

Contend for the Faith

REVIEW: For the last three weeks we have been looking into the little book of Jude. I think Jude may be the reason we have phrases like “Never judge a book by its cover,” “Never underestimate your opponent,” and “Good things come in little packages.” Just because Jude is this tiny little book at the end of the Bible, it packs quite a punch into our lives.

To give you the quick recap, Jude has been denouncing false teachers that “changed the grace of God into a license for immorality.” Jude has never been specific on what those issues are, however, with some of the peripheral issues he has brought up, we can guess that perhaps the false teachers were either involved in, or encouraging false lifestyles.

The book of Jude has touched on the issue of homosexuality, and the reality of hell. Overall, it has been a very insightful book.

INTRO: In our verses this morning Jude continues to go after the false teachers. I have mentioned this before, but I will say it again because it bears repeating: Jude was harsh with the false teachers. We are not used to that with our sanitized, modern Christianity. We take the two greatest commandments, love the Lord your God, and love your neighbor and make them absolute in the sense that any negativity, any harsh words are against the teaching of Christ. Yet Jude did not have a problem coming down on men that were perverting the gospel. Jesus did not have any problem coming down on the Pharisees. Their example speaks volumes. But please note that they attacked the sinful lies these people spread, and the wicked hearts that motivated them. It does not mean you can attack or say anything you want when you get upset. It means Jude and Jesus attacked sinful behavior, and men whose hearts were set on evil.

Jude 14-16

I. The use of the prophecy

A. Jude uses a prophecy from Enoch, a character in OT history

1. The problem is that we have no record in Scripture of Enoch ever saying these words
2. In fact, we have no record of Enoch ever giving a prophecy in Scripture
3. Enoch was listed only in OT genealogical lists
 - a) There is one comment that was made about him that stands out - “Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.” (Genesis 5:24)
 - (1) This seems to indicate that Enoch never died but was just taken to heaven
 - (2) This would be confirmed in the book of Hebrews (11:5)

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- b) Because of the commendation from God and so little said about Enoch in Scripture, it makes him ripe for legends, and the Jews were fascinated by Him
- B. Where we do find these words is in the pseudepigraphal book of 1 Enoch
 - 1. The pseudepigrapha is a collection of books falsely attributed to a famous figure in biblical history
 - 2. So the author wrote the work, and then, usually to get better acceptance, would title his work with the name of a famous person
 - 3. Jude's use of this quote that is not in the Bible (there was an excepted body of literature by the Jews as Scripture, and this was not it) raises questions
- C. Jude's message, for some, can get lost in the question of why he is quoting a book in an authoritative manner that has never been accepted by ANY religious body as part of the canon of Scripture
 - 1. This question is not new to us in our century
 - a) Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian both thought that 1 Enoch was inspired by God
 - b) Jerome thought Jude was not inspired because of his use of 1 Enoch
 - c) Augustine thought that 1 Enoch was inspired in parts but not the whole
 - d) So who is right?
 - 2. Some today argue that because Jude refers to 1 Enoch and calls it prophecy, it must be an inspired book
 - 3. However, two things stand against that idea
 - a) There is ample evidence that Jews and Christians in the first century were operating with a "closed" canon, and one in which there was no dispute between Jews and Christians
 - b) Second, Jude does not use the normal practice of saying "Scripture says..."
 - (1) No, "it is written"
 - (2) None of that
 - (3) We also find other writers in the NT that quote sources outside the Bible
 - (a) Paul did it twice as we saw in our study of Acts
 - (b) So Jude's use of 1 Enoch is similar to my quoting Yoda from the Star Wars movies
 - i) Is Yoda inspired by God? No
 - ii) Can Yoda hit on wisdom or truth that can help us see clearer? Certainly

II. Now, back to Jude's message

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A. Why Jude quotes this prophecy is understandable because it reinforces two key points about the false teachers

1. They are ungodly
 - a) The word is used four times in a very short space
 - b) It's almost as if a child wrote this section, being unable to think up different words
 - c) This word may have been what drew Jude to the quote
 - d) At least there is no ambiguity in what Jude is saying - these people are ungodly
2. The false teachers will have to deal with God's judgement
3. One reason this is referred to as prophecy is because it speaks of the coming judgement of the Lord

B. In the previous two paragraphs Jude refers first to tradition or history, and then applies what he draws out to the false teachers

1. So we find the words "these men" again to point us back to the false teachers

C. Our verses open by saying, "Enoch, the seventh from Adam..."

1. We need to understand that the Jews counted inclusively
2. That is to say they included every person in the line: Adam, Seth, Enosh, Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, Enoch

D. It is not clear if Jude meant that Enoch (the book not the man) was prophesying about these men also (in addition to the wicked in his day) or Enoch (the book) prophesied about these men in addition to other texts

1. The NIV omits the "also" suggesting that he means other texts point at these men
2. "Like other New Testament writers, Jude assumes that the prophecies find their fulfillment in Christ and the church he founded. They can therefore apply the words of the prophets to their own circumstances.¹"

E. The theme of the prophecy is judgement

1. In context it is clear that the judgement is negative
2. However, the judgement is aimed at all of the ungodly
 - a) They are being judged for their ungodly actions
 - b) But also for their ungodly speech
 - (1) These sins of speech were not likely in the original quote - Jude added it
 - (2) He probably added it because of the sins in which they were erring

F. Jude continues to elaborate on the sins of speech

¹ Douglas J. Moo, *2 Peter, Jude*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996) 269.

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1. He calls these men “grumblers and faultfinders”
 - a) Who are they grumbling about?
 - b) The background suggests that they are grumbling against God Himself
 - (1) The word used is often used in the OT for Israel grumbling against God for bringing them into the desert
 - (2) It’s possible, given that they pervert God’s grace into license to sin, that they grumbled against God’s laws that restricted their freedom to do what they want
 - (a) We see this all the time nowadays
 2. Jude then goes back to the ungodly acts at the end of verse 16 by saying, “they follow their own evil desires”
 - a) As we have seen in the past, those evil desires may be linked to sexual lust and greed
 3. The third criticism about the false teachers is “they boast about themselves”
 - a) This interpretation may be a little too narrow
 - b) A literal translation reads, “their mouths speak haughty or bombastic things”
 - (1) That could mean boasting about themselves
 - (2) In context it seems more likely that they are speaking arrogantly about, toward or against God
 4. The last criticism goes back to their greed, briefly referred to in verse 11
 - a) Jude uses an idiomatic phrase that denotes showing favoritism
 - b) We do not know the form this greed motivated favoritism took
 - c) Perhaps they were only teaching the rich because they could pay well
 - (1) That was a common problem back in ancient times
- III. Some ways we can apply these verses to our lives
- A. We, as Christians, need to be aware that Christ’s judgement is coming
1. Too many people think that it will not happen - in fact that may have been what these false teachers were thinking
 - a) They think God is too loving to bring judgement
 - (1) Yet they forget that God has already brought judgement in the past
 - (a) Think Noah and the flood
 - (b) Think Israel invaded by foreign armies
 - (c) Think famines and flood
 - (d) Think Lot’s wife, etc
 - (2) They also forget that for God to be unloving He would be judging us without us knowing what we were being judged for

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- (a) In other words, God did the loving thing by telling us in advance what would please Him and the only thing that matters - faith
- (b) An unloving God would make the waters muddy, He would change what matters most on a whim, He would not make clear what He was looking for
- (3) On judgement day, no one can stand there and say, "God never told me what He expected!"
 - (a) Yes He did
 - (b) It's call His Word, the Bible
- b) Some think that judgement will not happen because it has been so long and we never see things like God's judgement as it happened in the Bible
 - (1) The ground never opens up and swallows people - like Korah
 - (2) God doesn't send fire from heaven to show that is He is alive and real
 - (3) Ever wonder why that is???
 - (a) The Bible says that God is being patient so that all may have the chance to come to Him
 - (b) Also the judgement is not active the way it used to be because of the change of the nature of God's relationship to His people
 - i) Israel was a nation-state in which God was showing the world who He was through them
 - ii) The vast majority of the judgement in the OT was leveled against Israel
 - (1) Yes there is the flood - pre-Israel
 - (2) Yes, there is Jonah and the Assyrians
 - (3) But the majority was against Israel
 - iii) Today, we, the church are covered by the blood of Christ
 - (1) The sins are paid for
 - (2) But that does not mean that we cannot fall under judgement too
 - (a) 1 Cor. 11 says that there are some who "fell asleep" by partaking in communion unworthily
 - (b) God does still judge even today, but not to the same extent, and in the same visible fashion as He did with Israel
- 2. What does the passage say about the judgement
 - a) First of all it will be personal
 - (1) God Himself will be the judge

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- (a) It will not be famines, or floods this time
 - (b) It will be standing before the Creator as He holds up the standard to see if you have met it
 - (2) This shows how serious the event really is
 - (a) Ever have some boss, three levels up come to your office to oversee the final stages of an important project?
 - (b) You are getting a sense of how important things are
 - (3) The Lord will not judge alone
 - (a) He will be with thousands upon thousands of His holy ones
 - i) Holy ones often is taken for angels
 - ii) But in other places in Scripture (Rev. 19, Col. 3) the people of God will come with the Lord to judge the nations
 - (b) Over the centuries, the people of God have suffered at the hands of the ungodly - one day that will all be reversed as the godly will be the ones receiving the blessings
 - b) Second, the judgement is universal
 - (1) It will be against all the ungodly
 - (2) None will escape the judgement
 - (3) It has rightly been said that the first time Jesus came, He came as the Savior - the next time He comes, He comes as the Judge
 - (a) Personally I would rather embrace Him as Savior, than meet Him as Judge
 - (b) This is also displayed in Jesus coming as the Lamb of God, and finally as the Lion of Judah
 - i) Savior
 - ii) Judge and King
 - c) Third it will be a just judgement
 - (1) There are no human weaknesses to get in the way
 - (2) There is no jury, no court of appeals - there is just the Just and Righteous Judge
- B. All of this, again, should be a great motivator for evangelism
1. Too often this concept of judgement is pushed far into the future in our minds
 - a) Yet if you read the Bible, the NT Christians believed it would come any day
 - b) The coming judgement was a present reality to them, and so it should be to us
 - (1) I'll admit, I have been a product of my Christian upbringing on this one

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- (2)The reality of judgement has never pressed hard on my heart, and I am asking the Lord that it will
- 2. We all seem to know that people do need the Lord
 - a) Yet when push comes to shove, we have allowed the comfort of an American Christianity into lulling us into slumber concerning this imminent reality
 - b)If the judgement is real, and is imminent, then we need to be doing all we can for those around us that do not know Christ
- C.All of this talk of judgement can be a scary thing if we do not have the right understanding of Scripture
 - 1. If you are in Christ, you have passed from death to life, from judgement to reward
 - a) So if you are in Christ, you will not face God as Judge in the end, you will face Him as Father
 - b)Christ's coming should fill you with joy because of all that it means
 - (1)Deliverance from sin
 - (2)Deliverance from temptation
 - (3)Deliverance from illness, disease and death
 - 2. But if you are in Christ, the issue you need to deal with is not rejection or condemnation from God, it is, "What have you done with the gifts God has given you?"
 - a) Let's start with first ridding ourselves of ungodliness
 - (1)We could read Jude 14-16 and get smug thinking that we will not be judged because we are not listed with the ungodly
 - (a)True, we are not
 - (2)But the fact is we still struggle with ungodliness in all kinds of different ways - even though we are redeemed
 - (3)These verses should spur us on to ask about the ungodliness we still have, to face it head on, and to declare all out war on it in our own lives
 - (a)It is a holy discontent
 - (b)That drive that while we are not one of the "ungodly" we still are not like God - and that should push us forward to become more like Him
 - b)What ungodliness?
 - (1)Well the word is broad and can refer to any thinking or action that does not line up with God's desire
 - (2)But one of the things that Jude zeros in on is the sin of pride when he speaks of the false teachers boasting or speaking haughty things
 - c)Pride

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- (1) You could argue that pride is the root of all sin
 - (a) Ever since the snake came along and said, “He knows you will be like Him”, man has struggled with pride - wanting to be like God
 - i) Pretending we know what God knows
 - ii) Pretending we are in control - which is an illusion if ever there was one
 - (b) We see this in a society that boasts of its accomplishments in science, medicine, and so on
 - i) They make less and less room for God
 - ii) Or worse, the god they allow to stay in the picture is a god of their own creation
 - (1) On this point, do I have to remind you what the Bible says
 - (2) It laughs at those that make god in their image (in the Bible, out of wood or stone)
- (2) Sadly, too many Christians have re-created God in their own image, rather than allowing God to be God
 - (a) They get embarrassed at who God says He is
 - (b) So they hide the parts they don't like, or soften on the sins they want to hold on to
 - (c) Allow me to give two examples that may make you squirm
 - i) I am a Calvinist - meaning I believe in the sovereignty of God, and that He has the right to choose
 - (1) Many argue against Calvinism because they cannot see God sending anyone to hell because God is too loving
 - (2) If that argument came from Scripture at least you have a basis for authority, but most people make that argument from their own concept of who they think God is
 - (a) They usually do not scour Scripture to understand who God says He is
 - (b) They latch on their favorite verse(s)
 - (c) They create their own version of God
 - ii) Second example: Western Christians sadly struggle with God's call to share their material things
 - (1) In defense, I think this has changed some in recent years, but we have a ways to go yet

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(2) Yet too many Christians, in their worldview, in their politics argue not from a biblical worldview but from a materialistic worldview

d) Let me return to the question, "What have you done with the gifts God has given you?" - and then we will be done

(1) In this view that God will come as Judge to judge the ungodly, what about the godly?

(2) Our judgement is about if we have used

(a) Our material wealth

(b) Our spiritual gifts

(c) Our knowledge

(d) Our, dare I say it...time for God's glory

(3) We need some serious self-evaluation

(a) Because while their judgement is heaven or hell

(b) Ours is rewards or lack thereof

(c) Sure you can get into heaven without being rewarded

i) But wouldn't you rather have something to give back to your king?

ii) Wouldn't you rather, as Scripture says, "store up for yourself, treasures in heaven"