

- Few studies of scripture combine so few verses with so much intrigue and mystery as the book of Jude
 - The letter is only 25 verses, so it's a very quick read, yet it's one of the least often studied books of scripture
 - Jude's letter invites wonder and confusion due mainly to its frequent references to extra-Biblical material
 - Yet the author makes little attempt to explain his fleeting references to strange and marvelous things
 - So generations of Christians have neglected the letter, largely out of ignorance
 - Still, something we give the least attention can often be the thing that most deserves examination...like that check engine light on your dash
 - All this is ironic, because Jude's purpose in writing was to warn the church against overlooking false teachers who had arrived in the church
 - A few years, perhaps a decade, earlier, Peter had written to Jewish believers in the churches of the Diaspora
 - The Diaspora refers to ten Greek cities outside Palestine where Jews settled after Rome conquered the nation
 - Collectively, these cities held the bulk of Jewish believers in the early church
 - Our NT includes five letters written to these early Christians
 - The letters of Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter and Jude comprise the Jewish Epistles
 - In his second letter, Peter warned the churches that wicked men, false teachers, were going to come to them seeking to corrupt the faith
 - Peter began his second chapter of that letter in this way:

2Pet. 2:1 **But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.**

2Pet. 2:2 **Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned;**

- In Jude's day, those false teachers had in fact arrived in the Diaspora, just as Peter predicted
- So Jude writes to encourage the churches to recognize and respond to the fulfillment of Peter's warning
- Jude's letter shares another feature common to all the Jewish epistles: he borrows liberally from Jewish history and writings
 - The Jewish people knew the story of their nation intimately, since it was recorded in

scripture

- But depending on which school of Jewish teaching they experienced, their understanding of the meaning of that history could vary widely
- So the NT Jewish letters commonly draw from that history to make theological application, and Jude does this extensively
- So to understand the letter properly, we must spend some time in places revisiting that history ourselves
- But as I said, Jude's letter is unique in the NT, and in fact it is arguably the most remarkable of the five Jewish Epistles
 - First, the structure of the letter is poetic
 - Jude displays a remarkable love for triplets...and I'm not speaking of his dating life
 - Jude writes using triads (i.e., thoughts expressed in threes) throughout his letter, for a total of 14 triads in just 25 verses
 - Those triads offer a convenient way to organize our study of the letter, like an outline with 14 points
 - Secondly, Jude is the only book of NT scripture sourced by someone who was not considered an apostle
 - Jude specifically excludes himself from the company of such men, as we'll see in v.17
 - Now neither Luke nor Mark were apostles either, but Luke's material was sourced by Paul, while Mark's material was sourced by Peter
 - And all other letters were written directly by Apostles
 - So Apostles were the source for the content in all NT books save Jude's
 - And yet the early church fathers universally accepted the authority of this letter, considering it inspired
 - Jude had a ministry as a traveling evangelist, accompanied by his wife, according to Paul in 1 Cor 9:5
 - Perhaps he was also accompanied by an Apostle or had some other claim to apostolic review
 - In fact, Jude had a close family connection to an Apostle, who may have been his muse: his brother James
 - And that brings me to the third distinction for Jude's letter: Jude was one of only two NT authors with a family connection to Jesus
 - He was a half-brother of Jesus, and a full brother of James, the author of the letter by that name
 - Because of his relationship to Jesus, Jude's sons and grandsons, were considered descendants of the House of David and a threat to Roman rule
 - When the Roman Emperor Domitian heard they were proclaiming a new kingdom, he arrested them

- He suspected they were trying to re-establish a Jewish Kingdom in place of Roman rule
- Greek historians record that Jude's grandsons defended themselves by showing the Caesar their rough hands from a life of farming
 - Which proved they were merely working peasants, not nobility seeking a kingdom in this world
 - They were men awaiting a kingdom in Heaven
- Fourthly, Jude's letter is unique for the way it quotes from another letter of scripture
 - Jude quotes no less than thirteen times from the letter of 2 Peter
 - If he had quoted Peter anymore, we would have been forced to call this the third letter of Peter
 - Jude quotes so much because his purpose in writing is to tell the Jewish believers, "Peter told you so!"
 - Peter warned believers that false teachers would come in the future
 - And now that those false teachers were working their way through the Diaspora, Jude writes to say these are the men Peter warned you about
 - We'll look at that in more detail as well
 - Finally, Jude is the only author of scripture to quote from the apocryphal literature: ancient books of wisdom often portrayed as inspired texts
 - Jude quotes from a book called the Assumption of Moses and another called the Book of Enoch
 - Jude's quotes are points of controversy, since the apocryphal writings are, in fact, NOT scripture
 - These extra-biblical works are routinely filled with error and myth and contradictions
 - They are particularly dangerous because some traditions try to pass them off as inspired, thus introducing error and heresy into the canon of scripture
 - So Jude's decision to incorporate quotes from Jewish apocryphal writings causes some Christians to squirm and ask whether those books are therefore to be considered inspired works
 - But as we'll see, Jude's choice to incorporate some details doesn't mean he was endorsing these works
 - As we encounter these quotes in the letter, we'll examine each one, in turn
 - Moving to the text...as when studying any epistle, this study must begin with some background on the author, the audience and the circumstances in which it was written
 - Which leads us to the opening verses of the letter and the first and second triads
 - You'll notice there is only one chapter in Jude (one of five books in the Bible with a single chapter)

Jude 1 Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ:
Jude 2 May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you.

- First, Jude is not this author's name
 - His name is actually Judah or Judas in Greek; Jude is a contrived English version of the name
 - The name Judas has come to carry a certain negative connotation as a result of Judas Iscariot
 - So when the first English translators came to the letter of Judas, they elected to translate his name to Jude to distance this author from Judas, the traitor
 - Also, there is an apocryphal book called the Gospel of Judas
 - This is perhaps another reason why the translators may have chosen to change the name
 - The change was purely contrived, yet out of respect for tradition and familiarity, I'll stick with the name Jude
 - Jude identifies himself in the traditional way of most epistle writers, as a bond-servant of Christ
 - A bond-servant is the word *doulos* in Greek, which is literally the word for slave
 - It refers to a particular kind of slave, one who has entered into his arrangement freely and joyfully
 - And once the arrangement is established, the relationship becomes permanent
 - So Jude is identifying himself as a man bound to serving Jesus Christ for life
- It's always fascinating readers that neither Jude nor James chose to identify themselves to their readers by their human relationship to Jesus
 - You might suppose that having such an intimate family connection to Jesus would have been something these two men wore like a badge of honor
 - They could have leveraged that association to gain added respect and authority
 - Certainly we can see something like that happening in the church today, can't we?
 - Consider that somewhere in the world today, there are men and women who are the direct descendants of Joseph and Mary through their other children
 - If someone could trace their family relationships back to that family, wouldn't they be using that for personal benefit?
 - Almost certainly
 - So why did James and Jude completely ignore their family connection to Jesus?
 - Because neither of these men came to know their own brother as Messiah until after His resurrection
 - And though they grew up with Jesus in the same home, they never believed in

His claims to be Messiah

- We see this in John's Gospel

[John 7:5](#) For not even His brothers were believing in Him.

- It still blows my mind to imagine what Jude must have thought when he first came to faith in Christ, his earthly half brother
 - To realize that the older brother you had grown up around was actually the God Who created the universe and all it contains...can you even imagine?
 - We know younger siblings always suffer the indignity of comparisons to the achievement of older brothers, but this is ridiculous...
- We can be sure James' and Jude's delayed understanding of Who Jesus was didn't give them added credibility within the body of Christ
 - Quite the opposite: it likely was a point of shame for both of them
 - Especially since their deeds were captured in John Chapter 7, where they mocked their brother's claim to be Messiah
 - So these men correctly set aside any claim to being special or worthy of greater respect owing to their association with Jesus
- Instead, they made reference to their spiritual relationships
 - Whatever earthly relationship they had prior to coming to faith in the Messiah became utterly meaningless the moment they were born again
 - This was not some show of false modesty on their parts
 - This is consistent with the Bible's teaching on our identity as believers
 - When we become followers of Jesus Christ, we are born again spiritually
 - Just as our physical birth gained us relationships with parents and siblings, so did our spiritual rebirth
 - Moreover, scripture says that the relationships we gain through our spiritual birth take precedence over any earthly relationships
 - Even Jesus Himself, when asked to give preference to his earthly mother and unbelieving brothers who had joined the crowds, said this:

[Luke 8:21](#) But He answered and said to them, “My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it.”

- So Jude and James made no reference to their earthly connection to Jesus
 - As far as these men were concerned, their earthly relationship with Jesus was long gone and no longer relevant
 - The only relationship they had that mattered was as a bondservant to the Lord, the Creator

- And so it is for us as well
 - Our identity in this world is the same as our identity to come: we are servants of Christ
 - We may hold other affiliations for a time...
 - Longhorns, Aggies, Texans...
 - We may take pride in our nationality, or our cultural heritage, or our past achievements
 - But never let those things define you or overshadow your identity in Christ
 - Our loyalty is to the Lord, our country is not of this world, and our wealth and inheritance is not found on earth
- Since we're talking about identities, why did Jude call himself the brother of James?
 - Because as we said earlier, Jude was not an apostle
 - But his brother had become the leader of the church in Jerusalem, and as such, the leader of the Jewish Church
 - It's likely that Jude was an elder or other church leader under James' authority
 - So mentioning James gave Jude some additional credibility in writing to the church
 - Plus, I wonder if he spent most of his life distancing himself from the "other" Judas?
- Looking deeper at the first verse, you'll notice it ends with Jude's first triad describing his audience of Christians
 - Jude says we are called, beloved by the Father, and kept for Jesus
 - Jude neatly references the different roles of the Three Persons of the Godhead concerning our salvation
 - First, the call of the Gospel is the work of the Holy Spirit
 - No one becomes a Christian unless and until the Holy Spirit draws us to the message of the Gospel

1Cor. 12:3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus is accursed”; and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.

- Secondly, the reason we even get called in the first place is because of the Father's love for us and His decision to demonstrate His love to us

John 6:65 And He was saying, “For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.”

- The Father's love is the basis for the entire plan of redemption

- And our opportunity to be a part of it, Jude reminds us, is evidence in itself of God's love
- When we face one of those dark moments in life when we wonder if God hears and cares, remember Jude's description
- The very fact that we are included in the family of God is proof of the Father's love for us
- Finally, we are kept for Jesus
 - Jesus is the focus of everything in Creation
 - You weren't saved for your own sake
 - Your salvation wasn't a gift for you...it was the Father's gift to His Son
 - We are the Bride for the Groom
 - Being kept by the Spirit and the Father, for the Son
 - Remember, it's all about Jesus, not about you and me
- Next Jude gives his second triad in his salutation
 - Once again Jude succinctly sums up the gifts God bestows upon believers as a result of God's plan of salvation
 - First, by our relationship in Christ we received mercy
 - This is always the first thing we think about as we consider the benefits of membership in the Christian club
 - Mercy from God's judgment, mercy from the wrath of God
 - Mercy from an eternity spent in Hell
 - This is the chief selling point when we share the Gospel: receiving God's mercy
 - The mercy of God through Christ makes every other benefit possible
 - Following mercy, we experienced peace
 - Knowing that we have been reconciled with God because of the sacrifice Christ offered in Himself on the cross, leaves us sleeping at night without fear of where we'll be when we die
 - We live in hope for eternity
 - We live knowing that this world is the worst we will experience
 - An assurance of Heaven...a peace unbelievers never experience
- Finally, we find love of a different kind
 - We are granted the capacity to love in the way God loves: self-sacrificially, unconditionally
 - The love of God becomes a part of who we are
 - And the love of God multiplies in us as we devote ourselves to coming to a greater knowledge of Him in His word
 - And as we devote ourselves to applying what we learn by the Spirit
 - These gifts are spiritual gifts, spiritual rewards we receive

- But through the mystery of spirit and flesh working together, the Lord manifests these spiritual gifts in our physical nature and experience
- We receive spiritual mercy, yet it yields in us greater capacity for kindness and mercy toward other sinners
- We receive a spiritual peace that passes understanding, but it enables us to walk without fear in the face of persecution and trials
- We receive the spiritual gift of God's love, but it manifests within us as the fruits of the Spirit, so that we will show God's love to others
- Finally, Jude states his purpose in writing

Jude 3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

- Jude, like all the epistle writers, likes to introduce a next section in his letter with the word "beloved" (John does this a lot also)
 - He says he had plans originally to write to them on a different topic: concerning their common salvation
 - The word in Greek for common is *koinos*, which means common property
 - Today, we might say public property
 - In other words, Jude was to write to the Jewish Christians in the Diaspora about the nature of the salvation they all shared
 - What was Jude's interest concerning their common salvation?
 - Well, we don't know because he changed his topic
 - Perhaps he was going to echo some of the themes of Hebrews, explaining how the Old Covenant gives way to the New Covenant
 - In the end, it's doesn't matter, because the Spirit wanted Jude to talk about other things
 - I think that's our lesson to take from Jude's change of heart
 - When we're operating under the Spirit, listening to the Lord, working in His will...our plans will naturally change from time to time
 - And our understanding of Scripture will change as well, since one goes hand in hand with the other
 - If our understanding of scripture, and our desires in ministry and our plans for accomplishing those desires NEVER change, what does that say about our willingness to hear from the Spirit?
 - What are the odds that our first inclinations were 100% in line with the Spirit's desires? Probably pretty long odds
 - More likely, our unwillingness to change plans is a reflection of our unwillingness to listen to the Lord

- Jude listened, so he changed plans
- His new plan was to write an appeal to the church so they would take action
 - Jude wants the church to contend earnestly for the faith
 - Contend earnestly is a single word in Greek meaning to struggle or fight or resist on behalf of something or someone
 - And the fight in this case is for the faith
 - How do you fight for faith? Isn't faith something that comes into the heart of a person by divine favor (grace)?
 - We can't fight to establish faith, right?
 - Yes, this tells us that the fight Jude wants to encourage isn't a struggle to win souls
 - It's a fight to preserve the meaning of the Gospel message
 - It's a fight over doctrine and practice, over truth
 - It's a fight against false teaching
 - Jude hopes to stimulate his readers to fight against distortion and falsehoods creeping into the church
 - This is truly a fight, one that involves a form of hostility against others
 - Not armed hostility, but it's a real battle nonetheless
 - Paul calls it the "good fight" and speaks of "keeping the faith" through a struggle
- The struggle is to maintain the faith as it was once handed down to the saints
 - There is a very important principle expressed in that phrase
 - The faith, or we could say the content of the message of salvation, is something that came once
 - With the coming of Christ and the fulfillment of His work on the cross, it is finished
 - All that is needed to be known has arrived
 - As the writer of Hebrews said:

Heb. 1:1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,

Heb. 1:2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

- To anyone or any school of thought or any group that teaches there is something missing in our understanding of Christianity, scripture says they are wrong
 - The faith that saves, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, was delivered in its entirety "once"
 - This moment was collectively the period of time when the Lord walked the Earth, and in the time immediately following when the men He appointed as Apostles

delivered the message He gave them

- Remember, the word apostle means one sent with a message
- That message was the faith, the Gospel delivered once for all
- Many have tried to come along since that time and make a claim that the original church missed something
 - The gnostics and Judaizers made that claim
 - The Catholic Church has made that claim over the centuries and continues to make it today
 - Mormons make that claim; JW's make that claim; Christian Science makes that claim; many others have made that claim
 - But scripture says that all we need to understand came through Jesus and His apostles once for all
- Secondly, it has been handed down, Jude says
 - The handing down refers to the Apostles' teaching, and that teaching becoming canonized and shared among the faithful
 - It's a reference to scripture and to the power of the Holy Spirit to protect and deliver God's word to ears that will hear, across both time and distance
 - It is self-evidently God's plan that the Gospel be shared, that it move, that it be handed down, in its original form
 - And the word of God is the means by which the faith is kept pure, having been once delivered
 - When you hear churches or pastors extolling the virtues of studying God's word...
 - Or pastors like me arguing for the exposition of scripture from the pulpit (as opposed to other forms of preaching)...
 - It's because of the principle of the faith having been once delivered and now handed down
 - We are all called to engage in a fight for the faith, but before we can fight for it, we have to know what "it" is
 - And if we are Biblically illiterate, we are hopelessly unarmed in any battle over the doctrines and precepts of our faith
- Every Christian is an intended recipient for this letter, and it might as easily have been written in the twenty first century rather than the first century
 - The faith of our church is as much under attack - if not more so - than the faith in Jude's day
 - The attacks range from subtle to full force
 - They come from people inside and outside the church
 - They take many forms, but they all work in a similar fashion
 - They seek to introduce new thoughts, new requirements or attach new

meaning to the faith once delivered

- Then with these new thoughts, they reinterpret - or completely ignore - traditional views of scripture
 - And the end is always the same: the Gospel is no longer a message of our sin, Christ's righteousness, and the need to reconcile with God
- In its place, the "faith" becomes a promise of wealth, health, acceptance, happiness, or some other worthless, meaningless, temporal and utterly bankrupt principle in place of our eternal salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ
- Therefore, we are all called to engage in this fight
 - And as we move further through the letter over the next several weeks, we will come to understand who our enemies are and how we are to approach this fight
 - I hope you will join me in the battle

Jude 2

- Last week we learned that Jude felt the need to write to the church asking them to fight for the faith
 - The fight was to protect the content of the Gospel and the teaching of the Apostles
 - The fight was against those who might wish to do harm to the orthodox teaching of the church
 - These are the false teachers Peter warned the early church they would see coming soon enough
 - And now it fell to Jude to deliver the news that these false teachers had, in fact, arrived
 - Jude asked the church to fight against them, but the success of any battle depends on knowing your enemy
 - The enemy is easiest to identify when they look different than we do
 - It helps create an “us” against “them” mentality
 - It’s why the villains wear black hats and the heroes wear white hats
 - It keeps things so much easier
 - But what happens when the enemies are inside the gates?
 - When they live and work among us
 - When they look like us and pretend to be on the same team
 - It’s dangerous because we can’t tell the difference between our neighbors and our enemies
 - It’s why spies are universally hated
 - G.K. Chesterton said:

“The Bible tells us to love our neighbors, and also to love our enemies; probably because generally they are the same people.”

- So Jude is writing to name names, to expose the false teachers, to put a face on the enemy of the faith
 - The church's enemy have infiltrated into the camp
 - They're working from the inside to weaken the church
 - They speak from a position of strength and authority
 - They cause the faithful to stumble because they appear to have standing and maturity
 - And in Jude's day, they weren't challenged by New Testament scripture, since the canon wouldn't be written and available until the end of the first century
 - So we pick up in v.4 as Jude identifies these enemies the church must battle for the preservation of the faith
 - They are posing as friends
 - And they are encouraging the church to great sin
 - Like Charlotte Bronte once said:

"I can be on guard against my enemies, but God deliver me from my friends!"

Jude 4 For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

- In his third triad, Jude describes the manner and nature of the enemies of the faith
 - Certain persons have crept in unnoticed
 - Certain persons is literally specific men
 - Jude has certain men in mind as he writes this letter to the church
 - The enemies of the Gospel come in many forms and attack in many ways, as Satan has many weapons at his disposal

- Nevertheless, Jude's concern is focused on one certain form of enemy
 - So he is intent on describing that enemy in detail
- Secondly, these certain men have crept in unnoticed
 - The phrase "crept in unnoticed" is a single word in Greek
 - It is the only occurrence of this Greek word in the NT
 - It's actually a compound of three Greek words
 - *Para* (beside), *eis* (among), and *duno* (to settle in)
 - It means to settle in alongside quietly, without drawing attention
- In Jude's day, itinerant preaching was very common
 - Itinerant preachers were men who moved about the countryside preaching from town to town
 - They earned their living from love offerings
 - And they never settled in any place for long
 - This pattern made it easy for false teachers to enter a church and teach, since the culture accepted strangers as having virtually equal authority as resident teachers
 - Perhaps these men arrived as itinerant preachers and then stayed
 - Or perhaps they were homegrown false teachers
 - Either way, these men had already become a part of the church by the time Jude wrote
- But they managed to enter without any in the church noticing
 - This fact is a problem by itself
 - As we'll learn later in this letter, these men hold to very wrong doctrines and encourage very bad practices
 - Yet somehow they joined alongside the church without raising concerns
 - It was as if Peter's warnings weren't heeded

- Contrast that to what we know about the church in Ephesus, which existed in this same time and region
 - Jesus wrote to that church through John and said this:

Rev. 2:2 'I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false;

- According to Jesus, false teachers couldn't sneak up on the Ephesians
- That church wouldn't tolerate evil men
- What was the difference between Ephesus and the churches Jude has heard about?
 - We have one clue in Jesus' letter: they tested the men who made claims of apostleship
 - That probably means they demanded the men demonstrate the apostolic powers that uniquely identified the Apostles
 - And we can be sure they also tested their words against Old Testament scripture and the teaching of the Apostles, similar to the Bereans, of Acts fame
- Somehow other churches in the Diaspora failed to take these precautions
 - Testing any leader's teaching is Defense 101 in the church
 - It's like closing the gates in a city wall: it's your first line of defense
- The church still has that requirement today
 - As we're going to see, the men Jude is concerned about still exist today
 - They have wormed their way into churches in our communities just as they had in Jude's day
 - You can't pick them out by appearances
 - They love their wives, kiss their kids, and smile a lot

- They speak in soothing tones, pray with their eyes tightly closed, and use the name Jesus a lot
- And they wear white hats
- They are tares among the wheat
- But in the end, their teaching gives them away as enemies of the faith
- And we can only find them by listening carefully, studying our Bible and testing what they say against what scripture says
- In the first part of the triad, Jude rebukes the church concerning these false teachers
 - He says these false teachers were men marked out for condemnation
 - Condemnation is the Greek word *krima*, which is simply the word for judgment
 - Jude is referring to the judgment of God, the Second Death, the Great White Throne judgment
 - As enemies of the faith, it shouldn't surprise us that these men will face judgment for their sin
 - But Jude says something intriguing concerning this judgment
 - These men were marked out for this fate beforehand
 - The literal Greek phrase is "long ago written out in advance"
 - In other words, these men and their fate was long ago prophesied or written
 - Jude is referring to how Peter and the other apostles foretold the arrival of such false men
 - In fact, Jesus Himself foretold their arrival

[Matt. 7:13](#) "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.

[Matt. 7:14](#) "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

[Matt. 7:15](#) "Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

[Matt. 7:16](#) "You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they?

[Matt. 7:17](#) "So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit.

[Matt. 7:18](#) "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit.

[Matt. 7:19](#) "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

[Matt. 7:20](#) "So then, you will know them by their fruits.

- Jude is rebuking the church over their lack of vigilance against false teachers
 - The apostles had taught them, Jesus had warned them, and still they have allowed these men to creep in
 - No wonder Jude felt compelled to change the topic of his letter!
 - They should have seen it coming, but they failed to guard against their arrival
- In the second part of the triad, Jude describes the manner of these false teachers
 - They are ungodly men who change God's grace into licentiousness
 - Ungodliness is the Bible's term for our modern term "unbeliever"
 - So it comes as no surprise that these enemies are unbelievers
 - We'll see Jude emphasize this fact again when we get to the third part of this triad
 - Next, their modus operandi is to turn or change grace into a license to sin
 - Licentiousness means having a license or a right or freedom to commit sin
 - Before we truly understand grace as the Bible teaches it, our flesh can be tempted or persuaded to see God's limitless forgiveness as a green light to go on sinning
 - Paul addressed this problem in Romans

[Rom. 6:1](#) What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase?

[Rom. 6:2](#) May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?

- Paul's question was likely the essence of the false teachers' argument to the church
 - Grace is the forgiving of sin, and it is without limit
 - Christ's sacrifice on the cross was sufficient to cover all sin
- Therefore, the false teachers were gnostics, who taught the church that they could glorify Christ through their sin
 - Because as they sinned in the flesh, they were creating a need for more of God's grace to be made available to cover that sin
 - By allowing the flesh to engage in sin, the believer was increasing God's grace, which is a good thing
 - And since the flesh was to be replaced one day anyway, it mattered not to God that we allowed the flesh to sin
 - They dismissed the need to observe moral laws of any kind, which is called antinomianism
- Let's address this notion clearly. This is heresy and false teaching.
 - As Paul said, are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be!
 - In fact, every true believer need only search their hearts to know the answer to that question
 - For the Spirit convicts us of our sin and leads us to an understanding that God is calling us out of sin
 - Paul says we are to glorify the Lord in our body, since He dwells within it
 - Our body is to die, Paul says, making it a sacrifice to God
 - Just as the Jews never sacrificed imperfect animals
 - Our earthly life is to be used to prepare our bodies as a sacrifice
 - So that our body is a pleasing sacrifice in life and in death
 - These men on the other hand, aren't seeking to glorify their bodies, much less the Lord
 - Their warped theology was merely a cover for their corrupt morals

- These men wanted to engage in all manner of sin and do so within the context of the church and without the bother of condemnation or judgment
- They weren't content to carry on with their sinful choices outside the church
 - They wanted to bring their sin into the church
 - Yet at the same time, they brought with it teaching that made an argument for why their sin wasn't actually sin
 - And then along the way, they encouraged others to join in with them
- We can see examples of this kind of thinking still living on today, with various sexual perversions and other sins
 - Christians, and supposed Christians, seeking to be a part of the church while maintaining their immoral behaviors
 - And they want to redefine sin so that these immoral practices can be allowed to continue and even be accepted as normal
 - Sin is always corrosive and corrupting
 - Ever since Woman took the first bite, those who enjoy sin long to share it with others
- Finally, Jude says these men deny Jesus Christ as master
 - This last part of Jude's fourth verse is a direct quote of 2 Peter 2:1-2

2Pet. 2:1 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

2Pet. 2:2 Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned;

- Notice Peter also mentions secretly introducing heresies
- Denying the Master
- Prepared to receive judgment
- Following their sensuality

- Thus maligning the faith
- Their denial of Jesus wasn't a specific repudiation of Christ or Christianity
 - They denied Jesus in that they demonstrated they didn't know Him
 - As John says:

John 2:4 The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commands, is a liar, and the truth is not in him;

- So Jude has not-so-subtly reminded his readers that they ignored Peter's good advice, and now they find themselves fighting an enemy inside their city walls
 - The enemy looks like one of them, but he can be known by his fruit
 - The fruit is sin, done in the name of grace
 - And by their sin, they deny the Master
 - Corrupting the truth
 - Jude knows there is a leak in their ship
 - So he has written urgently asking the church to plug the holes and throw the scum overboard
 - But perhaps they wonder if such men could be rehabilitated inside the church?
 - Shouldn't the church have more compassion on these unbelievers?
 - After all, even though they don't know the Lord, maybe they are seekers, and therefore maybe the church should remain seeker-friendly?
 - So Jude reminds the church how the Lord has historically dealt with such people

Jude 5 Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all, that the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe.

Jude 6 And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day,

Jude 7 just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.

- In these verses, we reach Jude's fourth triad, which shifts our focus
 - It's easy to see the three parts of this triad, and it's made particularly easy since each part gets its own verse
 - Collectively, these are three lessons from history
 - Jude reminds Jewish believers of Jewish history as it relates to their present situation
 - Let's look at each example to better understand the lesson Jude wants to leave with the church
 - First, he prefacing his examples saying I want to remind you of something
 - But then he quickly adds they know everything once for all
 - Does the phrase "once for all" ring bells from last week?
 - This phrase is another reference to the scriptures
 - So once again, we should hear these words as a polite rebuke to the church
 - Jude says I desire to remind you, but you already have everything you need to know available in scripture
 - Jude is implying he shouldn't have to remind them of anything
 - All three of his examples are found in the Jewish scriptures, which every God-fearing Jew should have known
 - More importantly, they should have already learned the lessons these examples existed to teach
- In the first example, Jude references the wandering of Israel in the desert after leaving Egypt
 - Israel departed Egypt as a nation, but that nation consisted of two million individuals
 - God didn't call that nation because all two million were God-fearing believers

- Scripture makes clear that a believing Israel has never been more than a remnant
- Sometimes that remnant is quite small, sometimes it's most of the nation
- But we should never confuse what God does with the nation, with what He's doing for the individual members of that nation
- So as Israel left Egypt, and received the Law and prepared to enter the Promised Land the first time, they revealed their true hearts along the way
 - Time and time again the people of Israel chose to satisfy their flesh, in conflict with God's instructions
 - They grumbled about the lack of water, the lack of food, and even worshipped idols
 - Scripture says they did these things as a result of a lack of faith
 - Hebrews says specifically

[Heb. 3:16](#) For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses?

[Heb. 3:17](#) And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?

[Heb. 3:18](#) And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient?

[Heb. 3:19](#) So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

- So Jude reminds the church that even though God's nation left Egypt together, they were not all equally God's people
 - Among the camp of Israel were unbelieving men and women who looked the part but lacked a true heart
 - They were like the false teachers of Jude's day
 - They didn't get credit for showing up...they were condemned for lack of faith
- As a result of their unbelief, God eventually destroyed an entire generation of Israel in the desert
 - Only the remnant entered into the Promised Land

- The rest were destroyed, Jude says
 - What lesson do we learn from Israel in the desert?
 - God knows who are truly His, and who are hiding in the camp
 - And those who are not His will perish
 - As Peter taught:

2Pet. 2:9 then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment,

- In his second example, Jude mentions sinning angels
 - First, these angels didn't keep their proper abode
 - Simply put, they didn't stay where they belonged
 - They went somewhere they were forbidden to go
 - In short, they sinned, which means they are demons
 - Secondly, Jude doesn't say what they did in this verse, but he does mention the consequence of their actions
 - They are currently bound and kept in darkness
 - They are awaiting a future day of judgment
 - Notice that Jude calls that day, when all sin is finally judged and removed forever, as the great day....great, indeed
 - From Peter's second letter, we learn that the sin of these angels was associated with the time of Noah, which leads us to Chapter 6 of Genesis

Gen. 6:1 Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them,

Gen. 6:2 that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose.

- For a full exposition of these verses, I leave it to you to listen to the Genesis study online, but I can summarize here for now
- A careful examination of the Hebrew words used in this passage leads us to understand what was happening in the years prior to the flood

- Satan sought to pollute the seed of mankind by sending demons to impregnate women
- We obviously don't know how the spirit realm and mankind could interact in this way, except to know that it was possible
 - Similar to the way that angels appeared with Abraham and ate with him in his tent
 - Somehow the angelic realm has the capacity to take on the appearance of flesh to interact with man in a physical way
- After the demons made this plan, God responded by bringing the flood
- And the demons responsible for this great sin were bound and are being kept until the day of judgment

- What was the lesson for the Church of the angels' rebellion and God's response?
 - First, consider what these angels knew
 - They knew the reality of God
 - They knew the truth of Jesus as the Son of God
 - They understood the majesty and power of God to accomplish His purposes
 - Yet they still chose to rebel against such glorious things
 - Clearly, these angels were not interested in the truth
 - Moreover, they were not candidates for rehabilitation
 - They were bound in darkness, removed from any further influence
 - So the lesson was that even an exposure to God's truth and His power doesn't ensure someone of knowing the truth
 - And when these counterfeits are exposed, they must be removed
 - Because they are due a judgment that has been prepared for them

- Finally, the third example is Sodom and Gomorrah, a story that needs no explanation
 - The chief sin of these cities was indulging gross immorality
 - In Greek, the term carries a sense of giving in to an urge or desire
 - The men of the city gave in to a wrong desire and as a result, they went after strange flesh, Jude says
 - And then Jude says the entire episode of Sodom and Gomorrah took place so the world would have a vivid picture of what the Lord has planned for those who practice such things
 - The judgment of the cities was temporal
 - But the judgment the people are enduring is eternal
 - And that is the lesson Jude is drawing from this example
 - The false teachers of his day were indulging in fleshly sinful desires
 - But God has a judgment prepared for them, one of eternal fire
- So let's sum up these three examples
 - The enemies of the faith may be hard to see, but God knows them
 - They are the ones who do not believe
 - They reject God's authority
 - So He will reject them and destroy them
 - The enemies of the faith have been exposed to great and wonderful truths and wonders of the faith
 - They are like the angels that willingly left the proper place
 - They despise the majesty of God's glory in Christ
 - They will experience eternal darkness
 - The enemies of the faith are motivated by an indulgence in their flesh
 - They are seeking to defile the flesh
 - But they will experience eternal fire

- Jude gives us that summary in v.8

Jude 8 Yet in the same way these men, also by dreaming, defile the flesh, and reject authority, and revile angelic majesties.

- These men are the point of his examples
 - They are defiling flesh by their false encouragement to sin
 - They are rejecting authority in their denying of God's word and the Apostles' teaching
 - And they are reviling angelic majesties
- The word for angelic majesties should probably be translated differently
 - The Greek word is *doxa*, which is literally glory, as in heavenly glory
 - So they revile the majesty and glory of God, which is seen in the Spirit's work in the temple of God
- Just as the demons wished to corrupt the bodies of women so as to destroy the human race, now these false teachers are doing the same to us today
 - Any time we are encouraged to walk in sin in the name of Christ, we are experiencing the same kind of deception
 - It is the deception of reviling majesty or glory
 - A call to sin is a rebellion against the glory of God's work in man
- This is why Hebrews says that God does not give help to fallen angels
 - The plan of redemption is limited to mankind
 - He is working a plan of glory for man
 - But these false teachers, like the demons before them, reviled that glory and sought to destroy it.

- Jude wants to stir up his readers
 - The fight was on
 - Men had arrived, false teachers
 - Men teaching heresy, promoting licentiousness
 - But the church hadn't heeded earlier warnings to watch for these coming wolves
 - And now they were prowling within the congregation, wearing sheep's attire
 - So they were even harder to spot
 - Consequently Jude felt compelled to write to awaken the sleeping believers, calling them to arms
- Last week we studied vs.4-8 as Jude presented his third and fourth triads
 - In the third triad Jude described the enemy
 - They were men called out for condemnation in earlier days
 - Unbelievers who twist grace into an excuse to sin
 - Men who deny Jesus as Lord
 - In his fourth triad, Jude gave three examples from Israel's history to remind the church how God responds to such men
 - The rebels in Israel were destroyed over their lusts, despite having been joined to the chosen people for a time
 - And angels who witnessed God's majesty still rebelled against Heaven to pursue forbidden things in the days of Noah
 - And they experienced judgment in the end
 - And the sexual perversions of Sodom and Gomorrah warranted fire from the sky to remind us of the coming judgment for such sin
- History taught the church God knows these men; He sees their hearts and He will judge him
 - And the Lord will do the same for all false teachers and any who come to destroy the work of God among His people
 - But Jude's history lesson was also a reminder to the church itself
 - An incentive for them to steer clear from these men and their influence
 - Once the false teachers have been identified, it's our responsibility to remove them from the church
 - But at the very least, we are obliged to shield ourselves from their negative influence
 - Paul told Timothy in 1 Tim 6:11 to flee from the practices and influence of ungodly men seeking earthly gain rather than righteousness
 - This is the Bible's command to the church
 - It's fight or flight
 - Jude is asking this church to fight these men and their ungodly influence

- And to flee their immorality and ignore their example, knowing the judgment that awaits
- There is nothing more disheartening - especially for a teacher - to expose a false teacher to his audience, only to find the audience shrugging off the news and returning for more of the same
 - Perhaps it's pride and an unwillingness to admit they've been seduced by the wrong leader
 - Perhaps it's inertia; they can't get up the energy to change their circumstances and seek a new teacher
 - Usually it's an ignorance for why the problem is so serious
- They underestimate the impact on their walk
 - I've known some to dismiss concerns over their choice to remain under bad teaching claiming all is well
 - Even as their marriage crumbles, the kids rebel, and their spiritual walk comes to a dead stop
 - And they never consider that one may be connected to the other
- There is a reason we're told to seek for the pure milk of the word
 - It's the source for life and godliness God has provided so we will mature
 - Sitting under great teaching doesn't guarantee our marriages won't have difficulty
 - Or that our kids will turn out perfect
 - Or that we won't suffer even as Job did
 - But it does assure us we will have the maturity and understanding to face it in a godly way, as Job did
- But when we go after false substitutes, when we ignore our spiritual development
 - We will see consequences in our life eventually
 - So we shouldn't play with fire...we flee
- Revisiting v.8, Jude transitions from his history lesson to describing the deeds of these men

Jude 8 Yet in the same way these men, also by dreaming, defile the flesh, and reject authority, and revile angelic majesties.

- What were these men doing? Jude uses his fifth triad to give us a character sketch of who they were - and who they always are to a degree
 - First, we hear how they came to their false views: by dreaming
 - Dreaming refers to prophetic dreams
 - These men used the time honored practice of claiming wisdom from a heavenly

source through a special revelation

- Notice Jude says these teachers came in the same way
- Also by dreaming
- The starting point for these false teachers is always a special revelation which they claim as their authority
- This is such a classic and insidious trick of Satan, it's worth a few minutes to consider
 - The enemy's favorite trick according to scripture, is to dress up his lies as revelation from Heaven
 - The Bible says in 2 Cor 11:14 that Satan disguises himself as an angel of light
- It's no coincidence that many false religions begin with a similar story
 - A man who was visited by an angel of light
 - The angel then delivered new information, new revelation
 - This new information supersedes anything provided before
- The story of many false religions start this way
 - The beginning of the Mormon religion involves an angel of light delivering new revelation to supersede orthodox Christianity
 - The story of the beginning of the Islamic religion involves an angel of light delivering new revelation to supersede all other Biblical revelation
 - There are plenty of others
- We can know these new revelations are always wrong because Scripture itself tells us so
 - Jude earlier told us that the faith was once delivered and has been handed down
 - It was all delivered by Christ and the Apostles
 - It was handed down...nothing has been lost
 - Then Hebrews tells us

Heb. 1:1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,

Heb. 1:2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.

- God has saved the best revelation for last, that is the revelation provided through His Son
- We already have the best God has for us, revealed in the life and words of Jesus Christ
 - No lesser angel is going to come along after Jesus' appearing and gives us something better than He gave us
- Finally, the word of God ends with this warning:

Rev. 22:18 I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book;

Rev. 22:19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.

- Jesus' words are not only about the book of Revelation
- God is the author of all scripture
 - He knew Revelation would be the last book of the canon
 - And so He knew these words would appear at the very end of the canon
- And therefore, He wasn't merely speaking about Revelation, He was summing up all scripture
 - He was saying in effect that if anyone tries to add to scripture they are showing themselves accursed and a disciple of the devil
 - So we are to turn our backs on anyone who tries to tell us of their special revelations
- Because of their dreaming, these false teachers were inspired to commit three kinds of sin
 - First, they defiled the flesh
 - This is a reference to their licentiousness and sexual immorality
 - Just like the angels of Noah's day and the men in Sodom, these men used their teaching as a cover for their lusts
 - Immorality is always the calling card of the ungodly
 - Paul makes the connection between those who hold to false teaching and a lifestyle of depravity in one form or another

1Tim. 6:3 If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness,

1Tim. 6:4 he is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions,

1Tim. 6:5 and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.

- Notice the list of things Paul says go hand-in-hand with advocating teaching that conflicts with Christ's instructions
 - They create disputes, they provoke envy and strife

- They use abusive language and encourage evil suspicions
- And there is constant friction among themselves
- We don't need to look too hard today to find false teachers who fit these descriptions
 - Watch religious TV or attend some of the more prominent mega churches and you'll see showmen and women performing in front of tens of thousands
 - They preach false messages on prosperity, provoking envy among the faithful
 - Or they preach messages of inclusion or acceptance on controversial social questions, instead of preaching the Gospel
 - Or they work to pander to the unbelieving world, even resorting to foul language from the pulpit
 - These men are constantly competing with one another for a chance to fleece the biggest audiences, seeing godliness as a means to personal gain
- Secondly, these men reject legitimate church authority
 - In Jude's day, the false teachers arrived with heretical, unorthodox teachings
 - Naturally, they immediately found themselves at odds with legitimate church leaders trying to protect their flocks
 - But they rejected that authority
 - This is what Paul meant when he said such men create disputes over various questions or words
 - They create a smoke screen by twisting scripture and contending with church leaders over proper interpretation
 - If the church respected and listened to its elders, it can be protected from the influence of such men
 - But too often the pastors and others leaders are the youngest and most impressionable within the church
 - They are spiritually immature, or at least inexperienced and ill equipped to recognize and contend with false teachers
 - We need to follow mature and knowledgeable leaders who stand by God's word and lead the church away from such nonsense
 - And then we need congregations trained to follow their godly leaders when they issue warnings about the latest unbiblical fads, no matter how popular
- Finally, these leaders revile angelic majesties
 - When we looked at this verse briefly last week, we noted that the word translated angelic majesties is the Greek word *doxa*
 - The word means glories, and in Heavenly glories
 - And the word revile means to slander, to profane sacred things, to blaspheme
 - These men think nothing of slandering God, His word, His Son and the Spirit
 - They are shameless and show no fear of God

- I'm sure if we've watched even a few minutes of the worst false teachers of our day, you've probably witnessed them saying something that caused you to gasp
 - You may have wondered how they could be so impetuous, so fearless of God
 - Let me give you an example of everything Jude describes, evident in a false teacher today
 - I won't name the teacher, because his name doesn't matter
 - False teachers come and go, names change, but it's the pattern we need to learn well
- This false teacher is a prosperity preacher featured frequently on national TV, flies the world in his private jet and has a huge following
 - First, here's his story of how an angel gave him his ministry

"Suddenly I felt a suction as if I was being pulled up out of the room. . . I heard a sound, Whoosh! And I was pulled up out of the room. . . I didn't know I had left the room and I was zooming along at a phenomenal rate of speed. . . in something like a cable car. . . Then I looked up. There stood another being. I realized that it was the blond-headed angel who had visited me. . . I had an appointment with the Lord God Jehovah. "Then I saw other people who didn't have on robes; they were wearing gowns. They started walking toward the city, but they seemed to get weak. I saw them walk over to the trees, pick what looked like fruit and eat it. Then they took some leaves off those trees, put the leaves up to their faces and breathed in, smelling them. I asked the angel, "What's happening?" He said, "Some of them have not lived the life they should. They believe in God and love Jesus, but they didn't live to their fullest potential. . . Yes God is merciful to them," he said. "But they have to be prepared to stand in the presence of the Almighty. Some people don't live close to God the way they should. They know Jesus as their Savior, but they could do so much better. In heaven they will eventually be able to go to God's Throne, but it takes more time for them."

- And here are three quotes the man made during preaching

The very first thing on Jesus' agenda was to get rid of poverty! Would you like to know why some people, including ministries, never get out of poverty? Its not because they aren't smart. Its not because they don't have windows of opportunity. Its because they're not anointed. If you're not anointed, poverty will follow you all the days of your life. His first objective was to get rid of poverty.

Naturally, the devil tried to shut down this living, breathing Church. He wanted dry bones. He began to take the freshness of God and put Ecclesiastical dogma

on it. He used theological understanding (doctrine/the study of God's word) to water down the fire

Not long ago I was in prayer in my own study, and I know the Lord just like you know the Lord. And man I went in there and started off my day with the lord and said 'Lord Lord how you doing today. It's going to be a great day. And I noticed the lord wasn't acting right, ...cause I know God, you know when your child is not felling good, right. You know when something, you may not know what it is but he wasn't acting right for lack of a better term. I know God I know him and I know the fulness of his presence , and I know him. And I said something' wrong...I said Lord you had a bad day? And he said "Yea my children have been disobeying me." I said somebody hurt you today, I said lord I don't ever want to hurt you anymore so lord I'm going to cancel all my appointments and all this stuff that we call ministry and I'm gonna sit here and I don't know how to say this God for a lack of better term, till you fell better. Cause so many people hurt him that day... Lord I said I'm just going to bless you I'm gonna praise you I'm gonna just call your name. And it dawned on me and the Lord went "Thank you."

- You can see all that Jude taught is exhibited in this man
 - His authority comes from dreaming and angels of light
 - He is lustful and uses God's grace to cover his sin of greed
 - He rejects church doctrine and teaching when they criticize his teaching
 - And he clearly reviles glories of Heaven, mocking God and Jesus
- Peter warned the church of such men
 - And now Jude backs that up with a clear description of their methods
 - So now we can't say we didn't know
- On that final point of reviling God's glory, Jude has more to say

Jude 9 But Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

- Jude uses an example taken from an apocryphal book called *The Assumption of Moses*
 - This book is not scripture
 - Therefore, the content of the book rests entirely on the wisdom and integrity of the man who wrote it
 - But that doesn't mean that everything in the book is automatically false
 - When we say something is scripture, we mean the author was writing under the

inspiration of the Holy Spirit

- As a result, every word is perfectly placed, entirely accurate and without a single error
- It is true in fact, accurate in perspective, timeless in application and not subject to a man's interpretation
- It is also intended by God to serve a certain purpose in His plan of redemption
 - It supports His plan to bring glory to Christ
 - And it serves to lead men to Him
- So the difference between scripture and any other writing is its degree of accuracy and the purpose in its existence
 - But other kinds of writing can hold truth and have merit too
 - For example, I can pick up a book written on the history of the Vietnam War and find some truth
 - The book is not inspired scripture, and so it may be filled with false information, misconceptions, and biased perspectives
 - But it's also likely to hold some true information
 - Facts about the war and the events of those days
 - Names and places that are accurate
 - So it falls short of scripture because it's not written by the Spirit, it lacks perfect accuracy, and it exists to serve a different purpose
 - Nevertheless it still has some value
- In this case, Jude found a fact in *The Assumption of Moses* that had value
 - Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Jude includes this detail in his letter, thereby making it a part of scripture
 - So we can say that the Lord has endorsed this one fact
 - But that doesn't mean the entire work from which it was taken is accurate
- Knowing this, let's consider this strange account
 - Jude reports that the archangel Michael disputed with Satan concerning the body of Moses
 - Jude doesn't give us the back story on this moment, because he knew his Jewish readers knew what he was talking about
 - The Jewish apocryphal literature was widely read in Jewish society
 - And everyone knew this account like we know the story that George Washington chopped down a cherry tree
 - Is it true...maybe so, maybe not, but everyone knows the story
 - This story is one of those fables in Jewish literature
 - Only in this case, it's a true story

- But we have to look elsewhere to understand what Jude's readers already knew
 - Interestingly, there is only one surviving copy of *The Assumption of Moses*
 - And that copy is missing over a third of the original content
 - And the part that does survive doesn't include the reference to this moment
- So you might wonder how do we know it was ever in the book?
 - Because other ancient writers and historians remark that this event was recorded in *The Assumption of Moses*
 - And so we can consult these other ancient records to learn what *The Assumption of Moses* originally said
- What we learn is a story that makes the false teachers' gall at mocking God's glory all the more shocking
 - Moses died in the desert on the East side of the Jordan river
 - We can read about it at the end of Deuteronomy

Deut. 34:1 Now Moses went up from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is opposite Jericho. And the LORD showed him all the land, Gilead as far as Dan,

Deut. 34:2 and all Naphtali and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah as far as the western sea,

Deut. 34:3 and the Negev and the plain in the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar.

Deut. 34:4 Then the LORD said to him, "This is the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants'; I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not go over there."

Deut. 34:5 So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD.

Deut. 34:6 And He buried him in the valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth-peor; but no man knows his burial place to this day.

- Moses died before the nation entered into the Promised Land
 - He was barred from entering because he disobeyed the Lord's instructions
 - He struck the rock of water more than once, which displeased the Lord
 - We studied why this was so offensive in our study of Exodus
- When Moses died in the wilderness, no man was given the privilege of knowing where he was buried
 - The Lord Himself buries Moses' body, we're told
 - The purpose in the odd arrangement was in keeping with what we learned in our Exodus study
 - Moses represents the Law

- And the Promised Land represents Heaven and eternal life
- God wanted to make clear that we do not enter the Promised Land by means of the Law
- Instead, God asked Joshua to lead the people into the Land
 - Joshua is the same name as Jesus
 - We enter by following Jesus, not by following the Law
- Furthermore, God buried the body Himself so that no man could dig it up later or make it into an idol
 - Once Joshua was appointed to lead the nation, no one was to follow Moses again
 - Likewise, once Jesus comes and fulfills the Law, no man is to resurrect Moses, so to speak
 - We don't try to bring back the Law
- Now we learn that when Deuteronomy says God buried Moses, it means that the actual process of burial was carried out by angels, specifically by the archangel Michael
 - Michael was appointed by God to bury Moses body
 - Other ancient Jewish texts refer to Michael as the burier of the dead
 - Probably because he performed this task for the Lord
 - But as Michael was burying Moses, the enemy demanded the body of Moses from Michael
 - *The Assumption of Moses* says that Satan argued that Moses belonged to him because Moses was a murderer
 - Moses killed the Egyptian taskmaster
 - So for that reason, Moses was Satan's follower
 - Satan was lying as usual
 - Moses wasn't a murderer
 - He killed the taskmaster to protect the life of another, which is a form of self-defense
 - Furthermore, Moses was saved by faith according to Hebrews 11, so his sin was forgiven
 - So why did Satan want the body?
 - We can imagine a simple reason
 - The enemy knew that Moses was a powerful symbol to the Jewish people
 - If Satan had been able to use Moses body, perhaps to resurrect it by indwelling it, he could have perpetrated a great fraud
 - He could have shown Moses resurrected by the enemy's power, and drawn Israel away from God to worship Moses and Satan
 - And in that way, Satan corrupts the people destined to bring the Messiah

- Clearly, the Lord wasn't going to allow this to happen, and Michael knew he couldn't give the body to Satan, but Michael fought Satan with a degree of respect
 - Jude says Michael didn't dare to rail against Satan
 - Remember that railing means to slander or blaspheme or speak in an abusive way to someone
 - Even though Satan is the great enemy and a fallen creature, nevertheless Michael treated him with respect...why?
 - Michael is the archangel, but Satan was a cherub, according to Ezekiel 28
 - Cherubs are the highest form of angelic being
 - Angels are a lesser form
 - Michael is the chief angel
 - But he's still a lower creature than a cherub
 - So despite Satan's fallen place, Michael defers to Satan's position of honor without daring to revile his position
 - So how did Michael contend with Satan and prevent Moses' body from falling into the wrong hands?
 - Jude says Michael appealed to the Lord
 - In the story, Michael turns to the Lord for his support in the battle, and the Lord turns Satan away
 - In that sense, Michael tells Satan that the Lord rebuked him
 - But Michael didn't make the rebuke himself
- Contrast that with these false teachers
 - They are mere men, not archangels
 - They revile the majesties of Heaven, even the Father and Son, not Satan
 - If Michael knew enough not to challenge an angelic majesty, what does it say about the ignorance of these men?
 - Michael must have had real fear for the consequences of such an action
 - He must have had good reason to think twice before challenging Satan
 - He knew something about God's wrath and justice and judgment that these men lack
- We'll look at Jude's application next time, but for now think about how this lesson changes your perspective of those who teach us to rebuke the devil
 - False teachers dramatically teach us to rebuke the devil
 - Cast him out, and he will leave
 - They will even quote James 4:7 where we're told to resist the devil and he will flee
 - But the key is how we resist

- We don't resist by reviling angelic majesties
- We don't resist in our own power
- We appeal to the Lord and ask Him to protect us, and the Lord will rebuke Satan according to His desires
- We know Satan has real power, but we know the Lord has greater power
 - So we turn to Him, while giving proper respect to the angelic majesties

- In our last lesson, Jude was exposing the false teachers in the church as dreamers, revilers, and depraved sinners
 - He gave us the pattern for their behavior
 - They receive their insight from demonic revelations
 - They engage in immoral, depraved sexual practices and use their false teaching as a cover for their licentiousness
 - They reject church authorities, proclaiming themselves to be an authority unaccountable to anyone
 - And they blaspheme the majesty of God and His revealed plan
 - These men pose a great danger to the church, leading many astray and creating stumbling blocks for others
 - But what motivates these false teachers?
 - Jude has already told us that these men seek to cover their sin with false teaching concerning God's grace
 - But surely they could sin without entering the church, yet they've sought to affiliate with Christians
 - So they must have some other motive, some other benefit for reaching into the church to find their audience
- Now Jude begins to explain what drives these men in their evil pursuits

Jude 10 But these men revile the things which they do not understand; and the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed.

- Ironically, while these false "teachers" claim to possess a new, better spiritual knowledge, they speak concerning matters they can't understand
 - They claim to have spiritual understanding, spiritual wisdom, spiritual knowledge
 - And they come offering that spiritual knowledge to the church
 - Thereby claiming to be teachers of the Word
 - But Jude labels them as ignorant of the very things they claim to know
 - They are spiritually ignorant of the truth
 - This is further evidence that we are talking about unbelievers who have joined themselves to the church culture thinking they understand the faith
 - But they have come short of the grace of God, as Hebrews says
 - They are no nothing more than what they have assumed in the flesh
 - To quote Peter in Acts 8 speaking to Simon the magician

Acts 8:20 But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you

thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!

Acts 8:21 “You have no part or portion in this matter, for your heart is not right before God.

- But they do come with knowledge of a sort...things known only by human instinct
 - The Greek word for instinct means natural knowledge
 - Jude's point is that these men are limited to knowledge they come by naturally, or in their natural state
 - As opposed to a knowledge given to them supernaturally by the Spirit of God
 - Remember that the Bible uses the term “natural” to describe a sinful, fallen person prior to receiving faith and receiving the Spirit
 - Natural men cannot relate to the Lord or to spiritual truth
 - Natural men have selfish, evil intentions and motives

1Cor. 2:12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, 1Cor. 2:13 which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. 1Cor. 2:14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

- And there is nothing more dangerous than a natural man pretending to have spiritual insight and preying on unsuspecting immature believers
 - The danger is two-fold
 - First, the men deliver the opposite of what they claim to bring
 - They claim to bring truth concerning God and His desires
 - But because they have no insight to offer, they can only supply human wisdom and human understanding
 - It's natural, and Jude says it's like the instinct of an animal
 - It's knowledge that doesn't come from study or disciplined submission to the authority of God
 - On the contrary, it comes from instinct, gut understanding present at birth
 - And so the faithful hungry for spiritual truth are sucked in to receiving knowledge that can only feed the flesh
 - And that's the second reason these men are so dangerous to the church
 - Their teaching appeals to the flesh
 - They speak with the only spirit they know: the spirit of the world

- And those words seduce the flesh of those who listen
- They promise spiritual enlightenment but stir up fleshly lust
- Jude says these men will also be destroyed by these things
 - Those who live in the flesh and seek to please the flesh will die by the flesh

Rom. 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

Rom. 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,

Rom. 8:7 because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so,

Rom. 8:8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

- Then in v.11, Jude pronounces woe upon these men

Jude 11 Woe to them! For they have gone the way of Cain, and for pay they have rushed headlong into the error of Balaam, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

- To pronounce woe against someone means to declare coming judgment
 - The Lord pronounced woe against the Pharisees, scribes and lawyers for leading the people astray
 - And in Tribulation, the angel pronounces woe to the world because of the coming judgments
 - And now Jude pronounces woe upon these false teachers
 - And by extension, all false teachers
 - False teachers follow the lusts of their flesh into the grave, and into hell
- Which brings us to their motivation, and Jude's sixth triad
 - First, they have gone the way of Cain
 - Obviously, we need to revisit a little of Cain's story to understand how these men repeat the mistakes of that man
 - We know Cain is Adam's first son
 - He was a man who gets in trouble with the Lord and is sent away from the family
 - What was Cain's mistake?
 - In short Cain believed that his relationship with God was little more than a business transaction
 - Cain would hand over something of value to the Lord

- And the Lord would respond with blessing and approval
- In Genesis 4 we read this:

Gen. 4:4 Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering;

Gen. 4:5 but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell.

Gen. 4:6 Then the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?

Gen. 4:7 “If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.”

- When Cain and Abel go to sacrifice to the Lord, both bring tithes from their respective labors: Cain from the harvest and Abel from the flocks
 - But Abel understood by faith that more than tithes were required
 - Abel knew that sacrifice was required to cover sin
 - So Abel brought both tithes and a sacrifice
 - While Cain only brought the tithe
 - So the Lord showed favor to Abel for his sacrifice and tithe, while the Lord didn't regard Cain's tithes
 - This upset Cain who was expecting their business transaction to be honored
 - The Lord was obligated to repay Cain for his gift, or so Cain thought
 - But the Lord explains to Cain that he has no reason to be angry, since he had the same opportunity to sacrifice and be accepted
 - The lamb of the sin offering is lying at the door
 - Cain need only offer the sacrifice and the Lord would be Cain's master as well
 - But Cain never submits to the Lord's authority
 - (Learn more in the Genesis study)
- How have these false teachers gone the way of Cain?
 - Like Cain, they don't understand that a true relationship with God comes only on the basis of a sacrifice for sin
 - Specifically, the sacrifice of Christ on the cross
 - And without that sacrifice, no relationship, no blessing is possible
 - Instead, these false teachers say that a relationship with God is entirely a business transaction
 - Money changes hands
 - God's blessing can be bought

- They believe this and teach others
- We give God something He wants, and then we get something we want
- This is the error of Cain and it reflects their lack of spiritual understanding
 - A natural man only understands what profits the flesh
 - The unbelieving world operates on the principles of self-centeredness and pay for play
 - The natural man cannot understand a God of grace
 - And a natural man sees true faith as foolishness
 - So these teachers tell themselves and their students that God requires payment for His love
- And conveniently, these false teachers are ready to collect your money on God's behalf
 - Now we see their true motive
 - Jude says because they want to be paid, these men rush headlong into the error of Balaam
 - The Greek word for rushed headlong is literally the word “poured” like a river rushing downhill
 - Once again, it's instinctive, natural and unthinking
 - Their motivation for false teaching is to gain money
 - Jude says this is repeating the error of Balaam
 - Balaam was a prophet of God
 - Like all prophets, he was supposed to serve God's people
 - But instead, Balaam peddled himself a foreign King, one who was determined to destroy Israel
 - In the end, the Lord prevented the prophet from speaking against His people
 - Peter tells us more about the error of Balaam

2Pet. 2:14 having eyes full of adultery that never cease from sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed, accursed children;
2Pet. 2:15 forsaking the right way, they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;
2Pet. 2:16 but he received a rebuke for his own transgression, for a mute donkey, speaking with a voice of a man, restrained the madness of the prophet.

- Peter says false teachers have eyes full of adultery
- They never cease from sin
- They entice unstable souls
- And they have hearts trained in greed

- Then Peter says that false teachers follow the example of Balaam in loving the wages of unrighteousness
 - Balaam's true love wasn't the Lord or God's people
 - Balaam's true love was the money he could make from serving as a prophet
 - He turned religious service into a money-making enterprise
- So going the way of Balaam means having greedy hearts and corrupting religious service into an opportunity to fleece God's people
 - So when we take Cain's error and Balaam's error, we arrive at a powerful and destructive combination
 - Men teaching that God demands payment before He will respond in blessing, was followed by a demand for payment
 - The teacher becomes God's debt collector
 - And their greedy hearts drive them to devise increasingly clever ways to fleece the sheep
 - But the damage doesn't stop there because Balaam's error goes a step further
 - As Peter reminds us, the prophet Balaam wasn't permitted to speak against Israel
 - But he still desired to collect his fee, so he offered the evil king Balak an alternative to destroy Israel

Rev. 2:14 'But I have a few things against you, because you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality.

- Balaam taught the king ways to entice the men of Israel into idolatry and sexual sin, which eventually weakened the nation and gave Balak the victory he desired
 - Likewise, the false teachers today trip up God's people by enticing them into idolatry and lust for earthly wealth
 - They emphasize their own wealth and prosperity as a marketing ploy
 - And as PT Barnum famously said, there's a sucker born every minute
- Finally, in the last part of the sixth triad, Jude explains these men have unbridled ambition
 - He compares them to the rebellion of Korah, and they share his fate
 - Korah's story is told in Numbers 16:

Num. 16:1 Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took action,

Num. 16:2 and they rose up before Moses, together with some of the sons of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, chosen in the assembly, men of renown.

Num. 16:3 They assembled together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, “You have gone far enough, for all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is in their midst; so why do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the LORD?”

Num. 16:4 When Moses heard this, he fell on his face;

- Korah led a rebellion against Moses and Aaron in the desert
- They questioned whether these men represented God
- And they demanded to rule themselves
- Obviously, Moses wasn't pleased and he warned the people not to be associated with this rebellion
 - In fact, Moses instructed the people that they must separate themselves from these teachers entirely
 - They couldn't even be near their tents or touch their possessions
 - Otherwise, they would be caught up in the same judgment
- Then the Lord appeared and the time for judgment came

Num. 16:28 Moses said, “By this you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these deeds; for this is not my doing.

Num. 16:29 “If these men die the death of all men or if they suffer the fate of all men, then the LORD has not sent me.

Num. 16:30 “But if the LORD brings about an entirely new thing and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that is theirs, and they descend alive into Sheol, then you will understand that these men have spurned the LORD.”

Num. 16:31 As he finished speaking all these words, the ground that was under them split open;

Num. 16:32 and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who belonged to Korah with their possessions.

Num. 16:33 So they and all that belonged to them went down alive to Sheol; and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly.

- The error of Korah was to rebel against the Lord and His appointed representatives and get away with it
 - But God will not be mocked
 - Sooner or later the rebel in the camp is judged

- And we need to steer clear of them if we want to avoid becoming collateral damage
- So in Jude's three examples, we see the three motives of these teachers
 - They share Cain's motive
 - Thinking with the flesh, they want to gain God's favor through a business transaction
 - They pay God, He returns the favor they think
 - They follow Balaam's lead
 - They see religious services as a means for personal financial gain
 - So they see no problem with profiting at the expense of God's people
 - Finally, they share the rebellion of Korah
 - They dispute any authority in the church
 - And they expect they can operate without fear or consequences
 - But they will share in Korah's fate as well
- Jude wants us to have an even better understanding of these men and how they operate
 - So he gives us six illustrations of false teachers using examples from nature
 - Here we find the seventh and eighth triads

Jude 12 These are the men who are hidden reefs in your love feasts when they feast with you without fear, caring for themselves; clouds without water, carried along by winds; autumn trees without fruit, doubly dead, uprooted;

Jude 13 wild waves of the sea, casting up their own shame like foam; wandering stars, for whom the black darkness has been reserved forever.

- The first four illustrations are found in v.12 and the last two are in v.13
 - Each illustration conveys an essential thought
 - So altogether we're looking at six additional points about false teachers
 - Because the more we learn about them, the less likely we are to be enticed by their smooth words
 - First, Jude says these men are like hidden reefs in the church's love feasts
 - In the early church, congregations had adopted a practice of honoring the requirement for communion in the form of a full meal
 - The entire congregation would enjoy a large meal or feast as the communion observance
 - Since everyone attended these events, then the false teachers were there also
 - But Jude says the presence of false teachers in the gathering are like rocky reefs that cause shipwreck

- Reefs lying just below the water are impossible to see
- So if a ship's captain wasn't aware of the existence, he might run his vessel up onto the reef unexpectedly
- The shipwreck leaves the ship damaged and stalled on its journey
- This is Jude's point of course
 - The presence of false teachers in the church is a dangerous peril for Christians in the body
 - Like ships on a journey, a Christian may come across one of these false teachers and become a man or woman of shipwrecked faith
 - We're damaged by their influence and our journey of sanctification and spiritual maturity stalls out
- Secondly, Jude says they care only for themselves
 - My English translation really ruins this comparison by the way it translated the Greek
 - Jude literally wrote shepherding only themselves, in Greek
 - The picture from nature is of a shepherd with a flock in the field
 - But the shepherd only cares for his own needs rather than ensuring the flocks are fed
 - Feeding sheep in a common metaphor in the New Testament for teaching God's people the spiritually nourishing word of God
 - This is the proper and expected role of every pastor
 - False teachers have a different agenda
 - They only care to feed themselves
 - Yet they portray themselves as pastors or shepherds of God's people
 - Don't be fooled, Jude says; they only care about themselves
- Thirdly, they are clouds without water carried by the wind
 - A cloud brings a promise of something good, specifically of rain
 - Rain is another common metaphor in scripture
 - It's used as a picture of God's blessing, raining down upon us from heaven
 - And of course we know that rain comes from clouds that gather
 - These men, Jude says, are like those clouds
 - They blow in promising great blessings from God
 - But they have no blessing to offer
 - So instead, they only manage to cover up the sun and increase darkness
 - Instead of giving a blessing, they obscure the blessing of God's truth
- Fourth, Jude's next triad begins with a description of autumn trees without fruit - twice dead

- Fruit trees, like most trees, lose their leaves in the winter
 - They look essentially dead during the winter
 - Then spring arrives and the arrival of leaves brings a promise of fruit in the autumn
 - Fruit is also a biblical metaphor, meaning healthy spiritual outcomes
- But these false teachers are like autumn trees with no fruit
 - They never bring a crop, they never produce good fruit
 - They give no spiritual benefit
- Furthermore, they are doubly or twice dead in the sense that they don't just look dead like a winter tree - they truly are dead
 - Spiritually speaking, they are unbelievers
 - Therefore, they are spiritually dead
 - It's no wonder they produce no fruit
 - Jude says they will be plucked out by the roots, as farmers destroy trees that won't produce fruit
- Fifth, they're raging waves, foaming up their own shame
 - The ceaseless roaring of the waves beating against the shore evokes a sense of restlessness, futility, a lack of peace
 - Standing on a beach or boardwalk, we can watch the waves rolling in one after another
 - The movement and the sound never rests
 - It's energy and chaos in the breaking foam...never peaceful
 - That's the comparison Jude is making to false teachers
 - They are forever stirring up discontent within the congregation
 - They tell us we are missing something God has for us
 - And untrained minds begin to consider their words while forgetting scripture
 - The Bible teaches believers that we have everything we need in the reality of what we receive in Jesus Christ

2Pet. 1:2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;

2Pet. 1:3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

- When we let our minds wander away from the word of God, we can fall for men who teach us we need something else

- They rob us of our peace and contentment in Christ
- But their false teaching will be a testimony of shame for them
- Finally, Jude ends the eighth triad with a comparison to wandering stars, for whom a darkness has been reserved
 - The Bible often uses stars as a symbol for angels, and that's the intention here as well
 - Wandering stars speaks to the fall of a third of the angelic realm, in following after the sin of Satan
 - They wandered away from God and into judgment
 - The Bible also says that the endless darkness of the Lake of Fire was created for Satan and the demons that followed him

Matt. 25:41 “Then He will also say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;

- The Lake of Fire will serve double duty in also serving as the place of judgment for all unbelieving men from all history
- Hebrews says the Lord doesn't offer help to fallen angels, but praise the Lord He did make a way available for men to receive mercy
- These false teachers are like the fallen angels, wandering away from the opportunity for glory
 - Instead they are on a one-way trip to the Lake of Fire
 - As unbelievers, and men who teach others to sin, they are stumbling blocks who face a terrible fate in the future
 - Peter says this concerning false teachers:

2Pet. 2:21 For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them.

- False teachers who set themselves up inside the church have come to know the way, that is the Gospel message
 - They haven't believed in it so as to be saved
 - They know it in the sense that they have been exposed to it
 - Notice Peter says they have known the way of righteousness
 - But they don't know righteousness itself
 - Since they are men working around and inside the church, they have heard the Gospel but they haven't believed
 - They know how to get to Heaven but they aren't willing to make the trip

- And Peter says that in turning away from the commandment to believe, they will suffer a worse punishment in the end
- So let's sum up what we learned in this section of Jude's letter:
 - False teachers are unbelievers
 - We're not saying that a person who teaches something incorrectly, falsely, has instantly become a false teacher in the manner Jude describes
 - We can say there are False Teachers and teachers who teach falsely
 - False Teachers are a very specific class of evil men
 - These are the ones we've been studying throughout Jude's letter
 - But any believer can make an error in their teaching from time to time
 - In fact, every believer WILL teach errors eventually, inadvertently
 - No teacher, save Christ Himself, is perfect in his or her understanding of scripture
 - Paul says we all share that limitation

1Cor. 13:12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.

- Every Christian can teach incorrectly, but this isn't Jude's concern
 - His concern is that we know these certain unbelievers and understand the dangers and the response that's required
 - Jude recognizes their evil fruit
 - Don't become victim to their greedy desires
 - Don't trust their empty promises of blessing
 - Don't let them rob you of your contentment
 - And don't stand too close, because at any minute they might be swallowed up in judgment
- Next time we finish the letter, including another exploration of apocryphal literature in the Book of Enoch

- In our previous lessons, Jude has left us no doubt that false teachers are evil men due to judgment
 - In fact, in v.4 Jude said these men have been marked out beforehand for judgment because of their licentiousness and unbelief
 - They see religion as a means for financial gain
 - And they use religious service as a means to that end
 - And now Jude finishes his letter emphasizing the reality of their coming judgment
 - His purpose in this is to assure believers that we have nothing in common with these men
 - We and they have entirely different futures
 - Therefore, we need to see them for who they are: condemned men and women
- To make his point, Jude chooses to quote from another apocryphal book, called the Book of Enoch

Jude 14 **It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones,**

Jude 15 **to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”**

- There is no work of scripture written by Enoch
 - Yet in ancient Israel, there was a book called the Book of Enoch
 - In reality, the book bearing his name was written by someone else many millennia later
 - The book is Jewish apocryphal literature
- As we learned earlier, apocryphal literature is a form of popular Jewish writing designed to read like true scripture
 - It interested ancient readers because of its mystique of appearing to be wisdom from above
 - But it is not scripture
 - It just poses as if it was inspired text
 - It weaves together historical fact, myth, tradition and fiction to create an interesting story
 - We can think of it as ancient form of pulp fiction
- In this case (as with the Assumption of Moses earlier), there was a detail within the Book of Enoch that was accurate, and so Jude incorporates that fact into his letter
 - The detail concerns something that Enoch said prophetically

- Before we look at what Enoch said, we might ask the question how would anyone in Jude's day know what Enoch said approximately 3,000 years earlier?
- Especially since Enoch lived 700 years prior to the flood of Noah
- So how could anything he wrote have survived long enough for Jude or anyone else to know of it?
 - First, the Lord has the power to preserve His word, period
 - If God intended Enoch's prophecy to become a part of scripture (as it did in Jude's letter), then that prophecy must continue through history
 - Heavens and earth will pass away, but God's word will never pass away
- Secondly, the ancient Jewish historian Josephus reports a tantalizing detail concerning how Biblical authors like Jude came to know about historical events before and immediately after the flood
 - Josephus reports that Enoch's son, Methuselah was an ancient historian
 - During his exceptionally long lifespan Methuselah wrote the history of the world since Adam, on two large stone obelisks
 - These obelisks stood on earth somewhere in Arabia during the years leading up to the flood
 - You may remember that Methuselah died in the year the flood came
 - So he lived long enough to record all the events of Genesis Chapters 1-6 on those obelisks
- When the flood arrives at about the year 2,350 BC, Methuselah's historical markers remained standing through the judgment waters
 - After the waters receded and Noah and his descendants emerged from the ark, they could still read about the history of the world prior to the flood preserved on those obelisks
 - In fact, Josephus reports that those obelisks remained standing and readable until Moses' day
- If this story is true, it would explain how Moses could have written Genesis during the desert wanderings
 - Perhaps the Lord led him to the obelisks, which were written in Hebrew, where Moses learned the story he then preserved in the Torah
 - And so the words of Enoch were preserved until Jude could record them in his letter, thereby including them in the canon of scripture
- Jude says Enoch was the seventh man in the seed line after Adam
 - He is mentioned in Genesis 5
 - He is the father of Methuselah
 - And he is the man who we remember was taken by God before he died
 - Jude mentions his place in the line after Adam because seven is a significant number in scripture

- The number seven means completeness, the fullness of anything
- Enoch was the seventh in the seed line from Adam, the line that would lead to the Messiah
- In Genesis, Enoch is contrasted with another character, Lamech
 - In Genesis, the line of Cain is the family of unbelief and rebellion, while the line of Seth is the line of the seed promise
 - And the seventh member of each family is contrasted in Chapters 4 & 5
 - In Chapter 4, we see the seventh in the line of Cain
 - He is a man named Lamech
 - In Genesis 4 we read this about Lamech

Gen. 4:23 Lamech said to his wives,

“Adah and Zillah,
Listen to my voice,
You wives of Lamech,
Give heed to my speech,
For I have killed a man for wounding me;
And a boy for striking me;

Gen. 4:24 If Cain is avenged sevenfold,
Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.”

- Lamech is the seventh in the line from Cain
 - He is a man who demonstrated great sinfulness and rebellion
 - In fact, he prides himself on being seventy-seven-fold more ruthless and dangerous than his forefather Cain
 - He literally brags about murder
 - While Cain tried to hide his sin
 - This man brags about it
- On the other hand, Enoch is the seventh in the line of the seed promise
 - Concerning Enoch we read:

Gen. 5:22 Then Enoch walked with God three hundred years after he became the father of Methuselah, and he had other sons and daughters.

Gen. 5:23 So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years.

Gen. 5:24 Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.

- Enoch was a man who walked with God, we're told
- It's a brief statement, but it's all we need to hear when contrasted with the seventh in

the line of Cain

- Enoch was with God in faith and obedience
- While Cain's descendants had moved as far from God as we might imagine
- We also notice that Enoch's end is mysterious
 - One moment Enoch was walking with God, then the next moment he is not, for God took him
 - Genesis is very careful to describe the birth and death of every important person in the seed line
 - But here we learn that Enoch didn't die; he was simply taken by God
 - Why did God take Enoch off the earth without requiring him to die first?
 - The answer relates to the flood of Noah and to the point Jude is making
 - Enoch's removal from the earth is a picture of a future removal of God's people from the earth prior to death
 - That future removal is the resurrection (or rapture) of the church which is yet to happen
 - That resurrection will happen seven years prior to a coming judgment for the earth
 - The Lord will remove the righteous (by faith) before He brings His judgment on earth
 - Enoch is a picture of God's plan to separate the righteous before judgment falls on the unrighteous at the end of the age
 - In Enoch's case, he was removed 700 years prior to the flood of Noah
 - While Cain's line is left to experience God's judgment waters
- So when Jude says Enoch was the seventh in the line of Adam, Enoch is causally making reference to Enoch's role as the poster child for righteous followers of God
 - Jude is reminding his readers that God's people are to be separated from the unbelievers prior to God's judgment at the rapture
 - In fact, Enoch's quote is itself an oblique reference to the rapture when he says that the Lord's return is accompanied by His holy ones
 - First, did you notice that Enoch talked about a return of the Lord?
 - That means Enoch knew not only that the Lord would come but that He would leave
 - And then Enoch understood that the Lord would return in a future time
 - In other words, Enoch understood that there was to be both a first and second coming of the Lord
 - Next, we see that Christ's return involves more than just Christ
 - He returns with thousands of His holy ones
 - Those holy ones are you and me...we are the ones returning with Christ

- This means that we must have been removed from the earth prior to His return
- Once again, this is an oblique reference to the rapture of the Church prior to Christ's return to bring judgment
- So let's put all this together as we move forward into the rest of these verses
 - Jude wants to emphasize that the believers in the church have nothing in common with these false teachers
 - So Jude reminds the church of Enoch
 - Enoch was a man who testified by his life and his words that God intends to separate the righteous from the unrighteous prior to judgment
 - Moreover, the righteous will have a role with Christ in executing judgment upon evil men, including false teachers
 - In v.15 Jude says this coming judgment will fall upon men like these false teachers
 - Notice, they will be condemned both by the ungodly things they do and the things they say
 - They will see judgment not only for living sinful lives without faith
 - But their judgment will also take into account their false teaching and lies concerning God and His word
 - Knowing this, Jude expects his readers to make the obvious conclusion
 - If these men are to receive punishment for what they do and what they say, then we need to see them the way God sees them
 - Their words will cease to be compelling and their lies will no longer have the power to deceive when we look upon them as condemned men
 - Next time you happen to catch one of the prosperity preachers speaking their lies on TV, take a moment and look upon them with an understanding of Jude's words
 - See them as condemned men
 - Understand they are digging their own grave with their lies and their sinful lives
 - Know that you will accompany Christ at His Second Coming to execute judgment upon them
 - And quickly, they will begin to look very small and even pitiful in your eyes
 - And in that moment, they will have lost their power to deceive you
- Jude mentions they are condemned by what they do as much as by what they say
 - So he lists some of the patterns of speech that condemn these false teachers

Jude 16 These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage.

- In the first part of this verse, we have the tenth triad
 - First, Jude calls these men grumblers (or murmurers)

- This is a uniquely Jewish insult in scripture
- The Pharisees were said to grumble in the presence of Jesus' teaching
- The Israelites were murmurers in the desert wanderings
- In both cases, these actions were intended to illustrate their lack of faith in God's word
- As in the case of the Pharisees, these men claim to be teachers of the word, yet they themselves grumble against true teachers
- Secondly, they find fault or they are complainers
 - They are men who complain of their situation or fate
 - If complaining were enough to gain us the fire of hell, who could escape?
 - But the issue here is not complaining in the general sense
 - Their problem is complaining about not being free enough to follow their lusts
 - They find fault in leaders, other teachers who challenge their teaching and their behavior
 - They are like children complaining about rules they don't like
- Thirdly, they are men who speak arrogantly
 - The word in Greek for arrogant literally means of excessive weight or size
 - They are speaking in excessive ways
 - And they do so to flatter people in the Church for the sake of gaining advantage
 - There are two kinds of lies we can tell about people:
 - One that slanders and one that flatters
 - One tries to discredit someone, while the other tries to manipulate them
 - And both are equally sinful
- Now at this point in his letter, Jude has described these men in multiple levels of detail
 - The church is aware of their presence, their nature, their methods, their motivations, and their fate
 - The church no longer has any excuse for defending themselves and removing the false teachers' influence
 - The question is whether they will have the courage to do so
 - Some will, but others will waver and may not have the spiritual maturity to see things as truly
 - We see that problem in the church today
 - While some Christians are wise enough to recognize the false teachers on TV and in our local churches...
 - Others are taken in by their smooth words
 - So now Jude makes his final appeal

Jude 17 **But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ,**

Jude 18 **that they were saying to you, “In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts.”**

Jude 19 **These are the ones who cause divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit.**

- Rather than listen to the grumbling, complaining and arrogant speech of the false teachers, Jude asks the church to remember the words of the Apostle Peter
 - Jude quotes from Peter again in v.18

2Pet. 3:3 **Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts,**

- Both Jude and Peter speak of mockers in the last days
- The term “last days” refers to the last period of our age
- Therefore, Peter was not speaking of the false teachers in his own day, including the false teachers Jude is writing about
- Nevertheless, Jude is making an application from Peter’s prophecy for his readers in his day
 - His point is that false teachers always come in a similar way and therefore have a similar effect on the body
 - They use false words to cast doubt and create division within the church body
 - In a future day, false teachers will come mocking the prospect of Christ’s return
 - Such mocking hadn’t yet begun in Jude’s day, because Christ’s first coming was still a fresh memory
 - People were still expecting His return to be right around the corner
 - But as time stretches from decades to centuries to millennia, the opportunity to cast doubt grows
 - So in a future day, Peter said men would begin to cast doubt on Christ’s return
 - That future day has already arrived for us
 - Why do false teachers mock Christ’s return?
 - Primarily because it provides an excuse to follow after their lusts
 - If it were true that Jesus won’t return, then perhaps judgment won’t come to the ungodly
 - And if judgment is in doubt, then those who want freedom to sin can do so with impunity
 - They have no fear they will be called to account for their sin

- So Jude uses Peter's statement as evidence that whenever such men arrive, they create divisions by what they say
 - They drive a wedge into the body of Christ
 - They are worldly-minded men
 - They have only a focus on the here-and-now
 - They are men who cannot consider heavenly things, because as Jude says in the final part of the triad, they are devoid of the Spirit
 - If we had any doubt that they are unbelievers, this statement would settle our doubts
- So the defense against false teachers follows naturally from their methods
 - If they preach lies, we need to know the truth
 - If they divide the body, we need to remain united in our faith
 - If they sow discontent, the body needs to focus on the goodness of God
 - If they are worldly-minded, we need to keep our minds on eternity and the rewards of Heaven

**Jude 20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,
Jude 21 keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life.**

- Here is Jude's response to the problem of false teachers in the church
 - He gives a two fold response, beginning with a focus on ourselves
 - First, each believer has a personal responsibility to keep ourselves spiritually strong
 - Notice Jude doesn't tell us that our first defense is to attack these men?
 - We aren't commanded to engage with these men
 - They are unbelievers, and therefore they have nothing in common with the believer
 - We are to leave room for the vengeance of God, as Paul says in Romans
 - It's foolish to assume we can fight these men in our own power
 - The enemy is far stronger than we are
 - Only by putting on the full armor of God are we able to withstand his tricks and lies
 - In other words, we must fight in God's power, and that begins with readying ourselves
- So Jude says our first line of defense against these enemies is to build yourself up on your most holy faith

- Notice he says to build up “on” the most holy faith (not in)
 - He means to study up on the faith, to learn about our faith
 - Jude is emphasizing study of God’s word, the doctrines and the theology of our faith
- To become a serious student of the word is the first and most important defense to false teaching
 - Spiritually, it strengthens us to resist the power of the enemy to draw us away from the truth
 - As we said, if false teachers work through lies, we need to know the truth
- You have probably heard it said we don’t teach bank tellers to identify counterfeits by studying counterfeits
 - They learn to identify counterfeits by studying real money
 - And so we must become students of the truth in order to filter out the lies
 - And if the enemy is the father of lies, then how well do you suppose we must know the truth to be prepared?
- Secondly, Jude uses his twelfth triad to remind us of the importance of relying on all three Persons of the Godhead
 - First, we continue praying in the Spirit to ensure we are aligned with God’s heart
 - When false teachers makes claims about what God wants for us
 - Or when they tell us what God expects us to do for Him
 - We need the counsel of the Spirit to test those statements
 - If we are practiced in listening to the Spirit, then their words will set off warning bells
 - Like a young child who expects to hear the voice of a parent but instead hears the voice of a stranger, it will not sound right
 - This again is something we can only do if we are practiced at listening to the Spirit’s voice
 - Secondly, keep yourself in the love of God, that is of the Father
 - God’s love for us should be reflected in our attitude concerning all things
 - These false teachers are promoting attitudes, thoughts and actions that are inherently unloving
 - They are not loving toward God
 - Nor are they loving toward our neighbor in the way they promote jealousy, discontentment and division
 - If we use a test of love for all teaching, we will find it an amazingly accurate way to filter falsehoods from truth
 - Truth will promote love for God and neighbor while the enemy’s lies do the opposite

- Finally, we are to wait for the mercy of Christ at His return
 - Said another way, Jude is calling for Christians to keep their gaze squarely on eternity
 - Keep thinking about the coming of Christ for the Church
 - Consider daily the judgment seat of Christ and how our judgment will go on that day
 - Let that eternal mindset guard your hearts against false teaching that attempts to lower your thoughts to earthly desires
- Next Jude asks the church to fight against the divisiveness of false teachers by strengthening each other in the fight

Jude 22 And have mercy on some, who are doubting;

Jude 23 save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.

- With Jude's thirteenth triad, we find his counsel for how to strengthen others around us when false teachers arrive
 - First, some of our more immature brothers and sisters in the faith may have doubts about what is true
 - They may hear the teaching of the false teachers and wonder if it's true or even entertain it for a while
 - This is a natural result with immature believers, since they are always the most vulnerable
 - To this group, Jude counsels that we have patience and show mercy
 - The word for mercy can also be translated pity
 - We are to look at them with understanding and pity, so that we can respond in kindness
 - We do not further the enemy's goal by creating division
 - We try to heal the divide by showing mercy
 - Mercy means being understanding of their doubting, while continuing to teach the truth and expose the lies, and allowing time them to mature
- For some believers, however, the deception has been too strong to resist, and they have fallen for the false teachers
 - These are the believers who need to be saved, Jude says
 - Imagine a person who has fallen overboard into the ocean, and they need rescue
 - We must throw a life preserver to them and pull them back to safety
 - This can be difficult, and Jude makes no attempt to explain how we might do this
 - The specific steps to be taken will vary with the circumstances

- The basic point is to act in their best interest, endeavoring to pull them away from the false teacher's influence
- Maybe you offer them some CDs with recordings from this Jude teaching
- Or you sit with them and instruct them personally
- But do whatever you can to save them from the penalty they will suffer for experiencing a shipwrecked faith
- Finally, you have the group who has listened to false teaching for so long and liked it so much that they are now repeating it themselves
 - These believers must be handled carefully, Jude says
 - This third group are not the false teachers themselves
 - The false teachers are unbelievers, as we've seen
 - But these are believers who have taken the message to heart and are repeating it as they have been taught
 - You run into these folks everywhere
 - When you are in need for something, these Christians will repeat the mantra they have been taught
 - "Name it and claim it," "rebuke the devil," "sow your seed," etc...
 - By these false catch-phrases we can sometimes recognize the believer who has become saturated in the false teaching and believes it
 - More concerning, they may have started to follow in other lusts of the flesh, whether financial or sexual or otherwise
 - Jude says this person also deserves our mercy, but mixed with fear on our part
 - The fear refers to maintaining a distance from them
 - Especially if they have begun to mimic the fleshly sins of the teachers, then they are polluted by the flesh, Jude says
 - If so, then we still do our best to pull them out, but we need a sober view of the possibilities and the dangers
 - We probably have little chance of success and we need to protect ourselves and others from their influence
 - This is a problem the church faces anytime a believer has gone seriously astray
 - Even as we try to help the individual, our first priority is to the flock
 - Like a person suffering from a deadly contagious disease, we must quarantine the patient to protect the population even as we work to treat him or her
 - So Jude says the church has to fight against the false teachers in the church in three principle ways
 - First we strengthen ourselves in daily disciplines of the faith, relying on God in His power
 - Secondly, we work to help our brothers and sisters resist the enemy's schemes

- Finally, we protect the flock by isolating those who have fallen for the lies, limiting their damage
- Then Jude ends his letter with a vote of confidence in the church's ability to carry out these instructions

Jude 24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,

Jude 25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

- First, Jude gives the church confidence to resist false teachers by reminding them they stand in the power of God
 - God has the power to keep or guard us from stumbling
 - The point isn't that God promises to keep us from making mistakes in our life or even from falling prey to false teachers
 - We know that many Christians do stumble and some fall for false teaching
 - Jude is referring to God's ultimate power and promise to redeem us and sanctify us and glorify us in the kingdom
 - Whatever else may happen, we will one day stand in the presence of the Lord and be considered blameless
 - Our blamelessness is not a product of our own power or will or work, as we know
 - It comes strictly as a matter of grace
 - But because of His grace, we will stand blameless and in great joy over that change
 - This is the true hope of the Christian faith
- Secondly, we owe this all to Him, our only God and Savior, through the God-man Jesus Christ
 - Therefore, to Him rightly deserved to be all the glory, majesty, dominion and authority
 - Jude is specifically contending with a variety of false teaching in the church
 - He states that there is only one God and Savior
 - He states that the savior is Jesus Christ, Who is also Lord Himself
 - Remember, these false teachers were denying the Master Who bought them, according to Peter
 - Furthermore, Jude says this Lord is the holder of all glory
 - The mention of glory refers to the Shechinah glory of God known from the Old Testament
 - That mention of glory would remind Jude's Jewish readers that Jesus was the

fulfillment of the Messiah promises of the Old Testament

- Next, Jude says He has all majesty
 - Like Matthew's Gospel, Jude is emphasizing that Jesus was the King of the Jews
 - He was not merely a prophet
 - He was also the anointed King
- He has dominion over all
 - He will return and rule the earth
 - Despite some claiming Jesus will not return to rule, Jude says yes He will since he has all dominion
- Finally, He has all authority
 - There is no other source of power or authority in Creation other than Christ
 - Even the enemy and the false teachers are operating under the authority of Christ for a time
- To end the book, Jude can't resist adding a fourteenth triad
 - He says that our God has existed before all time
 - Is in the present now
 - And will be forevermore
 - With that he adds an "Amen"
 - And so do we