

Xviii. Beware of False Prophets

by John Sung

John Sung emphasizes the importance of discerning false prophets and contending for the faith as outlined in Jude's epistle.

Scripture: Jude 1

Topics: "Discernment", "Vigilance Against Deception"

Description

John Sung emphasizes the critical need to beware of false prophets as foretold in Jude, who warns believers to discern between true and false teachings. He highlights Jude's credentials and the importance of contending for the faith, especially as false prophets infiltrate the church, leading many astray. Sung categorizes false prophets into three classes: unbelieving liberals, self-exalted ones, and those of the flesh, urging the congregation to recognize their deceptive tactics. He encourages believers to build themselves up in faith, pray, and remain steadfast in God's love while actively working to save souls from deception. Ultimately, Jude's message is a call to vigilance and purity in faith as believers await the return of Christ.

Transcript

(JUDE)

The Book of Revelation foretells the Second Coming of Christ. Before He comes, it is most necessary to beware of false prophets. Hence Jude is placed before Revelation.

Vs. 1 & 2. This Jude (Judas) is not the one surnamed Iscariot who betrayed Jesus. Some say he is Jesus' younger brother. At first he did not believe Jesus, but after His resurrection he became a believer. During his time of serving The Lord, false prophets arose. When Peter wrote his epistles these false prophets had not yet appeared. In Jude's time the false prophets came, and many were enticed.

We must discern between the true and the false like distinguishing between silver and copper coins. Jude says, "I am a servant of the Lord, brother of James, and I write to them that are sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." His credentials are that 1) he is called, 2) he is sanctified in God, 3) he is preserved. Many of you were called through the love of Christ in our previous Revival meetings. We receive this precious letter from Jude also which brings us 1)mercy 2)peace and 3)love multiplied. God has specially preserved this Epistle for us that we might beware of false prophets.

Vs. 3, 4. "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

Soon after many are saved and born again, these false prophets will come in to shake their faith. When an army goes to war, what it fears most is infiltration into their ranks by the enemy. We are not afraid of the enemy without, but rather the enemy within. So let us beware of the devil, of false angels, creeping into our midst. Let us "purge our party"! Many infiltrate not through its main door but by climbing the wall, or by slipping in through the side doors. These are hypocrites who have no evidence of their vaunted salvation, "who were before of old ordained to this condemnation." These have no way of repentance who must receive double punishment. These men have turned the grace of our God into opportunity for lust. They are blind, not following the Holy Spirit, but the Devil. Beloved brothers and sisters, let us beware of these who use all kinds of methods to infiltrate the Church. Throughout my China travels I have seen not a few of these. It is easier to preach than to argue with these people. So, Jude says, "It was needful (I could not help but)." Pastors and preachers everywhere like to be goody-goodies by not engaging in such polemics. Yes, false prophets are wolves entering the church to devour the flock. Let us analyze the different classes of false prophets. There are three:

Vs. 5. The first class are the unbelieving liberals. Jude says, "I will, therefore, put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this." Though the people followed Moses they did not believe in him. There are many pastors and evangelists in the church who do not believe in heaven or hell, nor in His precious blood. They do not believe the Bible, no, not Genesis, and yet they are theological professors and leaders. Yes! Beware of false prophets who are Satan's tools. Open wide your eyes to defend against these unbelieving liberals, modernists. Eighty per cent of the foreigners (missionaries) coming out to China are unbelieving liberals who do not believe in the whole Bible. Beware! Jude says, "These people will be destroyed in the desert."

Vs. 6. The second class of false prophets are the Self-exalted Ones, who claim themselves the Spiritual Ones. Esteeming themselves better than others, they keep not their original place through such exaltation. The Lord will chain these up until the judgment day. These claim to be spiritual: these keep Saturday, these demand that women be head covered, these demand immersion, these claim to speak in tongues. These are all false prophets: 1) Sabbatarians 2) We-who-come-in-the-Name-of-the-Lord 3) Rapturists 4) Speakers of tongues. When I was in Shantung I met a certain group of lepers so much so they could fly! After leaping themselves half-dead, they lay exhausted on the ground. On the third or fourth day they revived. They talked of seeing heaven and of the rapture. Beloved, let's beware of this. And it is those who claim to be spiritual who back-bite most, who denounce others. These who are found all over China are the proud ones, evil angels.

Vs. 7. The third class is of the flesh. They can preach. They are leaders. But they commit adultery, they engage in business, they sell opium to get rich. Many are found in the big cities. Eighty-eight out of a hundred are breakers of the Seventh Commandment. Pitiful? Beloved, I'm most afraid of this third class of people.

Vs. 8. These are filthy dreamers who despise authority. They do not admit their error, but rather castigate others to be of the emotional type, of the evil spirit, and of practicing trickery. These engage in wrecking the work established by others. These come into schools and churches and work on those who are born again. For example, when our girl students preaching bands come home enthusiastically from evangelism,

they will subtly implant these words, "Oh no! Paul says he suffers not a woman to teach. So girls are not to go out witnessing." How wicked is Satan! He builds not but destroys! He steals into the flock to shake their faith, to divide.

Vs. 9. Satan and the Archangel are in contention. Moses is dead. Satan wants to make Moses' body an idol for worship. The angel forbids him. In the contention the angel dared not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke thee!" There are many who speak evil of others, but the Angel dared not speak evil even of Satan. Can we speak evil of others? We have no qualification to criticize. I have never so spoken of others.

During these Revival Meetings, many were saved. But there are coming in those who will denounce, "So and so is an evil spirit. He has played on the emotions of the people and intoxicated them. He is false!" These have no other work to do than go about shaking the faith of others.

Vs. 10, 11. The Bible says, "Woe to the false prophets!"

1) These who go the way of Cain. They trust in works, not in the precious blood. They offer fruits of the land, not the precious blood of the Lamb. They preach on the good character of Jesus, not the precious blood of the Cross.

These use human wisdom to criticize the Bible.

2) These run greedily after the error of Balaam. Balak thought of hurting Israel by asking Balaam to curse Israel. He offered bribes to Balaam. Balaam later used women to entice Israel to commit fornication and worship idols. As Israel forsook God so God did not love Israel. Afterwards when God destroyed Moab, covetous Balaam was put under the sword.

In the Church today we meet with those who claim to come in the Name of the Lord. They are covetous. They get hold of the rich and organize their own churches. These are false prophets.

3) The Gainsayers of Korah exalted themselves. Korah disobeyed. He rebelled. He wanted to work evil on Moses. God commanded the earth to open her mouth to swallow him up. A warning to false prophets!

Vs. 13, 14. We are to beware of false prophets but not to speak evil of them. Only beware! These come to your love feasts but are hidden rocks. When they visit your homes and when they engage in personal conversation with you, beware of them. In a moment of unawareness you hit their rocks! And you are sunk! I met with these for three years while preaching in Hingwa. Their words were sweet. They used many words to induce me to re-baptize. Beware! What are the evidences of their falsehood?

1) They are shepherds, but they feed only themselves. They have no qualms in their selfish practices. While engaging in preaching, they are also thinking of making more money.

2) They cannot save souls. They are like rainless clouds, blown by the wind. Their preaching cannot move a soul. Rainless clouds.

3) Fruitless trees in autumn. Dead. Leaves and appearance only. A vain hope.

4) Good at speaking evil of others. Rumour mongers.

5) Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame. Confused in their own hearts, they speak an irrelevant language.

6) Wandering stars to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

Vs. 14 to 15. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, foreseeing these things prophesied, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints to execute judgment upon all and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds."

Vs. 16. How to show up these false prophets?

- 1) In their evil-speaking and backbiting.
- 2) In their murmuring.
- 3) In their lustful behaviour.
- 4) In their self-exaltation and proud-speaking.
- 5) In their flattery and fair speeches.

Jude says, "Let us contend earnestly for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints."

Vs. 17-19. "But Beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. How they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts."

These are the fruits they bear:

- 1) Partisanship. So-called Brothers Society. "In the Name of the Lord", they come to you to break bread. Leave the denominations! These who stir up cliques (within the Church).
- 2) those who follow after the flesh.
- 3) those who cannot receive the Holy Spirit.

Vs. 20, 21. What should we do unto God?

- 1) Read the Bible --- building up yourselves on your most holy faith.
- 2) Pray --- praying in the Spirit.
- 3) Keeping oneself --- in the love of God.
- 4) Looking to Jesus.

After consolidating ourselves unto God, we must advance another step --- save souls, which is snatching them from the hands of Satan.

Vs. 22, 23. To others.

- 1) And to some have compassion, making a difference.

2) Save with fear others, pulling them out of the fire.

3) But as to the hard-hearted, the dead without any hope of change, we are to beware of them, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

Jude teaches us to see through the wiles of false prophets and beware of them.

Vs. 24, 25. Jude hopes we will preserve ourselves that we might not fall, to be spotless, blameless, that we might stand in His glory, giving Him glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

THEME SONG

Victory, victory!

In the blood of Calvary.

Victory, victory,

For eternity.

Jesus Lord almighty,

He will make you mighty.

All who trust in Him

Shall sing the victory!

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