

# Through the Bible - 2 John, 3 John, Jude

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of obeying God's commandments, warning against false teachers, and the role of Jesus in discernment and hospitality.*

**Duration:** 53:08

**Scripture:** Genesis 5:22, Romans 8:13, 1 John 3:23, 1 John 4:2, Jude 1:5-7

**Topics:** "Through The Bible"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of discernment in understanding the truth. He compares the process of finding the right answer in multiple-choice questions to discerning the truth in matters of science, history, and spirituality. The preacher highlights three key points that are crucial for believers: obeying God's commandments, loving one another, and acknowledging that Jesus came in the flesh. He emphasizes that these three points are interconnected and essential for living a righteous life. The preacher also explains that God allows deception to sharpen our discernment and help us mature in our faith.

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## Transcript

Let's turn now to the word of God in the second letter of John. The second letter of John is a very brief letter and there are two things he speaks about in this brief letter. One is obeying God's commandments and warning against false teachers.

He writes it to what he calls here the chosen lady, the elder, that is John, to the chosen lady and her children. Now that could have been a godly sister or it could have been a church whom he calls the chosen lady and her children. Whichever it is, it could be a sister too.

Maybe a widow who had God-fearing children and he writes a letter of encouragement. But it could be also to a church because there are a number of things written there which all churches need to take heed to. And he says, verse 4, I was very glad to find some of your children walking in truth just as we have received commandment from the Father.

That's a great testimony when a woman has been able to bring up her children to walk in the truth. And verse 5, he says, now I'm asking you, not as though I'm writing a new commandment, but that we love one another. This is John's great theme.

You notice how it comes through in all his writings. Love, love, love, even in John's gospel. And as I said, when we see this is John looking at the decline of Christendom and seeing how everything has fallen apart in most places.

Very few churches standing up for the truth, even in Revelation chapter 2 and 3, there were only two out of seven churches standing for the truth. He could see the cause for the failure and look at these letters as the man who is inspired by the Holy Spirit to rectify the problems in these churches. Peter went out and did evangelism.

Paul went out and built those churches. John at the end of the first century is correcting a lot of wrong things and he's giving them a proper emphasis. He says, these are the things you need to emphasize.

Love one another, not at the cost of truth. He speaks a lot about truth. He says about walking in the truth, verse 4. Walking in the truth and loving one another, not compromising truth and loving, but walking in truth and loving one another.

Obedying his commandments, because this is love, he says in verse 6, that we obey his commandments. Then he says in verse 7, many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who don't acknowledge that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. Notice again the emphasis, keep the commandments, love one another, and confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh.

Even in a small letter like this, he brings out these three points. Do you see how clearly he sees the importance of these three issues? Obey the commandments, teach people to obey the commandments, teach people to love one another, and teach people that Jesus came in a human body, came in the flesh, was tempted like us, did not sin. That was a great thing, and he says a person who does not confess that, this is the deceiver and the antichrist.

Now there are two truths concerning Jesus that we need to confess. One is that he is God, and the other that he is man. Or as the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 12, 3, no one can confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, Jehovah, except by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus is the Jehovah of the Old Testament. The second thing it says, we saw in 1 John 4, everyone who has the Spirit will confess that Jesus came in the flesh, that Jesus Christ is God of the Old Testament, and that Jesus Christ came in the flesh. Both these truths are important, but notice that the Apostle John emphasizes the second one more.

Why? We see the need in our churches. In all of our churches, we confess that Jesus Christ is God, the Jehovah of the Old Testament. There are certain cult groups that don't believe that.

Okay, forget them. Let's look at ourselves. What is our problem? Our problem is we don't sufficiently emphasize that Jesus came in the flesh.

And we've got so blind to that that when somebody speaks about it, we think it is heresy. Can you imagine how blind we have become that what John says, if a man confesses that Jesus came in the flesh, that is the mark of the Holy Spirit, and one who does not confess it is called the spirit of the antichrist. We have gone so far from that that when someone speaks about Jesus coming in the flesh, we think he's the antichrist.

This is the state of Christendom today, exactly like it was at the end of the first century. And if you want to speak God's prophetic word to backslidden Christendom today, do you know what to preach? Read John's epistles. Obey all of God's commandments.

Love one another and recognize that Jesus came in the flesh just like you. You have no excuse for your sin. He was tempted like you and He did not sin.

If you want a three-point sermon to keep preaching for the rest of your life, here are the three points. Obey His commandments, love one another, and proclaim that Jesus came in the flesh. That's how you can keep the commandments.

That's how you can love one another. That's the secret of doing those first two things. Can you keep all His commandments? Can you love one another? Here's the answer.

So in a sense, these three points are like this. The first two are, this is what God wants you to do. Here's the solution.

The third point. Jesus came in the flesh. He kept the commandments.

He loved others. Why can't you? There is no excuse for not keeping God's commandments. There is no excuse for not loving one another.

When we see that Jesus was made like us in everything, tempted like us, and did not sin. That's a tremendous truth. You say, why has God allowed deceivers then to come out into the world and preach all types of other things? Because that's the only way our discerning faculties can be sharpened.

You know, that's how we can become mature. For example, you know, many examinations these days are conducted in such a way, they have what is called multiple choice. They ask you a question, and then there are four answers underneath.

Is it this? Is it this? Is it this? Is it this? And you have to tick off the right one. And three of those answers are wrong. That is the purpose of deception also in the world.

One is right and three are wrong. And the Lord says, pick the right one. Supposing you have an examination paper, question paper, where there's only one answer.

Do you have to discern anything? Everybody will get 100%. Because that's only one right answer put there. And nobody will have discernment.

You won't know who has got discernment, who has passed and who has studied, who has not studied. No. So every examination in the world, they put multiple choice.

Maybe four answers and only one of them is right. That way we discern. And some of those answers are so close.

You know, let's take an elementary class. How much is two plus two? Okay. Is it one and a half? Sorry.

Is it three and a half? Is it four? Is it four and a quarter? Is it three and three quarter? The answers are all very close. And person thinks and says it's four. That's right.

Two plus two is four. So in the same way, in many other more complicated questions about science and physics and chemistry, you'll find multiple choice. The answers are so similar.

History questions. Very similar. It's not so far apart.

Very close. The answers are that you really need to know your subject to know which of those four answers is right. This is the purpose of deception also.

Why God has allowed deception to come here. Some of those people say something which is so similar to scripture. And the other fellow here is saying another thing which is so similar to scripture on this side.

So similar this side. But the right answer is here. And it's not four.

There are so many explanations today. Out of all these hundreds, find out the right one. Can you find out the right one? Sure.

If you love the truth, you'll never be deceived. We saw that in 2 Thessalonians 2. Those who love the truth will never be deceived. So God has allowed deceivers to come into the world.

And if you see that Jesus came in the flesh, you will not be deceived. That's what we see from verse 7. Why? I have personally found this is the answer to be protected from deception for myself. I told you about healing campaigns.

How do I know whether this particular healer and his healing methods are scriptural or not? I don't have to look at 25 verses. I don't have to look at 2000 verses. Only one thing.

Jesus came in the flesh. That's my answer. You say, how is that the answer? Jesus conducted healing campaigns in the flesh.

Let me see that. And let me see this. Immediately I know whether this is right or wrong.

Okay. Here is a preacher who asks for money all the time. How do I know whether he is a deceiver? I don't need 25 verses.

Jesus came in the flesh. Did Jesus keep asking for money? I get the answer immediately. Here I see a person who is emphasizing if you trust God, you'll be a rich person.

The Bible says this. This verse, this verse, this verse. I'm confused.

I'm a young believer. Maybe I'm deceived. What's the answer? Jesus came in the flesh.

Let me see. What did Jesus teach? Where did he teach like that? I get my answer immediately. You take any deceiver in the world.

He can't fool you when you have seen Jesus come in the flesh. Jesus is my dictionary. You know, when you don't know a word in English, what do you do? You go to a dictionary and look up the meaning of the word.

And even if you think the meaning is something else, you say, well, I must be wrong. The dictionary is right. Why don't you adopt the same method when you come to scripture? We see so many things going on today in the name of Christianity.

We don't know what's right, what's wrong. Go to the dictionary. The word made flesh.

Jesus revealed in the scriptures. I go to the Gospels and I go to the dictionary and I look at this thing going on here. I say, that's not from the Holy Spirit.

I see today people falling down and laughing and roaring like lions and barking like dogs and saying that's the Holy Spirit. I don't have to criticize them. I don't have to be confused.

Jesus came in the flesh. Let me see. Where did he lie down and laugh on the floor or where did he roar like a lion? I get the answer immediately.

I don't need to know the scriptures. These people in those days didn't have a Bible. Do you know that? But they knew that Jesus came in the flesh.

That was the answer to every wrong doctrine. So he says in verse 8, Watch yourselves. Be careful.

Be careful that you do not lose what we have accomplished that you may receive a full reward. You know you can lose your reward by being led astray by all these deceptions in Christendom today. My dear brothers and sisters, I say this to you after having served the Lord for 40 years.

The answer is that Jesus came in the flesh. Look at him. Consider Jesus and you'll never go wrong.

You don't have to criticize those men. You don't have to judge those men. God will judge them after they die.

We leave them alone. But we don't follow them if they are not manifesting the God that Jesus manifested in the flesh. And if anyone goes too far, verse 9, does not abide in the teaching of Christ, that means he goes beyond what Jesus has taught.

Jesus taught up to so much, but he goes beyond that. He does not have God. John is very bold.

He says if you don't stop where Jesus stopped, you don't have God. That's it. You learn to stop where Jesus stopped.

Don't go too far and teach fantastic super spiritual things which are not in the word of God. But if you abide in the teaching, you have the Father and the Son. And if anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching of Christ coming in the flesh and that Jesus is our example for all things, do not even receive him into your house when people come to me, Jehovah's Witnesses, who do not believe that Jesus Christ is Almighty God, Jehovah of the Old Testament.

I know that I cannot convince them because I've tried many times. I usually talk to them at the door very graciously. Some of them try to give me a book and after they give it, they say it costs so much.

I say no, thank you. I said I'll give you a little tract and it doesn't cost anything. Please take it.

Read it. And they never come back. I say I know all about your doctrine.

I'm sorry, I don't agree with you. And I know that you won't be convinced by any amount of argument. I don't receive them into my house.

I don't give them a greeting saying God bless you. God cannot bless them when they dishonor the Lord. The one who gives them a greeting is participating in his evil deeds.

Stand up for the Lord in these days of deception. There are cult leaders. Be careful.

Don't just think that's Christian love to show hospitality. And in those days, hospitality meant they would even stay in the house and send them on. Nothing of that sort.

And he says there are many more things I want to write to you but I'll see you face to face and our joy will be full. Now we go to 3rd John. 3rd John, we could say the subject is a good elder and a bad elder.

The good elder is Demetrius and the bad elder is Diotrephes. You read in verse 12 and verse 9. And this letter is written to a brother Gaius whom I love in the truth. Verse 2 has been misquoted by many people in the last century as though it taught the health wealth gospel.

It looks like that, doesn't it? Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health just as your soul prospers. So from that verse, a lot of people say, see, the Bible teaches prosperity and healing. And people don't realize that anybody, when they write a letter, they'll always say to a person, well I hope you're doing well and I hope you're keeping fit.

It's normal. That's exactly what John wrote. That's all.

And I say, if you have a doubt about it, what it means, what shall we do? When you don't understand a word in English, what do you do? Take the dictionary. Okay, you don't understand this. There's conflict, two opinions among believers.

Let's go to the dictionary. The dictionary is Jesus. Was he a rich man? No.

That eliminates the question altogether. Did he have health to do God's will? Yes. And I believe that we are to have health to do God's will.

But it's not that Jesus taught that you'll never get sick. There were many people sick in the pool of Bethesda. He healed one person.

John chapter 5. Paul and Timothy were some of his greatest servants. I look at the dictionary, Jesus, and I see Jesus did not heal Paul. I see, look at the dictionary, I see Jesus did not heal Timothy of his stomach's infirmities.

So, I get the answer. I get the answer that these are not the main things in life and what John was writing, just the way you would write to somebody. I hope you're keeping okay and everybody in your family is well.

And I hope you're prospering in your business and all that. It's normal, the way we would write to anybody. It doesn't mean anything more than that.

And when people get a doctrine out of that, without consulting the dictionary, they go astray and they lead a lot of people astray. Always look at Jesus who came in the flesh. You get the answer.

I was very glad, brother, when people came and bore witness to your truth and how you're walking in the truth. And I have no greater joy than this, than to hear my children are walking in the truth. John's greatest

joy was when he heard that those to whom he administered were walking uprightly.

Then he speaks about, in 2 John, he said about not showing hospitality to certain people. Here he says, you must show hospitality to certain other type of people. He says, you're acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, especially when you don't know them.

You know, there were traveling brothers those days, traveling here and there, preaching the gospel and sometimes they had to come to a place and they always had to receive hospitality from the believers in that place. They stayed in homes. They didn't stay in hotels.

There weren't hotels like we have today. And they bear witness to your love and you will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. To send them on their way means, it's an expression which means give them some money for their journey.

Today we would say, get them a ticket for their journey and provide them for their money for their journey expenses. Because these are not paid workers. There were no paid workers at all in the first century.

That phenomenon started much later. In there, people went out trusting God and money didn't drop from heaven. It was given by other believers.

So what John is telling Gaius is, here is a brother who is preaching the gospel, comes to your place, please provide him a place to stay. And they were probably, there were no trains or buses those days. They had to travel but they had to find some means of travel.

Brother Gaius, provide them hospitality and give them some money. Give them a gift. Because they are serving the Lord.

And you are a blessed man if you do that. Because, verse 7, you know that these people never take any money from unbelievers. They have gone out for the sake of Jesus name.

And here is the one verse which teaches very clearly. John has observed it for 60 years in the church. At the end of 60 years of the church, he says, no godly man ever takes money from unbelievers for preaching the gospel.

How is it today when we preach an evangelistic meeting, call unbelievers to listen to the gospel, we take a collection bag in front of them and say, before you hear the gospel, you better pay up. You mean he's got to pay something before he hears the gospel? And what is that money for? Oh, we got to support the Lord's work. These unbelievers are supporting the Lord's work.

Where did this happen? This is Babylon. This is not Jerusalem. Have you ever seen a public meeting where no collection is held? It's rare.

99.9% of them, they always take a collection. In fact, it's one of the major parts of the meeting. These early servants of God never took a cent of pie from any unbeliever.

They said, to give to God's work is an honor, a privilege. Not everybody has that privilege. Only God's children have that privilege.

And we're not going to give that privilege to anybody else. No unbeliever will be able to stand before God in the final day and that he's saying he supported me. No.

There are times when unbelievers have sent us money and we know they're unbelievers, we have returned it graciously. Or, we bought some books with that money and sent it back to them so that not one pie of that money comes for God's work. It goes back to Him in another form.

Or in the same form. We need to be wise here. God has got enough money among His people to do His work.

He does not want the devil's money to do His work. Do you believe that those who are not born again are children of the devil? How many of us will go to Pakistan to collect money to conduct a war against Pakistan? Have you ever heard of such a thing? But this is what so many stupid preachers are doing today. They say, you're a child of the devil, please give me some money so that I can deliver you from the devil.

What is this? This is a deception and it's practiced by every denomination in Christianity, even the so-called separated groups. The light on this matter of money is zero. Because they haven't studied the scriptures.

They go through Bible school and they haven't read 3 John verse 7. You must not touch a money from unbelievers. They have no right to support you, they have no right to support God's work. Be gracious to them and say, God bless you brother and save your soul but I don't want your money.

Like Elisha refused Naaman's money however much it was. I live in my heart, Elisha said, but I don't want your money. Take it back to Syria.

Gehazi took it and therefore we see most Christian workers today are like Gehazi without a doubt. And that's why they are not prophets of God. Elishas, which are very few today will not do that.

And he says about Diatrophes, this bad elder, he says, I wrote some things to him but he won't accept it. He loves to be first among everybody. It's possible for an elder to start as a very humble person and gradually come to the place where he wants to be a big man.

He won't even accept what an apostle says. I'm sure in the early days when Diatrophes was an unknown ordinary brother he listened to John. But as his ministry developed he began to think, who does John think he is? I'm also a man of God.

God has used me. I've established a church here. I don't have to listen to John anymore.

And that was Diatrophes' downfall. The chap must be regretting in hell today. Diatrophes.

Because he would not listen to the man perhaps who brought him to the faith, who taught him everything he knew about building the church. And now he begins to think he's somebody that even when John writes and corrects him, he doesn't listen. And he probably tries to displace John's authority in his church by manifesting himself.

You know that type of thing happens today. People who have grown up as children under some spiritual father, they begin to think that they are somebody and that's exactly what the devil wants them to do because he's planned to destroy them. Let him grow like this.

In ten years, I'll destroy him. Brother, be careful. If you are fortunate enough to have a godly brother as your elder and your guide, respect his advice.

No matter how much God allows you to grow, no matter how much He uses you, humble yourself. Even though that brother may not force his authority on you because he's such a gracious, godly man, you are going to be the loser if you don't humble yourself to take his advice. You'll be like a diatrophies.

And he says, for this reason, when I come, I will point out his sins to everybody else. John was a man who was not afraid of exposing arrogant elders. He accuses us with wicked words.

Even John, the saintliest man on earth was accused by people. You want to serve God? You will be unjustly accused with wicked words. Verse 10.

If John was accused, why not you and me? And he's not satisfied with this. If we send a brother there, he won't receive them. And if somebody else receives them, he puts them out of the church.

Why did you receive that brother? Why did you allow him to stay with you? Did you take my permission? This is a dictator. This is not an elder. There are people like that in the church today.

Dictators who control people. Steer clear of such people and don't ever be a member of such a church. That is Babylon.

100%. In the church of Jesus Christ, we never have such dictators. We have people who give freedom to others.

Brother, if you feel free to do that, that's fine. I'm not here to run your life. And brothers who have learned humbly to submit to spiritual authority.

And then he says to Gaius, verse 11, don't imitate what's evil. The one who does good is of God. The one who does evil hasn't even seen God.

And he says, Demetrius is different. He's a man who has received a good testimony from everyone. Has a good elder.

The truth itself bears witness to a humble, godly man. And you know our witness is true. There are many other things I want to write.

But I look forward to seeing you face to face. And further, we come to the episode of Jude, which is also a very brief episode. The subject of Jude is, verse 3, contend earnestly for the faith.

Contend earnestly for the faith. Don't compromise the faith. It's about false teaching, false teachers, and their judgment, and how in the midst of them you must stand up for the Lord.

He says, actually, verse 3, I wanted to write to you about our salvation. In other words, he wanted to write something like the letter to Romans. I wanted to write something about the gospel.

About this, what the gospel is all about. But when I began to write it, I felt a burden from the Holy Spirit to write on a completely different theme. Have you had that experience? Where you wanted to write something to a brother, and ultimately you end up writing something quite different because the Holy Spirit puts a burden on you.

Because you're in touch with the Holy Spirit. And he said, I felt the necessity to appeal to you to contend earnestly for the faith. I felt that is more important than explaining the way of salvation.

You all know that. There's a great necessity to encourage you to stand up for the faith in the midst of compromise. A great word for us in Christendom today.

Because, he says, because the doorkeepers in the church have gone to sleep. The elders who are supposed to be doorkeepers have gone to sleep. Verse 4, certain persons have crept in through the door unnoticed.

How did they creep in? Because the elders were asleep. The watchman was asleep. Ezekiel was a watchman.

An elder is a watchman. When the watchman is asleep, the enemy gets in. The wolves get in.

Because the shepherd is fast asleep. Spiritually asleep. An elder must be an alert doorkeeper who is spiritually awake all the time.

And he must check up who is that fellow coming into the church. Why is he coming here? Why is he going around visiting all these people? Certain people have crept in unnoticed because these elders were asleep. And they were people who turned the grace of God into licentiousness.

Licentiousness means a license to sin. Just like you go to the transport officer and you get a license to drive. And then you can drive.

And you get this license and you can drive a vehicle. In the same way, people took the grace of God as a license to do what? To commit sin. They said, well now I've got my license to sin.

Now I can sin as much as I like because God's grace forgives us. They misrepresented the grace of God. And a lot of people like that today.

Oh, Jesus forgives. And they fall into adultery. Oh, David committed adultery.

We can still be in the ministry. David went back to become king. All this type of argument and a lot of believers, foolish believers, just believe all that.

It's tragic. The grace of God has become a license to commit sin. If Elijah fell into adultery, I would say to him, Brother Elijah, retire.

Please don't ever be a prophet again. Go and do something else. Go and do business or something.

Go and sit in the synagogue, okay, but you can't go back into the ministry. But is that being preached today? No. The grace of God has become a license to sin.

Yeah, yeah, everybody sins. David sinned. Moses sinned.

This person sinned. Samson sinned. Samson sinned with many women.

And yet he served God. Leading people back into the old covenant. It's almost as though Jesus never died.

It's almost as though the Holy Spirit has never come. Now I'm not talking about believers in the church who fall into adultery or any type of sin. I believe they can become great godly men one day and apostles.

I'm talking about leaders who have been elders and leaders of churches and then fall into adultery or theft. I don't believe they should ever be leaders again. They can sit there as ordinary brothers.

So these people teach the grace of God has turned into licentiousness. And they say, Well, we're once saved. We're always saved.

It doesn't matter how we live now. And Jude says, Let me remind you about what happened to the people who came out of Egypt. They were saved.

What happened? Were they always saved? No. They perished in the wilderness. They never entered Canaan.

They were once saved out of Egypt and they didn't get in. They perished in the wilderness. And he takes that example.

Three times I said in the New Testament that example is quoted to warn believers. 1 Corinthians 10 Paul says, I can preach to others and be disqualified myself. And he gives the example of the Israelites who came out of Egypt.

Hebrews chapter 3 and 4. He says, Let us fear lest we also fall like those Israelites who came out of Egypt. Jude says the same thing here. Let us fear the people whom the Lord saved.

Afterwards, he destroyed in a nutshell. Verse 5 is people whom the Lord saved. He afterwards destroyed.

Will you preach that in your church that the people whom the Lord saved once he can destroy afterwards because they play the fool with sin. Brethren, if we live after the flesh, we will die. Romans 8 13.

If you live after the flesh, you'll die. That's what it says here. Let me give you another example.

He says, Angels in heaven. They were holy. And when they did not stay there and went into all types of sin, he threw them out and locked them up in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment day.

That's the second example. And he says, I'll give you a third example. Sodom and Gomorrah.

Verse 7. They also indulged in all type of immorality and they thought they would escape. The angel came to warn them. They wouldn't listen.

What's the result? They were judged and are exhibited as an example. These are examples of those whom God judged in Old Testament times. And in the same way, he says, these men also, these preachers who turn the grace of God as a license for committing sin, they also by dreaming, they talk about their dreams, they defile the flesh and they reject authority.

You see, that's another characteristic of people who live according to the flesh. They reject spiritual authority. They don't have anybody over them.

They will not submit to anybody. Once upon a time they did, but now they have become sort of important people and the devil is preparing them for their doom. They reject authority and they revile angelic majesties.

They make fun of the devil. I want to tell you something. Don't ever make fun of the devil.

Rebuke him, resist him, stand against him, wrestle against him, fight against him. All that is right. Command him to flee in Jesus' name.

But don't ever make fun of him. That's not proper. It says, even Michael, verse 9, the archangel, the greatest of the angels, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, he did not dare to pronounce a judgment against him.

He said, the Lord rebuke you. Even Michael, the archangel. But these people, they revile things which they don't understand.

And like unreasoning animals, they follow their instincts. You know, when people turn the grace of God into sin, they are like unreasoning animals who follow their natural instincts. If the body has a certain passion, for sex or anything, they just follow that.

They are like animals. Sure. That's how it is with a lot of people who don't know the grace of God.

Just like animals. A man of God must be different. You see in the world how so many boys will be following after a pretty girl.

Have you seen on the roads so many dogs running after one bitch? Exactly the same. Exactly the same. No difference.

And if some of those boys claim to be believers, Oh! What type of believers are they? Unreasoning animals following their instincts. I've seen that sometimes and it reminds me of the dogs, I'll tell you that. No, he says.

Woe unto them. A curse be on them. Such people should not take the name of Christ.

Say, we don't believe in Christ. We don't believe in God. Then do what you like.

Behave like the animals. But if you say you are a godly person, Christ, you take the name of Jesus. You have a responsibility not to follow your passions and your instincts.

And then he gives three other examples from the Old Testament. Cain, Balaam and Korah. What was Cain's problem? Jealousy of a brother whom God was blessing mightily on whose ministry there was a fire.

Abel. Do you see a brother in whose ministry there is a fire and an anointing? Perhaps younger than you? Sometimes you can even be jealous of somebody older than you. But if he is younger than you, Oh! It would be very difficult not to be jealous of him.

Unless you are a godly man. You know whenever you are jealous of someone's ministry, it's because you don't love him. When you see him going ahead of you.

You are the leader in a church. And a younger brother is anointed and he is on fire and he is going ahead of you. If you are jealous of him, you are in fellowship with the devil.

If you are a godly man, you will encourage him. You will love him. Brother, go on.

Let me sit down. You speak. You are the one who has got the anointing.

Jealousy comes where there is no love. Think of a father who is a farmer, not educated. And his son goes to college and gets a degree.

And the father goes for the college convocation and sees his son getting a degree. This uneducated father. Is the father jealous of him? Yes or no? Why? This young fellow who is half his age has got a degree and this chap is uneducated.

How is it he is not jealous? Because he is a father. Why is it you as an elder are jealous of somebody in your church? Because you are not a father. You are a baby.

That is the reason. A lot of elders are babies. A father will never be jealous.

Impossible. I have never seen a father jealous of a son who has gone ahead of him. He will encourage him to go still further.

Son, you must go and get a master's degree and a doctorate. You must go way ahead of me. I have seen sweepers who get their children educated.

I have rarely in my life seen an elder like that. Almost never. I have seen elders sit on their thrones keeping their eye on that fellow who has got an anointing.

Oh, he is a threat to me. I have got to somehow make life miserable for him. Where are the fathers? Where are the mothers? That is the tragedy in Christendom today.

If you are a truly godly man you will be delighted when you see young people coming up and taking up your ministry having a greater anointing than you. And you will say, Praise God, brother. You should speak.

I want to keep quiet. You have got the anointing. Go ahead and speak.

If you want to be a godly elder be like that. Cain was not like that. And I tell you, most Christian leaders are going the way of Cain even in separated New Testament assemblies.

Jealous. The other example is Balaam who ran after money. Another bad example.

Preacher. And he preached a lot of good things. Do you know that Balaam prophesied about the coming of Jesus Christ? You read that in the book of Numbers.

To preach about the coming of Jesus Christ that he would come from Judah. And then to go after money. How many people are like that today? Christian workers.

They have gone the way of Balaam. Third. The rebellion of Korah.

That's the other thing you find. People who once upon a time respected Moses. Korah respected Moses once upon a time.

That fellow Korah would have perished in Egypt. He would have been a slave in Egypt. God never saw him fit to be the leader of Israel.

God picked up Moses and delivered Korah from slavery. Brought him out. Encouraged him.

Gave him some leadership position. And suddenly Korah's head becomes big that he begins to defy even Moses. What happened to him? The earth opened up and swallowed him up.

He was jealous of Moses. Cain was jealous of somebody younger. Korah was jealous of somebody older who was his spiritual leader.

That can also happen. It's not only somebody younger. You may be jealous of somebody older than you.

You may be jealous of your spiritual leader because now you think you also have become a great spiritual leader. But God will manifest whom He anoints. And that will be a sad day for you.

Rebellion against authority is another thing which is very commonly found among Christendom. In Christendom. I don't believe we should ever rebel against authority.

If you are not happy with the church, leave that church and go somewhere else. But don't stay there and cause problems for the leadership. Otherwise you go the way of Korah.

You may not agree with them. Okay, leave that group. Go to another group.

Start your own group if you like. But never cause rebellion anywhere. These men are hidden reefs.

That means like hidden rocks that people's ships are crash on. They are like clouds without water. Just fool people that they've got some gift.

And so on. And then he says in contrast to all these bad examples in the Old Testament. Let me give you a good example from the Old Testament.

Verse 14. Enoch. Enoch was one lone man in his generation who walked with God for 300 years.

And what did Enoch preach? You know what Enoch preached? Judgment. He was a prophet. He was one of the first prophets in the history of the Bible.

Abel was a righteous man but he was not a prophet. Enoch was a prophet. The first prophet in the Bible.

What did the first prophet in the Bible preach? Judgment. The second coming of Christ. The Lord is coming.

The Lord is coming with thousands of His holy ones to execute judgment on what? On those who have done ungodly deeds. Who have walked in an ungodly way. And who have spoken ungodly things.

And all the harsh things which they have spoken. He spoke against ungodly actions and He spoke against ungodly speech. And hard speech which they have spoken against God and against His people.

So, we find that Enoch was a man who fearlessly spoke just like Noah. Noah was another prophet. What did he preach? Judgment.

What did Jeremiah preach? Judgment. What did Isaiah preach? Judgment. What did Nahum preach? Judgment.

What did Jonah preach? Judgment. Was there a prophet who didn't speak on judgment? Judgment against sin. God's going to punish you because of your sin.

How many prophets do we have today? Very few. It's not a popular subject. It's not because God doesn't want it.

I've often thought like this. Lord, India is one of the largest countries in the world next to China. In another ten years, we'll probably be ahead of China.

The largest country in the world almost. Is it possible that for this country of one thousand million people, you won't send any prophets to the church? How can that be? Don't you love this country? You know what the Lord told me? I have called many young people to be prophets in this country. But most of them fall by the wayside, running after money, running after some wrong marriage, joining some wrong organization, going for this, going for that, and they miss my will.

It's not because I did not raise up prophets. Is it possible that some of you sitting here, God has a plan for your life to be a prophetic voice in this country? God save you from running after money. God save you from getting into a wrong marriage.

God save you from sitting in a desk as a director instead of being a poor prophet in a hut. God save you from that. That's my prayer for you.

Be like Enoch, one lone man who walked with God. Okay? And that's what Jude is saying. Be like Enoch, content for the faith.

Stand up like him, he says. For the truth of God. Stand against all these grumblers, verse 16, who find fault and following after their own lusts and who speak arrogantly and speak flattering.

Stand against all these preachers who flatter people, verse 16, because they want some benefit from them. Don't be like them. Verse 17, remember the words of Jesus and the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ? How they told you that in the last days there will be mockers following after their ungodly lusts who cause divisions, leading people after them like Korah, worldly minded, who do not have the spirit but who talk about the gifts of the spirit without the Holy Spirit.

But he says, you, beloved, build yourself up on your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. There are a number of wonderful exhortations here. Build yourself up in the most holy faith.

Pray in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourself in the love of God. Keep yourself in the love of God means always remain sure that God loves you.

Never doubt it. When Peter was going to deny the Lord, the Lord said, I'm not praying that you won't fall. I'm praying that when you do fall, your faith does not fail.

You and I may fall, but when you fall, don't let your faith fail. Do you know what that means? When you come to that rock bottom in your life, remember one thing, that God still loves you. Like the prodigal son, far away in that far country, when he had lost everything, he could remember one thing, my father still loves me.

Remember that, my brothers and sisters. Keep yourself in the love of God. And when you live in that assurance of God's love, you know what will happen? That love will fill your heart that you will be able to love other people also.

Because God loved you when you were in the gutter, you can love other people who are in the gutter also. Keep yourself in the love of God. And when you keep yourself in the love of God, you have to keep yourself in the love of God.

Then it says in verse 24, He will keep you from falling. See these two verses together? You keep yourself, and He keeps you. What do you keep yourself in? You can't keep yourself from falling.

Impossible. You keep yourself in the love of God, He will keep you from falling. In the beginning, like Peter, you may fall and fall and fall and fall a few times, but a time will come when you will find, as you have humbled yourself, as you have stopped becoming arrogant against other people, you stopped becoming jealous of other people, you started working on your own salvation, and you started building up yourself in the faith, you started praying in the Holy Spirit, and you start keeping yourself in the love of God, He keeps you from falling.

Verse 24. Wonderful promise. And in that attitude, He says in verse 23 about evangelism.

This is the way to do evangelism. And not only evangelism, but delivering backsliders. He says, Save people by snatching them out of the fire.

Have mercy on them. And when you do that, hate even the garment polluted by the flesh. That means there must not even be a trace of sin.

You know, when we go to work with people who are sinful, the point here He is saying is, be very careful when you go to pull these sinners out, that you don't get polluted by their sin. Jesus was the friend of sinners, but nobody could pollute Him with sin. When you go to save sinners, don't let your own garment get spoiled by the flesh, by their filthy habits.

You have to watch yourself, keep yourself when you mingle with sinners. For example, many people, they can keep themselves holy when they are in the midst of godly people. They go and visit their unconverted relatives for one week, and they become backsliders.

They start gossiping with them, they start talking with them. You know what I advise people when they go to visit their unconverted relatives? Some of you are young, you go to visit an uncle or an auntie who is unconverted, and you know the favorite pastime of unconverted people is to speak evil of other people. So you sit there, and they start speaking evil of other people, and you can't get up and tell your uncle to shut up.

You know that. So what should you do? Keep your garment unspotted, just quietly get up and go away from that room. You don't want to listen to that.

And the next day, again they are starting gossiping, you quietly get up and go away from the room. In two or three days they will get the message that this young chap does not like to listen to all this. And that is your testimony.

You didn't tell your uncle to shut up. You had a quiet testimony, I don't want my garment to be polluted by what's going on here. Keep your garments, my brothers and sisters, how careful we are to keep, supposing you are walking through muddy water, how careful you will be to pull up your trousers, so that they don't get stained.

You got to walk carefully. You don't go splashing through muddy dirty water. When you go in the midst of unbelievers, be very careful.

Snatch them out from that fire. But be careful that your own garment is not polluted. And He is able to keep you from falling.

Trust Him. In that difficult situation, where you are with those unbelievers, trust Him to keep you from stumbling. And one day, to make you stand in the presence of His glory, blameless, with great joy.

That is the hope we have to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Be glory, majesty, dominion and authority for now and forevermore. Amen.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, help us to contend for the faith. Help us to be protected from deception.

Help us to have discernment in these days to stand true to You. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

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