening, powerful images. Jude reminds us that God does not take sin and rebellion lightly. He judges it. The judgment may come suddenly, as in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah. It may be delayed, as in the case of the angels. It may occur in the natural course of events, as in the case of those who came out of Egypt. But, whether swift or slow, God's judgment is always sure. God's judgment is always sure. Where is your heart today? There are four kinds of hearts. There's a hard heart, the word bounces off. The birds flying overhead sees the seed and they steal it away. Satan steals the seed that is sown. It's a

hard heart. There's a shallow heart, without repentance and true faith, counting the cost to follow Jesus Christ. They come for a moment and then they fall back and fall away. There is a crowded heart, the deceitfulness of riches and the cares and the lusts for other things choke out that seed, and they fall away. Then there's a fruitful heart. I'm praying that God gives us hearts that are soft, hearts that are deep, hearts that are clean, and hearts that bring forth fruit for the glory of God. That God's Word, as it's sown, is finding root in your heart and brings forth fruit for His glory. Amen?