

Jude - Pt 3 Self-Righteousness

by Billy Strachan

The sermon emphasizes the dangers of self-righteousness and self-willedness, and the importance of trusting in God's guidance and provision.

Duration: 45:41

Scripture: Genesis 4:3

Topics: "Self-Righteousness", "False Prophets"

Description

Billy Strachan emphasizes the dangers of self-righteousness, self-willedness, and self-exaltation as traits of false prophets, warning that these behaviors can infiltrate the church and lead to its destruction. He illustrates these points through the biblical examples of Cain, Balaam, and Korah, highlighting how their actions stemmed from a desire for personal gain and recognition rather than true submission to God's will. Strachan urges believers to recognize their own tendencies toward these traits and to seek a spirit-filled life that aligns with God's righteousness instead. He concludes with a call to humility and reliance on God's timing and direction in our lives.

Transcript

Remember our train of thought, a letter that opens and closes with security because we're going to need it, because we're not only seeing the traits and behavioral patterns of the false that are crept in to destroy a church, but we're also seeing what we are not to be like, but are finding out to our horror that that's so often exactly what we are like. These false men are ungodly, untruthful, unfaithful. They fall down in the area of their morals, but their judgment is sure, and we'd only remember that, but so often we don't because we never read it to have it recalled.

They are filthy dreamers, flesh defilers, and dominion despisers, and we see that they are a people that just live naturally as brute beasts, and are bent on self-corruption. And then in the 11th verse, he gives us another triplet, another horrifying triplet, as to the behavior of the false, what we ought not to be like, and unfortunately what so often we are like. Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain, ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Cor.

And the three traits here are Cain, self-righteousness, Balaam, self-willedness, and Cor, self-exaltation. Self-exaltation. And if you turn to Genesis and chapter 3, chapter 4, you discover here how to recognize this trait of self-righteousness.

But then you're also going to recognize that it's one of the things that ought not to be in a spirit-filled, Holy Ghost-controlled life. Adam knew Eve, his wife, and she conceived and bared Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. Now, in the literal Hebrew, she is stating, in effect, I have gotten the man from the Lord.

Because in Genesis 3, 15, was the first promise of a coming Messiah. And I will put enmity between thee, Satan, and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, you shall bruise his heel.

Christ, the seed of the woman. Your miraculous birth of Christ. Women don't have a seed, they have an egg.

The males have the seed. But here is the seed of a woman. Picturing for us the miraculous birth of Christ through the operation of the Holy Ghost.

And Satan would bruise that seed's heel. Kick a man in the shins, he won't die. But he shall bruise your head.

Wreck a head, and you do die. Showing the ultimate defeat of Satan by this coming promised man, the seed of the woman. And typical of the impatience of humanity, Eve jumps to the conclusion on the birth of her first son, Cain, that she is holding the man, the Saviour, in her hands.

And in actual fact, she has a murderer in her hands. It's like the promise he's given to David, that God would raise up to him a son that would rule on the throne of David forever. And he thought it was Solomon.

But it wasn't Solomon. It was to be Jesus. And too soon, men presume that what they've gotten immediately is God's answer.

And God says, no, I take time about the preparation of my answers to my promises. Nothing done impetuously or impatiently, and I do it well. And if you jump to a conclusion that I'm fulfilling my will, because you see visibly something that you think is the answer, you can be making the biggest mistake in your life.

And she thought she had the man from the Lord. She'd got the Saviour. She didn't.

She got a murderer. And she again bear his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

And in the process of time, guess who was the first to make a religious move in the family amongst the children? It came to pass that Cain, not Abel. And yet both those boys would hear the story from the father of what God did. How that they tried by self-effort to cover themselves up in their sinfulness by aprons they made of leaves of trees, but God gave them the skins of animals to cover them up.

And if you look in verse 21 of Genesis 3, unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them. Now that meant that an innocent animal that had done no wrong had to die to give up its skin, its hide, to become a covering for man, picturing the death of the innocence for the guilty. A picture of Christ, the Lamb of God, slain before the foundation of the world.

And this would be passed on. This is the foundation of redemption, the blood sacrifice to atone for the guilty. And it would be passed on to the boys, and yet the first one to make any religious response in the

family was Cain.

And he brought to the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. He came with what he could produce by self-effort through his own self-righteousness. He bypassed his father's story and brought the fruit of the ground.

And then you have a response from Abel. And Abel, he also brought to the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering.

He respects the one that's prepared to submit themselves to God's demands for redemption. And nothing will ever attain anything with God of any righteousness that comes from self-righteousness. And the word of God tells us that all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags.

But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. God has no respect for something that you produce to offer him. And Cain was very angry and his face fell.

And the Lord said unto Cain, why are you angry and why is your face fallen? If you do well, shalt thou not be accepted? God was stretching out the olive branch, giving another opportunity for this person to just humble himself, go back and do what his brother had done, bring a blood offering. And if thou doest not well, sin lies at the door, you're opening a whole can of worms that are going to get you. Sin lies at the door.

And unto thee shall be his desire and you shall rule over him. And you discover here that sin lies at the door. And if you refuse to adjust and come under the atoning work of an innocent animal slain on your behalf and still persist in your self-righteousness, you are going to release the enemy who's going to end up ruling over you.

And Cain talked with Abel, his brother, and it came to pass they were in a field that Cain rose up against Abel, his brother, and slew him. And the Lord said unto Cain, where is Abel your brother? And he said, I don't know. Am I my brother's keeper? Sin lies at the door and now sin is through the door.

Now sin is turning a man that made the first move towards God, but in self-righteousness, a liar and a murderer. And he said, what have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries unto me from the ground. And now you are cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.

When you till the ground, it will not henceforth yield unto thee her strength. A fugitive and a vagabond shall thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto the Lord, my punishment is greater than I can bear.

Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth, and from thy face shall I be hid. And I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth, and it shall come to pass that everyone that finds me shall slay me. And the Lord said unto him, therefore, whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.

And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any find him should kill him. And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord. What an exit, what a punishment, because of his determination to be accepted on his own terms with the Almighty.

Self-righteousness. And you'll find that one of the hallmarks and traits of the false prophet is that he attains to his spiritual height on the basis of self-effort and self-righteousness. Examine every other religion and cult in the world, and they all reek of self-righteousness, self-attainment, how perfect you can get yourself to get as near as you can before dying to the God that you're going to earn your way into his heart and meet him.

And God says that's not on. People live by the righteousness of faith, not by self-righteousness. And God's judgment on Cain was severe, as it will be on any false prophet that comes into a fellowship to wreck it with an air of self-righteousness.

And yet the funny thing is, it's so easy for the false prophet to come into a church fellowship and to work on the self-righteousness aspect because so many of the Christians are self-righteous. They absolutely stink of it. Proving and proving and proving Sunday in and Sunday out how spiritual they are by self-effort.

And God has no respect for it. The only respect he has is for any righteousness that is imparted by faith from Christ to that person. And that person will acknowledge that any goodness they have is not what they're doing for God or to impress the church, but stems from God's goodness to them, to them.

So his basic problem was self-righteousness. Now, of course, Balaam was a different cup of tea altogether as a false prophet. If you look in Numbers and chapter 22, Numbers 22, and the children of Israel set forward and pitched in the plains of Moab on this side the Jordan by Jericho.

And Balak, the son of Zippor, saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. And Moab was so afraid of the people because they were many. And Moab was distressed because of the children of Israel.

And Moab said unto the elders of Midian, Now shall this company lick up all that are round about us as the ox licks up the grass of the field. And Balak, the son of Zippor, was king of the Moabites at that time. He sent messengers therefore unto Balaam, the son of Beor, to Pithor, which is by the river of the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying, Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt.

Behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me. Come now, therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people, for they are too mighty for me. Even Moab recognized that God's people had strength, for they are too mighty for me.

Peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land. For I want that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed. A prophet with a reputation, that if he curses somebody, they get cursed.

And the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the rewards of divination in their hand. And they came unto Balaam, and spake unto him the words of Balak. And he said unto them, Stay here this night, and I will bring you word again, as the Most High God shall speak unto me.

And the princes of Moab stayed with Balaam. And notice the beauty of the next verse. Before Balaam makes a move, God came to Balaam.

God came to Balaam. He had not gone to God. And he said, What men are these with thee? And Balaam said unto God, Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me, saying, Behold, there is a people come out of Egypt, which covereth the face of the earth.

Come now, curse me them. Peradventure I shall be able to overcome them, and drive them out. And God said to Balaam, and what God says, God means.

And God said to Balaam, Thou shalt not go. And the whole problem with this man was, he went. Thou shalt not go with them.

And the major problem that he died for eventually was, he went self-willed, dug his heels in, and had a determination that at all costs he was going to get doing his thing, irrespective of whether God wanted it or God didn't. You shall not go with them. You shall not curse the people, for they are blessed.

My word has gone out that they're my people and they're blessed. And Balaam rose up in the morning and said unto the princes of Balak, get you into your land. For the Lord refuses.

The Lord never refuses. He always gives the correct answer that's positive. No is not a refusal.

It's no, because I have something better. Yes is not permission, because it's what you want. It's yes, because in my heart, it's the best thing for you.

And all prayers will be answered yes, no, or wait. But it will always be the best. And there's never a refusal.

But here you see the determination of the self-willedness of this man's heart, that God has been a bit of a spoil sport. A God that turns around and refuses, meaning I didn't get what I want. And when I don't get what I want, it's a refusal.

And he doesn't see it as the blessing of God. He refuses to give me permission to go with you. And the princes of Moab rose up and they went to Balak and said, Balaam refuses to come with us.

And Balak sent yet a princes more and more honorable than me. And they came to Balaam and said to him, thus said Balak, the son of Ziphor, let nothing, I pray you, hinder you from coming unto me. For I will promote thee unto very great honor.

And I will do whatsoever you say unto me. Come now, therefore, I pray thee, curse me, this people. And Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak, stating his price.

Oh, if Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord, my God, to do less or more. Oh, that sounds tremendous. Sounds like a very submissive person to God.

Now, therefore, I pray you stay here this night that I may know what the Lord will say unto me more. God doesn't have to say any more. God spoke.

What God spoke is irrevocable, irrefutable, irresistible, irrepeatabe. Once that word has gone out of the divine mouth, that's true. He didn't have to go back.

Thou shalt not go with them. And he says, I can't do anything more or less other than what God gives me permission to do. But let's wait till tomorrow and I'll talk to him tonight to see if God's changed his mind.

See if maybe in 24 hours he's forgotten I asked him yesterday and I'll get what I want today. And look at verse 20. And God came to Balaam at night and said unto him, if here's the condition, you want a clear cut indication as to whether what I said was true or not.

I'll show you how to recognize that what I said is true or not. I don't mind confirming my word. If the men come to call you, rise up and go with them.

But yet the word that I shall say unto you, you shall do. If the men come in the morning, wake you up and say, let's go, there's a sign that I am letting you go. And Balaam rose up in the morning, settled his ass and went.

Never even waited for them to wake him up. He got the slight indication there would be a chance of going. And Balaam rose up in the morning, settled his ass and went with the princes of Moab.

Determination to get his hands on that reward, that power. And God's anger was kindled because he went. And the angel of the Lord stood in the way for an adversary against him.

Now he was riding upon his ass and his two servants were with him. And the ass saw the angel of the Lord. It's only the believer that's rebelling, the person that's in communication with God and blinded by self-will, that can't see the Lord.

And people that come and say, I just don't know what God wants me to do. It's a load of rubbish. They're blinded by their determination to get what they want.

Even a donkey can see the Lord. And if donkeys can see that he's standing in the way and saying, this is not the way. Those of us made in the image of God and indwelt by Christ through the Holy Spirit.

It's stupid for us to say, I just don't know. I can't see. We're blinded by self-willedness.

And the ass saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way and his sword drawn in his hand. And the ass turned her side out of the way and went into the field. And Balaam smote the ass to turn her into the way.

But the angel of the Lord stood in a path in the vineyards, a wall being on this side and a wall on that side. He's now narrowing it down. He was in an open space saying, don't go.

Now he's crowding them into a place with a wall on either side, making it more evident that you've not to pass me. And when the ass saw the angel of the Lord, she had thrust herself into the wall, crushed Balaam's foot against the wall and he smote her again. And the angel of the Lord went farther and stood in a narrow place.

Notice the patience of the Almighty from out in the open to a walled gap, to a narrow place. Determined, just as determined as Balaam is in his self-willedness to show him that you're opposing me. You're opposing my will for your life.

I'm giving you every signal and every communication imaginable to tell you not to go. There was no way to turn either to the right or the left. And when the ass saw the angel of the Lord, she fell down under Balaam and Balaam's anger was kindled and he smote the ass with a stick and the Lord opened the mouth of the ass and she said to Balaam, what have I done unto thee that thou hast smitten me these three times? And Balaam said unto the ass, because you've mocked me, I would there was a sword in my hand for now I would kill you.

And the ass said unto Balaam, I'm not I thine ass upon which you have ridden ever since I was thine unto this day. Was I ever want to do so unto thee? And he said, no. Then the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way and his sword drawn in his hand and he bowed

down his head and fell flat in his face.

And the angel of the Lord said unto him, wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? Behold, I went out to withstand thee because your way is perverse before me. A self-willed person who blinds themselves from understanding the direction I have for them for their future is nothing more or less than a pervert of belief. And the ass saw me and turned me these three times and unless she had turned from me, surely now I would have slain me and saved her alive.

I'm so God of God, I can keep a donkey alive and wipe you out. And very often a stubborn donkey, a circumstance that crushes your foot against a wall that you think is opposing you and against you is an act of mercy. It's a donkey being merciful to you in spite of your self-willedness to keep you from going the wrong way, but you mistook it and thrashed it.

And so often in our everyday lives, we get up in the circumstances against us and we get out the stick and we thrash the circumstances to death saying everybody's against me, everybody's out to hurt me and we're so totally subjective instead of objective about these things. And we always suspect that every adverse circumstance is both heaven and earth and everybody around us in a church fellowship out to hurt us. Learn to be a bit more objective about things in life.

When Moses saw the burning bush, if he was going to be subjective, he wants the power of the bush, but the nearer he gets to it, the more the flames are scorching his hair and burning his face. Well, if he's subjective, he ends up and says, oh there's a trick to this, there's a catch to it, that fire's only interested in drawing me with an attraction of power to get me near enough to burn me. And he's liable to walk off into the desert and miss the blessing of leading two and a half million people to redemption.

But if you're objective, you take the attitude Moses took, I'm going up to that fire and I don't care if I end up like Kojak, lose all my hair and have a burnt red face, I'm going to get the answer, I don't care how much it hurts, I want the truth and I want the reality of the power of the bush. And one of the biggest problems is that in self-willedness, every time somebody out of the love of their heart tries to help you, to see that you're doing something wrong, going in the wrong way, ruining your own life, perverting your faith, you slap them in the face and tell them to mind their own business. Jesus Christ is my boss, not you, he'll tell me not you.

And you kick and you thump and you bash because you're so convinced that everybody that says a word against you, every circumstance that pushes you in a direction that you didn't particularly want to go with your self-willedness, it's all against me. It's the enemy, it's the devil. And you develop in your blindness a determination to go forward to do what you want to do.

And sometimes some of the most severe mercies are the best, where it hurts but it stops us from going in the wrong direction. And Balaam said to the angel of the Lord, I have sinned, for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me. No, he was blinded by his self-determination to get what he wanted.

Now therefore if it displeased thee, oh how wonderful, I will get me back again. And the angel of the Lord said to Balaam, go with the men. You're going to get my permissive will but you're going to live with the consequences.

But only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak. So Balaam went with the princes of Balak. And when Balak heard that Balaam was come, he went out to meet him into a city of Moab, which

is in the border of Arnon, which is in the utmost coast.

And Balak said unto Balaam, did I not earnestly send unto thee to call thee? Wherefore thou camest thou not unto me? Am I not able indeed to promote thee unto honour? Don't let anybody ever buy you. I had a friend at one occasion that tried to buy me. Offered me more than I'd ever had in my life if I just fulfilled the will that he felt God would want me to fulfill in this world.

And this stupid little man had the impertinence to say no. Flat broke I was, didn't have a penny to my name, and I had the stupidity to look at a powerful giant in the world and say no. Took him 19 years to speak to me again.

Oh how hurt they get when they can't buy you with the lovely little pieces of paper called money. Don't let anybody ever buy you, because then they own you. And Balaam said unto Balak, lo I am come unto thee.

Have I now any power at all to say anything? The word that God puts in my mouth, that shall I speak. And Balaam went with Balak, and they came to Kirjath Huzoth. And Balak offered oxen and sheep and sent to Balaam and to the princes that were with him.

And they came to pass on the morrow that Balak took Balaam and brought him up into the high places of Baal, that thence he might see the utmost part of the people. And Balaam said unto Balak, build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven oxen and seven rams. Let's make this a perfect job.

Let's impress him for my wages. And Balak did as Balaam had spoken. And Balak and Balaam offered on every altar a bullock and a ram.

Oh you can be very religious and find that you're still being self-willed. And Balaam said unto Balak, stand by the burnt offering and I will go. Peradventure the Lord will come to meet me, and whatsoever he showeth me, I will tell thee.

And he went to a high place, and God met Balaam. And he said unto him, I have prepared seven altars, and I have offered upon every altar a burnt bullock and a ram. And the Lord put a word in Balaam's mouth, and he returned unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak.

Then he took up his parable and said, Balak, the king of Moab, hath brought me from Aram out of the mountains of the east, saying, come, curse me, Jacob. Come, defy Israel. How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed? How shall I defy whom the Lord hath not defied? For from the tops of the rocks I see him, from the hills I behold him.

Lo, the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned amongst the nations. And, boy, to this very day that's true. Nobody wants them.

Who can count the dust of Jacob and the number of the fourth part of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his. And Balak said unto Balaam, Why hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse my enemies, and behold, ye have blessed them altogether. And he answered and said, Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth? And Balak said unto him, Come, I pray thee, with me unto another place from whence thou mayst see them.

Thou shalt see the utmost part of them, and thou shalt not see them all, and curse me then from thence. Let's make adjustments, and try all over again. And he brought him into the field of Zophim, to the top of

Pisgah, and built seven altars, and offered a bullock and a ram in every altar.

And he said unto Balak, Stand here by the burnt offering, while I meet the Lord. Yonder. And the Lord met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth, and said, Go again unto Balak, and say thus.

And when he came to him, behold, he stood by his burnt offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak said unto him, What hath the Lord spoken? And he took up his parable, and said, Rise up, Balak, and hear. Hearken unto me, thou son of Zephyr.

God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent. Hath he said, and hath he not spoken it, or hath he spoken, and shall not make it good? Behold, I have received commandment to bless, and he hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it. He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob.

Would you get that? They're in their fortieth year of rebellion, and God says, I see no iniquity in my people. I am able to keep them from falling. Neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel.

There's no perversion there, and yet they were in the depths of sin. The Lord his God is with them, and the shout of a king is among them. God brought them out of Egypt.

He hath, as it were, the strength of a unicorn. Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel. According to this time, it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought? Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion.

He shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain. And Balaam said unto Balaam, Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all. But Balaam answered and said unto Balaam, Told not I thee, saying all that the Lord speaketh, that I must do? And Balaam said unto Balaam, Come, I pray thee, I will bring thee unto another place.

Peradventure it will please God that thou mayest curse me then from there. And Balaam brought Balaam unto the top of Peor, and looketh towards Jishimon. And Balaam said unto Balaam, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven bullocks, seven rams.

And Balaam did as Balaam had said, and he offered a bullock and a ram in every altar. And when Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he went not as at other times to seek for enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness. And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes, and the Spirit of God came upon him.

And he took up his parable and said, Balaam the son of Peor hath said, And the man whose eyes were open hath said, He hath said which heard the words of God that saw the vision of the Almighty falling into a trance, but having his eyes open, how goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel. As the valleys are they spread forth as gardens by the riverside, as the trees of lyne aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters. He shall pour the water out of his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters, and his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted.

God brought him forth out of Egypt. He hath, as it were, the strength of a unicorn. He shall eat up the nations, his enemies, and shall break their bones and pierce them through with arrows.

He couched, he laid down as a lion, and as a great lion, who shall stir him up? Blessed is he that blessed thee, and cursed is he that cursed thee. And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he smote his

hands together. And Balak said unto Balaam, I call thee to curse my enemies, and behold, you have altogether blessed them these three times.

Therefore now flee thou to thy place. I thought to promote thee unto great honour, but, lo, the Lord hath kept thee back from honour. And Balaam said unto Balak, Speak I not also to thee and to thy messengers which thou sentest me, saying, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord to do either good or bad of my own mind, but what the Lord said, that will I speak.

And now, behold, I go out unto my people. Come therefore, and I will advertise thee what this people shall do to your people in the last days. And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam the son of Beor hath said, And the man whose eyes are open hath said, He hath said which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the Most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty falling into a trance, but having his eyes open.

I shall see him, Jesus Christ, but not now. I shall behold him, Jesus Christ, but not nigh. There shall come a star out of Jacob, Jesus Christ.

And a scepter, Jesus Christ, shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession. Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies.

And Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he, Jesus Christ, that shall have dominion. He doesn't come into your life to have a coalition government.

Dominion. And shall destroy him that remaineth of the city. And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable and said, Amalek was the first of the nations, but his latter end shall be that he shall perish forever.

And on and on he goes with this great prophecy about the coming of the Lord and what the Lord will do. And Balaam died and never enjoyed a part of it. He was slain shortly after that.

But the whole problem with that man, and the whole problem with Balak was the determination, the self-willedness to get the answer they wanted. Moving around, trying again, every conceivable trick in the book to get what they wanted out of God and couldn't get it. And that's the trait of a false teacher.

But do you see how easy it is for the false teacher to come into a church and to wreak havoc in a fellowship? Because you have so many Christians and they get up every morning and that's exactly their attitude to God. Here is my plan for today. Can you just put your rubber stamp on there and say passed.

And we are the awfulest people for creating plans and asking God to stamp them with the seal of approval. And it has nothing whatsoever to do with what God wants to do with your life. You're wanting his religious sanctimonious, super spiritual seal on your own plan so that you can tell the world it's what God wants you to do.

And if you really examined the so-called will of God for people today on their lives, you're only going to come up with one conclusion. God's eccentric because his mind seems to be full of chaos, indecision and things that destroy people. And it's not true.

Most of that chaos, indecision and destruction is self-inflicted because they're so blind. They want what they want. This is God's will for me.

It's what I'm going to do. It's what I'm going to get. It's where I'm going and they go.

And the whole problem with Balaam was that he went. And you know it's exactly the same problem with a believer. And so it's no surprise when you find somebody walking into the church and seeing a lot of self-willed people saying, I think I can be at home here.

I think I can be at home here. They practice a lot of self-will, everybody doing their own thing so I can do my own thing too and get away with it. And then they spoil the church.

Then the church says, how did that happen? How could a church split? How could a church be wrecked in its fellowship? Because they did not see to it that their own walk was such that they would have spotted the false person coming in immediately. But when you have so much self-righteousness cluttering up a church and so much self-willedness cluttering up a church, it's no surprise that they end up splitting. And the sin of Korah, self-exaltation, you find that in chapter 16 of Numbers.

Now Korah, the son of Ishtar, the son of Koah, the son of Levi, that means something. That was Israel's who's who. That's how you introduce people.

If you came up and said, can I introduce you to Korah? And you'd say, oh yeah, sometime, I'm busy at the moment. But if they said to you, may I introduce you to Korah, the son of Ishtar, you stopped. And you said, this is Korah, you're Ishtar's son.

Yes, if the Ishtar that you are thinking of is Ishtar the son of Koah. Well, I do think that's the one I'm thinking, but is the Koah that you're thinking of the Koah that was a direct descendant of Levi? Yes. Oh, I am delighted to meet you.

Because that was how they introduced people. And you knew by the number of names that they introduced you to, this is Mr. Big. So he's a man of renown, of importance, his ancestry and his heritage is superb.

And he traces his ancestry back to Levi, the first high priest came from the tribe of Levi. We've always had people in the ministry, you know, in our family line. Oh, I get that at church doors.

You know, of course, you know, my family for generations have been leading the choir. You know, I'm convinced of the enemy of man's soul ever had to choose a church job, he would be a choir director. I've seen more evil in a choir room before a service than I've ever seen during a service.

Watching them standing in there in front of mirrors, getting themselves all done up. And you say to yourself, I wonder if they've spent as much time getting their heart ready to sing as they do make their face ready to look at. Honestly, I mean, it's nice to see nice people when you see them spending so much time, hours, just for the sake of what people look at.

And then a minute later, they're arguing, why is she singing solo again? She's always up front getting the special pieces and I'm always in the background. Oh, and he's never saw such haggling and fighting and spitting and taxing. And they trace their ancestry back.

We've always been Christians in our family. And there was Dathan and Abiram, sons of Eliab and on the sons of Pele, sons of Reuben, took men. And they rose up before Moses with certain of the children of Israel, 250 princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown.

This was not a rabble. This wasn't you going out and getting together a subversive bunch of silent protesters. This wasn't grabbing a bunch of idle layabouts to go and have a protest meeting in front of the palace in leadership and say, we want a revolution.

We want to overthrow the government. These were men of renown, men with solid reputations and integrity in the nation. And they gather themselves together against Moses and Aaron and said unto them, you take too much upon you seeing that all the congregation is holy.

You think you've got a right to set yourself up. Moses is number one and Aaron is number two in this nation. You know, God, we know God.

What makes you think you're more important than we are? You say, you know, the Lord, I say, I know the Lord. What makes you my leader? We are holy, every one of them. And the Lord is amongst them.

For then lift you up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord. And the accusation was that they were lining their own nests, putting their own family into positions of importance. And when Moses heard that he fell in his face and he spoke unto Korah and unto his company saying, even tomorrow, the Lord will show you who are his and who is holy and will cause him to come near unto him.

Even him whom he has chosen will he cause to come near to him. This do take your senses, Korah and all his company and put fire there and put incense in them before the Lord tomorrow. And it shall be that the man whom the Lord does choose, he shall be holy.

You take too much upon you, you sons of Levi. And Moses said unto Korah, here I pray you, you sons of Levi, seemeth it but a small thing unto you that the God of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel to bring you near to himself, to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord and to stand before the congregation, to minister unto him. And he hath brought thee near to him and all thy brethren, the sons of Levi with thee, and seek ye the priesthood also.

What's this clamber for power and position? Aren't you thankful that God has a service for you? For this reason, both thou and all thy company that are gathered together against the Lord, and what is Aaron that you murmur against him? He never asked for the job God appointed him. So keep your hands off my chosen, says God. And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, which said, we will not come up.

Is it a small thing that thou has brought us up out of a land that flows with milk and honey to kill us in the wilderness, except you make yourself altogether a prince over us? Were you trying to be the king of the castle? Moreover, thou has not brought us into a land that flows with milk and honey or given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards. Will you put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up. And Moses was very angry and said to the Lord, respect not thou their offering.

I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them. And Moses said unto Korah, be thou and all thy company before the Lord, thou and they and Aaron tomorrow and take every man his censer and put incense in them and bring ye before the Lord every man his censer, 250 censers, thou also and Aaron, each of you his censer. And he took every man his censer and put fire in them and laid these

incense there on and stood in the door of the tabernacle of the congregation with Moses and Aaron.

And Korah gathered all the congregation against them unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the congregation. And the Lord speak unto Moses and Aaron saying, separate yourselves from among this congregation that I may consume them in a minute.

And they fell on their face and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin? And will you be angry with all the people? And the Lord speak unto Moses saying, speak unto the congregation saying, get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan and Abiram. And Moses rose up and went unto Dathan and Abiram and the elders of Israel followed him. And he speak unto the congregation saying, depart I pray you from the tents of these wicked men and touch not nothing of theirs lest you be consumed in all their sins.

So they got up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan and Abiram on every side. And Dathan and Abiram came out and stood at the door of their tents and their wives and their sons and their little children. And Moses said, hereby you shall know that the Lord has sent me to do all these works, but I have not done them of my own mind.

Never a thing I've done in leadership. Did it come from my own imagination? If these men die, the common death of all men, or if they be visited with the visitation of all men, then the Lord has not sent me. But if the Lord make a new thing in the earth, open our mouth and swallow them up with all that appertaineth unto him.

And they go down quick into the pit. Then you shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord. And it came to pass as he had made an end of speaking all these words that the ground cleaveth under that was under them.

And the earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up and their houses. And all the men that appertained unto Korah and all their goods, they and all that appertained to them went down alive into the pit and the earth closed upon them and they perished from among the congregation. Pretty decisive.

That was God's decisive answer to those that decided they had a right to be the leader. They had a right to be number one at the top. They had a right to go around politically and lobbying and doing their best to rouse the entire nation up, to throw out God's chosen and to be chief at the top because I should be number one.

Nobody would run this job like I run it. I'm better than anybody. Self-exaltation and God opened the ground and swallowed them up.

You know, I often wonder if God opened the ground in churches next Sunday morning to swallow up those who suffer from self-exaltation, how many pastors, deacons, elders would disappear on Sunday morning? How many youth leaders? How many church group leaders would disappear if God said on Sunday at 11, I swallow into the ground everybody that put themselves into that position and I didn't? You'd be surprised, wouldn't you? The three main traits of a false person whose judgment is certain, self-righteousness, self-willedness, self-exaltation, and it would be so easy to pick those people out if we would just submit to the will of the Lord, live by his righteousness and just stay where we are till God promotes or demotes. But when you see Christians who are practicing these things, it's no surprises that churches split, divide and disappear because they are giving ground to the false man to come in and practice what is his by nature.

So we've got to see to it we stop that and if God says don't go, don't go.

If God says go, go and daily get up with a determination to kick your self-righteousness in the teeth and stop seeking big positions of power and importance in the church of God. Just be thankful you're saved. Let's have a word of prayer.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/23/SID23966.mp3>

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