

Episode 16: Jude 17-19

In our last episode we jumped back to **Jude 14-15** from **Jude 16** and explored some amazing insights found in the prophecy of Enoch, the 7th from Adam. The **Code** gave us some fascinating revelations through numbers and names. Today, we will pick back up in **Jude 17**.

Previously Warned

Jude 17-19

But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they were saying to you, "In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts." These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit.

We have been addressing the boasting and arrogance of apostate teachers and the Spirit is clear, we must ignore the boasts of these apostates and instead choose to listen to what the apostles of our Lord Jesus said.

What's an Apostle

Technically, an apostle is a title that refers to one who has been sent with a mission. But to qualify as an apostle, one had to be a believer who was an eyewitness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, like Peter, John and Paul.¹ And, in those early days, it did not take long before false prophets and teachers began to appear claiming to be apostles, and there were even false letters passed about which claimed to be from the apostles.² So, the test of authenticity for the truth became what the original apostles had taught. In fact, when the New Testament was first being compiled, one of the first tests of authenticity was whether a letter was from an apostle or someone strongly associated with an apostle. Apostolic teaching was and still is the test of truth.

Peter, Paul, and John warned us saying that these apostates will come with the intention of destruction; and now they are here.³ The Spirit is telling us that we are to take this threat seriously. The Spirit is drawing some hard lines that make people uncomfortable since these lines are drawn within the body of believers; and, for the most part, we just do not like to make those kinds of distinctions. But as we studied in **Jude 13-14**, we **CAN** make these distinctions and we **MUST** make these distinctions.

These apostates have a purpose not only for their own lives but for yours. Being worldly minded and devoid of the Spirit, they seek the glorification of the **ME**, they seek the satisfaction of the **ME**, they seek the honor of the **ME**, they seek the pleasure of the **ME**, and they seek everything **but the death** of the **ME**.

And, what makes it so difficult is that they come from within the church, and they know how to act

¹ See **Acts 1:21-22; 1 Corinthians 9:1**

² **2 Corinthians 11:12-15; Revelation 2:2**

³ **2 Peter 3:3, 1 Timothy 4:2; 2 Timothy 3:1-9; 1 John 2:18**

and sound like a true believer. Therefore, knowing whether they are truly apostates or just someone struggling with their faith is difficult. Especially since all that they say is communicated in a way that sounds so right to our ears as it is filled with all manner of *instinctual religious wisdom*. But we must beware. We must live so needy for Jesus that we substitute our wisdom for His wisdom and our way of thinking for His way of thinking. That is the only way we are going to know how to accurately make distinctions. **But keep in mind, our safety is always found in the “substitution principle” whereby we seek His wisdom for our own.**

The litmus test, however, cannot be just words alone, for their words are deceptive. We must be willing and open to truthfully examine the fruit from their lives. Furthermore, we must keep in mind, that even the man we call the Antichrist will rise to power from within the temple of God,⁴ from within the Church.⁵ And that should not catch us off-guard, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore, it should not surprise us that his servants disguise themselves as servants of righteousness and, with many amazing sounding words, have wormed their way into fellowship-after-fellowship and are even found to lead fellowship-after-fellowship.⁶

And what is amazing is how quickly those who follow in the ways of Cain, Balaam, and Korah adopt good Christian lingo about being in the Spirit, living by grace, abiding in the **New Creation**, walking by faith, being a family, and living in community, and so on. Their feigned adoption of the truth makes it extremely uncomfortable to confront them and come against them, especially since it makes the one confronting come across as arrogant, controlling, and judgmental (even “Korah” like—one who wants to supplant their authority).

Nevertheless, we do have a job to protect the body of Christ from apostasy. Therefore, there will be times when we need to choose to run interference to protect others from harm.

We must also be very aware of the fact that the enemy never stops trying to destroy what God is doing in His body. His purpose is to steal, kill, and destroy.⁷ And like a hungry lion, the devil, and his demons, stalk believers waiting for the opportunity to pounce.⁸ Therefore, we must resist him firm in our faith never letting fear take a grip over our lives, especially the fear of man.⁹

We must continue to shepherd one another. We must continue to guard each other. We must be willing to lead each other and to follow. We must be willing to stick together as a family in Jesus and fight for each other. We must be willing to continue to fight against all the enemies within our soul (especially our religious *flesh* that is drawn to all manner of instinctual religious wisdom) that work together to tempt us to turn our backs on our neediness for Jesus and sets us up to be dependent upon men with boastful words.

And, for those who have enrolled in **Pain Central** and have walked the pathway of death and the destruction of the **ME** and have made it through the major battles, we must be willing to help those who have just enrolled and are starting to fight. Continue to move forward as the Spirit leads and never relent

⁴ **2 Thessalonians 2:4**

⁵ **1 Corinthians 3:16, 17, 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:21**

⁶ **2 Corinthians 11:14-15**

⁷ **John 10:10**

⁸ **1 Peter 5:8**

⁹ **See Isaiah 51:7,12-13**

in your own battle, but also, be willing to help fight alongside your brothers and sisters who have crossed over into the Promised Land and have dug down deep in their soul and made the choice to go to war against all the enemies of wrong belief and unbelief that reside within their soul. They will need the help.

In addition, the best way to encourage those who have yet to enter the Promised Land is to show them that there is victory in Jesus, for He always leads us in triumph.¹⁰ Show them that they do not need to be afraid and that they do not need to hold on any longer to that which is dead and dying. And we do this by choosing to walk in the **unrestrained freedom** that **Yahweh** has given – a life where the only law He asks of us to obey is the law which He performs for us. This law is satisfied through *agape* love, which is produced when Jesus lives in us and loves through us.¹¹ As always, our avenue of victory and success in our spiritual lives is through substitution. And we must never forget, there is no fear in *agape* love.¹²

Notice that it says that these apostates are scoffers or mockers. One of the strategies of Satan has always been to mock the things of God. The scoffing is usually quite personal, utilizes a lot of *instinctual religious wisdom* (so it sounds right), utilizes shame, and they compare-and-contrast with the way things are normally done in Christianity. But ultimately their words and deeds are not directed at helping people come to know **WHY** they can trust themselves completely to **Yahweh** and **HOW** to trust themselves completely to **Yahweh**. Rather, they default to all the things we can do for God and should be doing for Him.

The reason being is that their ultimate unstated purpose is to create division with anyone and any message that will threaten all that they love – the fruits of Cain, Balaam, and Korah. Accordingly, they will attempt to wrap others up in their rules and their *instinctual religious wisdom*, just like the pharisees of old.

This *instinctual religious wisdom* always takes away from the grace of God, adds to the grace of God, elevates the **ME**, and dooms others to a life of spiritual and moral frustration, failure, and bondage in an iron cage of sin and shame. If they can get a person to make their home in such a cage, they will have accomplished their mission of division, as another person becomes divided from their true life in Christ.

The Spirit has given us this warning because He wants us to draw close together and resist the enemy's attempts to introduce lies into the body of Christ. He wants us to be on guard and alert, watching out for each other so no one is captivated by the fables, misdirection, and seduction of these people who will lead us in wrong belief and unbelief because they simply cannot lead us in the truth. They may be able to talk about the truth (as part of their seduction), but they cannot lead us in the truth.

**THEY CAN ONLY LEAD US IN THEIR OWN INSTINCTUAL RELIGIOUS WISDOM BECAUSE
THEY CANNOT LEAD ANYONE TO A PLACE THEY HAVE NEVER BEEN AND ARE
UNWILLING TO GO.**

Remember, they may look like a cloud that will bring rain, but they are dry. They may seem to be a

¹⁰ **1 Corinthians 15:57; 2 Corinthians 2:14**

¹¹ **John 15:9-14; 1 John 3:11, 23; 1 John 4:7-8**

¹² **1 John 4:18**

tree that will have just the right fruit, but they are dead (double dead at that). They will seem to be a safe harbor, but they are just craggy rocks that will destroy and shipwreck our faith. They do not belong in the family because they are not a part of the family of God.

The Example

Let us look at **3 John**, a little book that like **Jude** is usually looked over or at best skimmed. But it gives us a very practical example of how John dealt with apostasy in the church and how he made judgments based on the fruits, and then acted upon it with authority.

3 John 1-4

This letter is from John, the elder. I am writing to Gaius, my dear friend, whom I love in the truth. Dear friend, I hope all is well with you and that you are as healthy in body as you are strong in spirit. Some of the traveling teachers recently returned and made me very happy by telling me about your faithfulness and that you are living according to the truth. I could have no greater joy than to hear that my children are following the truth.

John starts with a little greeting rejoicing that his friend is living in the truth. We know that feeling of great joy. When we hear stories that others are making choices to be found in grace and to live in the truth, we also rejoice.

3 John 5-11

Dear friend, you are being faithful to God when you care for the traveling teachers who pass through, even though they are strangers to you. They have told the church here of your loving friendship. Please continue providing for such teachers in a manner that pleases God. For they are traveling for the Lord, and they accept nothing from people who are not believers. So, we ourselves should support them so that we can be their partners as they teach the truth.

I wrote to the church about this, but Diotrephes, who loves to be the leader, refuses to have anything to do with us. When I come, I will report some of the things he is doing and the evil accusations he is making against us. Not only does he refuse to welcome the traveling teachers, he also tells others not to help them. And when they do help, he puts them out of the church. Dear friend, don't let this bad example influence you. **Follow only what is good.** Remember that those who do good prove that they are God's children, and those who do evil prove that they do not know God.

John first points out what is true and what is honorable (taking care of those who are going about preaching the gospel), and then he immediately addresses the way Diotrephes, whom he calls out by name, is opposing the truth. Diotrephes loves to lead, and he loves to divide, he loves to control, he is consumed by greed, and he accomplishes his ungodly task by making evil accusations against John and the other leaders within their community.

The enemy follows a consistent battle plan. However, John makes it clear that Diotrephes is an

apostate. He does not love to do the things of God; but he loves to do evil and prove thereby that he does not know God, that the Spirit of God is not in him, and that he is an enemy of the truth. Despite his words, his actions prove that he loves only himself.

John follows in the example that both Jesus and Paul set in terms of calling out, by name even, the religious leaders who are leading people to themselves and not to **Yahweh**.¹³ As scary as it may be, we must not be afraid; we must be willing to do the same. As John says, we must—yes, it is a command—follow only that which is good. And since only God is good¹⁴, we must only follow God as He lives in and through our leaders and not follow those who lead because they have taken authority, have a position, have a title, have a pulpit, have a degree, or have the system in the palm of their hands.

*“Our responsibility is never to oppose the truth, but to stand for the truth at all times”*¹⁵ and never relent, no matter who is opposing us and who is trying to take authority over our lives. Our authority is the Word of God and the teachings of the apostles who have warned us of “these people.” Let us give heed to the warning of the Spirit of God.

Summary of Jude 17-19

Jude warns of apostasy brought about by people within the church who look like believers, talk like believers, and even act like believers, but who really do not know God, but only act like they know God. They are worldly minded and devoid of the Spirit. They are what we might call “soulish” people, they have let their lamps go dry, and have only their *instinctive religious wisdom* to guide their life. The problem is that these very people worm their way into the church and spread their corruption to others creating division. They thrive off the power, authority, and structure provided to them by the religion of Christianity. They pervert the grace of God and scoff at the truth.

THE MESSAGE OF THE SPIRIT IS SIMPLE. WE HAVE AIDED AND ABETTED IN THIS APOSTASY.

We have allowed “these people” to have their place amongst us. We have been too afraid, too needy, too wanting, too unaware, too wrapped up in religious rules and requirements regarding authority and submission, and we have let them have a foothold in our lives. We have enabled them to continue. We have given them a platform, position, title, authority, and a structure in which to operate.

But we should have seen, we should have known, we should have been aware of the fruit that was being produced from their lives. Like Jesus, John, and Paul, we should have acted regardless of the consequences. **“These people” cause divisions**, they destroy; it is what they naturally do since they are worldly minded and devoid of the Spirit of God.

¹³ See **Matthew 23:13-36; Galatians 2:11-21** where Paul called Peter out by name.

¹⁴ **Matthew 19:17; Mark 10:18**

¹⁵ **2 Corinthians 13:8**