

The Acts Of The Apostates – Part 2

Jude 1:12-16

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We're going through the book of Jude, and the theme of the book is that we're to "...earnestly contend for the faith which was once," and for all, "delivered unto the saints." Then, he explains why we must "earnestly contend," because there are men who "...crept in unawares," to the church. It's basically a book about what is known as apostasy. In case you haven't really been here on Wednesday night, or we need just a quick refreshment, apostasy is those people who come into the church and profess to be Christians but don't possess Christianity—they don't possess Christ, they're not born again—and after a while turn from the faith that they professed and go back into the world. Many of them actually try to destroy Christianity with false teachings.

They're not born-again believers who backslide and lose their salvation. Peter describes them as the dog that vomits and goes back to its vomit or the pig that's been washed and goes back to its wallowing in the mire. This is a very serious, a very sobering topic. It's not popular today. It's not really en vogue. You don't hear a lot of preachers talking about this because they want to focus on the positive. But while with churches in many ways sleeping, false christ's, false messiah's, and false teachers have come into the church.

As Paul met with the elders at Ephesus, we talked about last Wednesday night, he said, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise," so there will be false teachers coming from the outside, we know them as cultists or cults, and apostates that will be in the inside and will turn away from the faith.

I want to get a running start on verse 12, so I'd like you to turn back to verse 8. I didn't want to cover all these verses in one week, but I want to read verses 8-11 to kind of bring us up to where we're at in verse 12. In verses 8-11, we have the apostates reject divine authority—that's the overarching theme, they reject divine authority. They always reject God's Word and the authority of God that He has ordained. Notice verse 8, "Likewise also these filthy dreamers," or these dreamers, and he describes them, "defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities," or authorities, and then illustrates it with, "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. 10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. 11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core."

They reject divine authority. They go astray because they're dreamers, that's the cause in verse 8, and the course is described for they "...defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities," or authorities, even Michael the archangel would not do that, and they "...speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those

things they corrupt themselves.” Then, he describes them as “...Cain,” which is the way of self works or self righteousness, “and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward,” which is serving for rewards or money, “and perished in the gainsaying of Core,” which speaks of their characteristic that they have sexual immorality, rebellion, and pride.

Now, go back to verse 12 and follow with me. First, they reject divine authority; secondly, verses 12-13, they resort to deliberate hypocrisy. Notice verses 12-13 says, “These are spots,” remember last week I pointed out that phrase, “these.” He uses it in verse 8, “Likewise also these,” and verse 10, “But these,” speaking of the apostates, and continues speaking about them in verse 12, “These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; 13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.”

Jude has covered the whole of creation thus far in this little epistle. He’s talked about angels, men, the apostates being like brute beasts or animals, but now turns to nature. Jude uses five word pictures from nature to uncover their hypocrisy. Remember they come in secretly, they come in stealthily. They don’t proclaim, “Hey, by the way, I’m an apostate. I don’t believe the Bible is the Word of God. I don’t believe Jesus was God. I don’t believe that you’re saved by grace through faith. I don’t believe in hell,” and they don’t come out openly denying the things of the Word of God, but come in looking like a Christian, talking like a Christian, smelling like a Christian—they’re wolves in sheep’s clothing—acting like Christians, but they deny the very tenets of orthodox Christianity. Jude is going to describe them with these pictures, or metaphors from nature, and they’re really graphic, beautiful, and they all have a spiritual message behind them.

If you’re taking notes, first of all, they’re like hidden rocks or reefs in your feasts of charity. Notice, “These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear.” Unfortunately, I have a confession. My King James translation is not really the best. Some of you, having a modern translation, may have a better rendering of what is going on here in this passage. The King James uses the word “spots,” but the Greek word actually means rocks or hidden reefs. The New Living Translation actually says, “...they are like dangerous reefs that can shipwreck you.” That’s a picture of these apostates.

Years ago, I was on a trip to Fiji to do a pastor’s conference. Now, that’s kind of like the ultimate for a pastor that likes to surf. I got invited to speak to a group of Fijian pastors, and at the end of the time of the conference, we went out to an outer island, from there out to an outer reef, and surfed this reef called Frigate’s Pass in Fiji. I’ll never forget. It was an interesting experience because we were literally way out in the Pacific Ocean and the spot that we were surfing you couldn’t see any land. Basically, we’re out in the ocean, couldn’t see the main island, couldn’t see the island we were staying on, couldn’t see any rocks or reefs, it was just open ocean. It was really kind of a weird feeling, and out of the open ocean these big waves were coming in because underneath the water there, what creates the waves, is a reef. I

noticed that when the tide would drop, the reef would actually expose itself. I was really blown away by that—to be way out in the ocean, no land anywhere in sight, and all these rocks were coming up out of the ocean in this reef.

I thought about how dangerous it must be for men in their boats when they come in to that pass through that opening to not know...if they don't know where the reefs are, they can certainly be shipwrecked and destroyed. Can you imagine ancient mariners passing through that area not having modern sounding to be able to tell where the reefs are? They wouldn't know where the rocks were, and actually, when the tide was high, the reef was only about two or three feet below the water. It was quite sharp and pretty gnarly. When the tide would drop, it would expose, but it was of grave danger to people that were sailing through that area because they were hidden and you couldn't see them, and you could be destroyed on those reefs.

Here's the point. These apostates, these false teachers, are like unseen dangers—like hidden reefs, very dangerous. If there was a big rock sticking up out of the water, you could see it and go around it, but when it's just a little bit below the surface of the water, hidden and unseen, it becomes very, very dangerous.

Look with me at what Jude says here. He uses the words "...spots in your feasts of charity." This kind of throws a curve for some people. They think, Well, what is this hidden reef or sailing out in the ocean and in danger of hitting the reef? And, the next thing Jude says, it's like a double use of illustrations here, "...in your feasts of charity," or love. What is this "feasts of love" mentioned there in verse 12? The "feast of love" were what was known to the early church as agape feasts, thus the word love or agape—love feasts. We call them today potlucks. You know what a potluck is, right? Everybody bring some food, and if you're lucky, you get something to eat. They would have potlucks. The problem was that the rich folks had lots of cool food and would bring it to the potluck. What happened is that it began to degenerate where the rich folks began to just eat their own food and weren't sharing with the poor folks who were hungry and needed to eat.

Now, we don't have a lot of potlucks here at Revival. We actually need to build a Fellowship Hall so we can do that more often. In my former church we used to have potlucks after church. The ladies would bring a great big casserole or something really good, and I noticed the bachelor dudes would bring a bag of chips. I've always noticed at the front of the line were the bachelor dudes. They're right up at the front of the line, and they would eat so much that the people at the end of the line, when they got up to the food, nothing was left but the bowl of chips. I would always go to the end of the line and just have a few chips for lunch. It degenerates, just like it does often today at a potluck, where the people who have the food, they eat it, the people that don't have the food, don't eat, and it became a problem.

Paul actually was writing about this in 1 Corinthians rebuking them that when they were coming to the "feasts of love" that they were eating their own food, they weren't sharing their food, and some were drinking and actually getting drunk. The love feast was actually tied together with communion. They would have a potluck, then they would go into communion. They were

engorging themselves in gluttonous behavior, they were being selfish and not sharing food, and they were getting drunk and then going in to the communion service. That was what was happening in Corinth.

The “love feasts” with the communion service kind of died out and didn’t last very long in the history of the church, but it was something that the early church participated in. That is, no doubt, what Jude is referring to here, their “feasts of love.” But what he’s saying is that these apostates come to their potluck, their “love feasts,” and act like they’re believers. They seem to be believers but are actually like reefs under the water that are dangerous. If you’re not careful, you can be shipwrecked on them if you follow their teaching and their instruction, thus the hidden reefs. They’re unseen danger.

What is the point? We need to know our Bibles to be able to detect truth from error. When you listen to a preacher, read a book, hear a sermon, listen to music, even the music you listen to, be concerned about the biblical accuracy of the lyrics. If it’s not right to preach false doctrine, it’s not right to sing false doctrine, so you need to be listening with a critical ear. Now, it doesn’t mean you go around with a censorious, critical, fault-finding, holier-than-thou kind of an attitude, but you do speak the truth in love and you do need to be discerning about what is true and what is biblical or else you can run onto one of these reefs and be destroyed.

Jude makes another statement about them. It says, “When they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear.” That “...feeding themselves,” we actually get our word pasture, and we get our word pastor from it. The NASB actually translates that, “...like shepherds caring only for themselves.” They were doing the same thing the Corinthians were doing—feeding themselves and weren’t concerned about others in the “love feasts.” They were basically selfish and very, very dangerous.

The second picture is in verse 12, “...clouds they are without water,” this one is pretty easy to understand. Those clouds are “...carried about of winds.” These last couple of days, especially today and last night, we’ve actually had some clouds in Southern California. In this Temecula valley we very rarely get rain, and when we see the clouds coming we kind of think, Oh! Maybe it will rain,” and then we watch the clouds move away, Maybe it might not rain, and it just goes away, Maybe it definitely is not going to rain. Have you ever just thought, Oh look! It might rain. Oh, we need rain! Oh, wouldn’t it be wonderful if it rained! Oh, refreshing rain! and it just, “Oh, bummer!” blows right by. I did wake up last night hearing the lightening and the thunder and heard the rain falling a little bit. But like clouds that promise and then don’t bring rain, the false teachers promise but don’t satisfy or deliver.

They look good. You turn on the tv, “Oh, we’re going to hear the Word of God. Oh, this is going to be awesome! Oh, whoa! They just took off somewhere else,” and just kind of float right by. You’re thirsting for living water, and they give you nothing but emptiness. They’re like clouds that have blown about by the wind. They look like they can give spiritual help, yet they have nothing of spiritual value. They are false prophets—they don’t deliver, they have false promises.

Write down Proverbs 25:14. It says, "Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain." It could be that Jude was thinking of Proverbs 25:14. They're "...like clouds...without rain." In 2 Peter 2:19, "While they promise them liberty, they," can only bring you into "...bondage." I found a Scripture, too, in Deuteronomy 32:2. It says, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew," so God's Word is like water for our thirsty souls. The true Word of God satisfies the deep longing of your heart and of your soul. You're feeding on the Word, you're drinking of the Word. It's so very important.

They're like reefs you can't see, very dangerous, and like clouds that come blowing in and you think they're going to bring spiritual health and life, but they produce nothing—they promise but do not produce. This makes me think about Ephesians 4:14 where Paul had actually said, that God gives to the church "...pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry," and then makes this statement in verse 14, "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about," same concept of the wind blowing, "with every wind of doctrine...But speaking the truth in love," we might be grounded in God's Word and grow thereby.

I've noticed that believers who aren't grounded in the Word and growing in the Word become prey to every wind of doctrine that blows through the church. They are unstable. Someone said, I heard it years ago and love it, "They're under the influence of the last person they talked to. Every time you meet them, they're on some new trip, some new fad, some new gimmick." They're always under the influence of the last person they talked to or the last preacher they heard. They're like unstable clouds blown around. I liken them unto tumbleweeds. We know what a tumbleweed is in Southern California. A lot of Christians are like tumbleweeds, whatever doctrine blows through the church they go rolling with it—and they roll back here, and they roll over here. They're not rooted and grounded in bringing forth fruit. They're not glorifying God. They're carried about with winds.

Notice the third graphic picture. They are like autumn "...trees whose fruit withereth," that phrase actually carries the concept in the Greek that they're like trees that dry up or wither in the fall. In the fall, the green leaves of summer fall off, the fruit has been harvested, and the trees are naked and bare. But they're not just naked and bare of fruit, their roots are dead and then they're plucked up from the ground. That's what's called twice dead—their roots are plucked up. The picture there is a tree that's dead, a tree that's not producing fruit, and a tree that has no life. The picture is that of false teachers that are dead. When it says twice dead, they're dead in the area of the fruit of their profession, and they're dead in the area of the root of their possession—they don't have eternal life. He uses the illustration of an autumn tree.

Jesus said in Matthew 15:13, "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." In context there he's talking about the Pharisees who were, in a way, apostates of his day—they professed that they knew God but in their works they denied Him—so they're not true believers. In Proverbs 2:22 it says, "But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it." They're like tares among the wheat, and they grow up together. When the Lord returns, He will root them out and, of course, they will be judged. The

point is they have no fruit, no life, and no roots in God's Word. It speaks of barren profession. Maybe they have robes, or wear Christian jewelry or maybe they wear Christian hats and all kinds of rings, they have all the garb and talk about the things of Christ but are not true believers. They're not authentic or genuine. They're like autumn trees but are dried up, dead, and produce no fruit.

You should be looking at ministries and ministers for the doctrine that they hold and especially their doctrine of Scripture. One of the points that the apostate starts to slip away from is a high view of the Scriptures, God's Word. They start to kind of doubt whether or not it's all true. They don't hold to inerrancy. They start to doubt its historicity. They start to doubt its clarity. They start to doubt its sufficiency. Apostasy begins with a lowering of one's view of the Scripture.

I've often said, and I know it's kind of like a soapbox I get on all the time, that your view of Scripture is all important as a foundation for your life because everything we know about God, about Christ, about Christianity, about salvation comes from the Bible. We wouldn't have any lamp, any light, any foundation, any truth if it wasn't for God's Word. In this crazy, confused culture that we live in right now, we need the Bible. The book that people laugh at, mock, reject, and have basically just dismissed is our greatest need. The greatest need in the world today is for the Bible—for us to believe it, to be able to read it, to live by it, and let the Spirit of God take the Word of God and transform the child of God, through the Word of God, into the image of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. It's so important. These are guys with barren profession. Look for ministries that hold a high view of Scripture.

Whenever I'm checking out another church or I'm checking out a ministry or what's going on in the internet, I always want to go and look at a doctrinal statement. We have on our website, by the way, a doctrinal statement; and I think it's pretty detailed and thorough what we believe as a church about the Bible, about God, about Jesus, about the Holy Spirit, about the Trinity, the Godhead, salvation, the church, man, sins, Satan, angels, what we believe about life after death, what we believe about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, the rapture of the church, the Millennial reign of Christ. It's all listed there for you. What the trend is today is a lot of churches don't want to take a doctrinal stand because they don't want to be divisive. Sometimes they say, "Doctrine divides," but we need to take a stand, as Jude said in verse 3, "...for the faith which was once," and for all "delivered unto the saints." Only the Spirit of God, working through the Word of God, can produce the true lasting fruit in a believer's life, so they don't produce spiritual fruit. They're dangerous reefs, they're clouds without water, they're trees without fruit—they cannot produce.

Notice the fourth. This is another one of my favorites, verse 13. They're "Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame," and the fifth one is "wandering stars." In Isaiah 57:20-21, the prophet said, "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. 21 There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Again, if you've ever been to the beach after a storm when it has rained, the water runs into the ocean so you have all that soot and dirt and the water gets kind of brown and mucky. The waves break on the shore and are kind of foamy—there are these murky, muddy, foamy waves breaking up on the

beach. Surfers, of course, still will go out in that water even though they shouldn't because there's a lot of bacteria, but these waves turn brown and come up on the beach leaving this foamy stuff that's kind of brown, slimy, dirty-looking, and gross. You've seen the beach like that after a storm. That's what these false teachers are, like "Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame." The imagery is conveying that they have wasted effort—all their work can produce nothing but foam and shame. It's actually describing the downward trend of these false teachers.

Throughout church history the waves of apostasy have come to attack the church, yet the church that Christ builds is built solidly upon the Rock, Jesus Christ, and it will stand.

Fifthly, verse 13, Jude says they are like "...wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." This is a picture of what we would call a meteor or a shooting star. The imagery is that in the ancient world, especially the mariners, the only way they can kind of guide themselves at night was by the stars. I mentioned being in Fiji when we were there, and on this little island way out in the Fijian sea have never seen stars like I've seen out in the South Pacific. It's just so amazing. You're out in the ocean and all you can see are the stars, and you use the stars to navigate; but you don't use a shooting star to navigate, you use a fixed star, maybe the North Star. These false teachers or apostates are like shooting stars, which are actually meteorites that are just burning out. If you've ever had a time when you can watch a meteorite shower, these things just going off, go out to Joshua Tree in the middle of the winter. The stars are absolutely amazing. You see all these shooting stars zipping across the sky.

Can you imagine being out on the sea at night trying to navigate and SWOOSH! "Okay, we're going to go this way." SWOOSH! "Okay, turn this way." The star goes this way, "Oh, okay. Now we go this way." You can't follow them. There's no course that can be set. Again, this is a picture of these apostates. He's using this picture or imagery of nature. They have no help in navigating through life. What a picture that is.

A wandering star has an uncontrolled moment of brilliance and then fades away into nothing. They make a big splash—they get a lot of "ooh's and ah's"—but then quickly burn out and produce no lasting spiritual value or worth.

Notice verse 13, "...to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." All through the epistle of Jude he describes the fact that these apostates are on their way to destruction, "...blackness," and "darkness," in judgment forever. It goes like this: It starts with selfishness, moves to helplessness, then to fruitlessness, to shamefulness, and ends up in hopelessness. How sad and tragic it would be for a believer to begin to follow these false apostles and teachers and preachers.

In closing, verses 14-16, we see that they receive their due penalty. First, verses 8-11, they reject divine authority; the second section is verses 12-13, they resort to deliberate hypocrisy; and, in closing, it says, verses 14-16, that they receive their due penalty. At the end of verse 16, starting in verse 17, there's going to be a major transition from talking about the apostates

to talking about the anecdote for apostasy—what we need to do as believers to prepare ourselves to build up ourselves in our most holy faith. Notice how he closes, verse 14. He says, “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these,” so you have “these” in verse 12, being the apostates, now the “these” in verse 14, “saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, 15 To execute judgement upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” You get the idea that these fellows are ungodly, four times he uses that word in verse 15.

Then, in closing, he describes them, “These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their own mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage.” That’s a great summary, description, and picture of these apostates in the church. We have the apostate’s future judgment.

What is this prophecy of Enoch? If it wasn’t for Jude, we wouldn’t understand or know that there was a prophecy uttered by Enoch about the coming of the Lord and His judgment on the ungodly which took place before the flood of Noah. Notice that Enoch is called, verse 14, “... the seventh from Adam.” You can check it out in the book of Genesis 5 and find seven generations coming from Adam to Enoch. Enoch is an interesting man. The Bible says, “And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.” He actually just took Enoch home. I call him Enoch the spaceman—God just took him to Heaven and he didn’t die as far as the Scriptures are concerned. Evidently, Enoch prophesied.

Some people are freaked out by this because they know that in the Apocrypha, the book of Enoch 1:9, there is a similar—not the same but similar—passage about the Lord’s coming in judgment. It’s different enough that it’s not verbatim or the same, but Jude, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, might have been thinking about it but wrote it because it is biblical and scriptural. This doesn’t justify the Apocrypha and say that it’s all right on that we can read it and it’s all reliable, but it does come from the book of Enoch, if that’s what Jude was thinking of; but Enoch, writing by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wrote that in 110 B.C. It was written before Noah and the flood, so it’s an ancient prophecy in the Bible and talks about the Lord’s, I believe, Second Coming.

When it says there, verse 14, “Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,” most likely that’s a reference not to the rapture when He comes for the saints but a reference to the Second Coming, seven years later at the end of the tribulation when He comes back with the saints. That’s one of the distinctions, by the way, between the rapture of the church—He comes for the saints, takes them to Heaven—and the Second Coming, Revelation 19, He comes back with the saints.

I want you to note in verses 14-15 the facts that we have about the Lord’s coming. First, He is coming. Look at what it says, “Behold, the Lord cometh.” This was before the flood of Noah, yet God spoke through Enoch. God then spoke again through Jude and made it clear the Lord is coming. Part of orthodox Christianity is the belief in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. I

know that good Christians can differ on whether they believe He'll come before the Millennium or at the end of the Millennium, or if there'll be a Millennium, or if they believe in a rapture or the Second Coming, and you can disagree on that if you want. I have my opinions and views, my convictions, but you do need to believe that He is coming again. Amen? Because Jesus said in John 14, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again." The cool thing is that Jesus always keeps His promises. He will come again.

Sometimes that reality just hits me and blows my mind, to use an old hippie term. It just blows my mind. Jesus Christ is actually going to come back. Can you imagine what a different kind of world this is going to be? Imagine turning the television on and all of the sudden they say, "The heavens opened up and Jesus Christ has returned!" When He does, you won't need to turn the news on to know it, that's for sure! "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS," read the description in Revelation 19. Amazing! He comes back in power, glory. He came the first time in humility as a man to die for our sins on the cross; He's coming back the second time as the Lion of the tribe of Judah to judge and to penalize or punish sinners as he says in this passage.

First, He's coming. Secondly, the fact is that He's coming with His saints and with His angels, verse 14. Some feel that the reference to "saints" there could be a reference to angels, and I know that when He comes back with the church in the Second Coming, He's going to come back with angels as well. We're actually going to be with Him in Heaven, we're going to see angels in Heaven with Him, and we're going to come back with Him riding on white horses, Revelation 19.

The third fact, verse 15, He is coming to judge. It says in verse 15, "To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." What does it mean to be ungodly? To be godly means to be Godlike, so to be ungodly means to be unlike God. We look at our world today and see people so unlike God, so ungodly. They're living in rebellion to God. Notice again in verse 14, the apostates are referred to as "these," and then says He's coming to judge all, so His judgment will be universal—all the ungodly will be judged. We see Christ coming back to judge sin. He came the first time to pay for the penalty of sin. He comes back the second time to punish sinners—He's coming back in judgment. His judgment will be just, verse 15, "...to convince all that are ungodly...of all their ungodly deeds."

Notice, verse 16, "These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts." This is kind of a summary where Jude comes back to a lot of the themes that he touched on earlier and he basically summarizes them. I have to admit, this is rather convicting when he starts in verse 16 and says, "These are murmurers, complainers."

I don't know what it is, I woke up on the wrong side of the bed this morning. It seemed like everywhere I went, everything I did, just wasn't going smoothly. Don't you hate that? Everything's off. I won't go into any detail, but nothing was working out. It's like, "What did I do to deserve this?" I got a little gripey, a little complainer, a little grumpy. Yes, Pastor Miller gets

gripey and complains. This afternoon, when I was reading that, I was like, “Oh, No! I’m in the Bible, verse 16.” You could put John Miller right next to that, “...murmurers, complainers,” my wife would write that in the margin of her Bible, actually. Several of the Bible commentaries I read talked about how they rejected God’s authority and then they murmur and complain because life doesn’t kind of do what they like or what they want. They’re rejecting God, rebelling against God, so they murmur and complain.

How about the people of Israel in the Old Testament, how they murmured and complained and wandered in the wilderness, so it’s part of the beginning stage of a pathway of rebellion against God where we complain about God giving us not what we want in life, or our lot in life, if things don’t go the way we want. Then, he talks about their “...walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage.”

Let me break it down like this: They are discontented, if you’re taking notes, murmuring and complaining, self-centered, walking after their own lusts. Remember they’re spots or rocks in your “feasts of love,” they only feed themselves. They’re like shepherds that feed themselves and care not for anyone else, so they’re self-centered. Thirdly, they’re egotistical, “and their mouth speaketh great swelling words,” so they speak arrogantly. Again, I’ve turned the Christian television stations on sometimes and you see them preaching. They strut on the stage like peacocks. They think that they’re God’s anointed chosen ones—don’t need the Bible, don’t need the doctrine of the Bible, don’t need the Scriptures, “I’m a man of God. I’m speaking from God. God just gave this revelation to me.” They’re the mouthpiece of God, and you can’t speak against the Lord’s anointed. They strut around like peacocks. They don’t preach with any humility. Now, preach with authority, but the authority is not the preacher, the authority is the Bible. The preacher is only able to preach with authority when he’s preaching the Word of God, not his own thoughts or his own ideas.

Notice also that they are deceptively flattering, “...having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage.” Someone says they tell people what they want to hear for their own profit. Interesting, one commentary I was reading said they do not value the authority of Scripture but they value the approval and praises of men. That’s so sad. They don’t value...I talked about fearing God on Sunday. They don’t fear God, they don’t value the Scriptures, but they value what people think about them and the opinions of men and want popularity rather than being faithful to God’s Word. If there’s anything needed in a preacher or teacher of the Word of God, it’s faithfulness to the Bible’s authority, and teaching the Word of God accurately, and not preaching for men’s approval, applause, or for a pat on the back, so they have “...men’s persons in admiration.”

In light of that, I thought of 2 Timothy 4:3-4 where Paul told Timothy to “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season,” and when he preached the Word to “reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine,” and then told him why, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine,” that means healthy, life-giving doctrine or teaching, “but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn

away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” The congregation gets preachers who will tell them what they want to hear, not faithfully preach the Word of God. They’re ear ticklers, so the ears are being tickled by the preacher. They’re tickling the ears of the congregation—they’re telling them what they want to hear.

As you summarize what we’ve covered in two weeks, first these apostates reject divine authority, they reject the authority of Scripture. It is the Word of God—inerrant, infallible, inspired by God. Secondly, they resort to deliberate hypocrisy. They’re not genuine. They’re not authentic. They’re not real. They’re hypocritical. Thirdly, they receive their own due penalty. Just as the cloud has no water, it’s blown away, they have no real spiritual life—they can’t provide the living water. They don’t preach Christ and Him crucified—he will come to Christ and find that living water that only can satisfy.

Beginning in verse 20, and we’ll get there next week, Jude is going to talk to us about the anecdote for apostasy when he says, “But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,” Spirit. Watching for the Lord to come again, “Keep yourselves in the love of God. It’s a marvelous instruction. It’s very practical. Jude has described the apostates and warned us of them, now he’s going to tell us how we can protect ourselves from them with the believer’s building program. Let’s pray.