



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Jude 1-25

"Our Common Salvation in Uncommon Times"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] I'm going to read the entire Epistle of Jude. I will make a comment concerning the epistle as a whole, but I'd like to read it. Because the opening stages of the epistle relate very definitely to what Jude writes following those verses. Because they explain what he means when he says that he found it necessary to write them and exhort them to contend for the faith. Now, as you read the rest of the epistle you'll understand why he was concerned. So we'll read the entire epistle through now.

"Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, sanctified by God (I'm going to make one change and say that probably what Jude wrote was "Beloved by God) the Father, and preserved (or kept) for. Jesus Christ: Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you. Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. (Incidentally when he says "contend earnestly for the faith"

and "for certain men have crept in unnoticed who long ago were marked out" he refers to what he's going to say in the following verses, because this is what the Old Testament in his mind was speaking about. Now verse 5,) But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh (different flesh), are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves. Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah. These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving *only* themselves. (You can see incidentally here that Jude is speaking about teachers who have intruded themselves into the meetings of the saints, "spots of their love feasts," the observance of the Lord's Table, "feasting with you without fear, serving only themselves.) *They are* clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." These are grumblers, complainers, walking

according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling *words*, flattering people to gain advantage. But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. (You can certainly see that one of Jude's most useful adjectives is ungodly. Five times right here in these few verses he's used.) These are sensual persons (That word sensual is the word natural, natural in the sense of 1 Corinthians 2 when Paul talks about natural men who are unable to hear the word of God because they have not received the Holy Spirit.) These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit. But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit (When Paul says the "natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, they are foolishness to them, because they," as he says here in this text, it's because they do not have the Holy Spirit. That's the way we are born naturally. We are born without the Spirit, and only who have been reborn, of course, have the Spirit. Now, Jude says,) keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And on some have compassion, making a distinction; but others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh. Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, (You know, it's very interesting to me. He's written such harsh words and now gives us one of the most beautiful and touching doxologies in the New Testament, one that we frequently repeat.) Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present *you* faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our Savior, (Perhaps the statement through Jesus Christ should be added here, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Because it is through Jesus Christ our Lord that he is our Savior. The texts differ at this point, but we'll read what we have here in the New King James Version.) To God our Savior, who alone is wise, *Be* glory and majesty, Dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen."

Let's bow together in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Our Father we come to Thee in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We give Thee thanks for the warnings that the New Testament epistles give us, and particularly for these strong words from the brother of our Lord. We thank Thee and praise Thee for the ministry that they've had in our own lives. And we thank Thee that they stand before us in the word of God and many people will read them and ponder their significance, the words that Thou didst give to the apostles, to Jude, and others are words that still have vital force and used by the Holy Spirit bring men and women to life eternal.

We give Thee thanks for the gospel. We thank Thee for the privilege of proclaiming it. And we ask especially Thy blessing upon us in this meeting. We pray that we may have the sense of the presence of the Holy Spirit and that he may minister to us in a way that may benefit each one of us no matter what our spiritual state. We pray for this church. We pray for its leadership. We pray for this country. We ask Thy blessing upon the President and others associated with him in the government. We pray for those who have requested our prayers in Believers Chapel. We pray that Thou wilt minister to them and give healing in accordance with Thy will.

Then we ask too, Lord, for our elders and deacons as they give guidance to us, as they oversee us spiritually, as they minister to us in practical ways. And we pray for each member of this congregation and each member of this church and ask that the ministry of the word of God may have free flow in our lives. We pray for the young people, and we pray for the older people. For all of them, all of us together, may grow in the experience of this marvelous salvation which has become ours through the blood that was shed on Calvary's cross. We give thanks in Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] It's helpful to remember that Jude at the time that he wrote this epistle is an old man. He's an old man because he's the brother of our Lord and has been preserved by the Lord to this day to write later in the century this marvelous little epistle. He's an old man, but he's a disturbed man. And one reading through this epistle cannot help but realize that he was very, very deeply disturbed over the theological state of the church as he understood it. We are living in days in which anyone who has a heart for the church of Jesus Christ and the truth of God would be disturbed. If you understand what is happening within in the professing Christian church, you cannot help but be disturbed.

A few years back, about five to be exact, Richard Brookhiser in *Time Magazine* in an article concerning the church wrote these words, "Protestant churches seem obsessed with sex these days, not that their interest in the subject is new. Puritan disquisitions on sex were so plain spoken that earlier 20th century editions of them had to be bowdlerized." Now, I know that's not a common word, but Thomas Bowdler was a man who published a ten volume of Shakespeare expurgated. In other words, Shakespeare's English language soon had to be expurgated. That is, the things that people said in the time of Shakespeare were thing that we don't say today; we're too nice to say those things. So Bowdler changed them. That's why he says the editions of them had to be bowdlerized.

"But the editions of today's discussion," Brookhiser goes on to say, "are revolutionary. Not why do men sin, but why shouldn't they party. Traditional strictures against homosexuality, premarital sex, once called fornication, even adultery are up for theological debate." This is a man commenting on the history, on the condition of the church five years ago. It's not better. "Traditional strictures against homosexuality, premarital sex, and so forth, even adultery are up for debate. The Presbyterians in conclave assembled," he refers to a conference that the Presbyterian church convened, usually their annual assembly. "And in this assembly they gave thumbs down to the new

morality." This was five years ago. "The Episcopalians gave thumbs sideways. The United Methodist Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will not be far behind in giving their thumb signals. Boys do it, do WASPs?"

Well, I'd like to say right here at the beginning that what Brookhiser says is very mild. The condition of the church is words, much worse than that. About five years ago I went down to the theological seminary in order to look up apostasy in *Time Magazine* and so I took down a number of editions of *Time* and *Christianity Today* in order to look and see just what had been said in these issues, these volumes, about apostasy. I could not find one article that had to do with apostasy. In other words, what was happening in the church was not noticed, or at least they didn't want to notice. It was not noticed by these particular people.

Now, in 1997 the Presbyterian church in the United States of America is debating the fidelity and chastity amendment. What is the fidelity and chastity amendment? It is an amendment to the practical doctrines of the Presbyterian church, not the Westminster Confession of Faith but the church organizations. It's an amendment in which the question of homosexuality is raised. And the amendment sets standards of sexual conduct that would rule out homosexuality for deacons, for elders and for ministers. In other words, if it passes you cannot appoint a deacon, cannot ordain an elder, cannot bring a minister to stand in the pulpit as the minister of the church if they proclaim homosexuality as acceptable. So the amendment demands life either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage of a man and a woman or chastity in singleness, for deacons, for elders, for ministers.

Now, I ask one question, why not members? Why not members? There's no reason to have this apply to elders, deacons, and ministers if it's contrary to the word of God, but not applying it to members. Now what is interesting about it, the presbytery for this area is called the Grace Presbytery. Churches like Highland Park Presbyterian Church and others are in it; John Calvin. Presbyterian Church, that's a good name. So they're all

in it. So they had a vote recently, and it was not a happy time, because it was a divided church. If eighty-six, incidentally of the country's one hundred and seventy-one presbyteries approve of the fidelity and chastity amendment that would set ordination standards in the churches. So it's being debated. It's not settled yet, but the presbyteries around the country are voting. This one voted the other day. The vote was two hundred and thirty-eight to two seventeen in favor of the amendment. In other words, this presbytery stands for the amendment and therefore questions of homosexuality are not approved for deacons, for elders, for ministers. The vote was two hundred and thirty-eight to two hundred and seventeen.

Now, the question I want to ask is two hundred and seventeen elders, ministers, voted to not have this? What does that tell you about the condition of the church? Why if the vote had been, well let's see, if the vote was two hundred and thirty-eight to seventeen that means that there were four hundred and fifty-five who voted. If the vote had been four hundred and fifty to five, you would say, "Well the church stands fairly strongly for what the Scriptures say." But the vote like this is something else. I'm happy that they did approve this, but I'm disturbed, anyone would be, at how many voted negatively to it.

Some years ago Martin Lloyd Jones who preached so fruitfully at Westminster Chapel in London, who's now with the Lord, was at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia to give a commencement address. He spoke on 1 Corinthians 15, verse 1 through verse 4, and many of you will know immediately without looking at the passage that this has to do with the gospel, because here Paul writes, "Moreover brethren I declare unto you the gospel which I preach to you, which also you received and in which ye stand, by which also ye are saved if you hold fast that word which I preach to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."

Now, Martin Lloyd Jones made a great deal over that phrase, repeated twice there by Paul, "According to the Scriptures." In other words, that was important to him. But then in a poignant statement alluding to his own compulsion to continue in the struggle for the gospel, because like Paul the aged, as Paul says in Philemon, "Paul the aged" he calls himself, and like Louis the aged here, Martin Lloyd Jones was Martin the Aged when he said this. But he quoted from Matthew Arnold's famous poem "Sohrab and Rustum." "But now in blood and battles was my youth and full of blood and battles is my age, and I shall never end this life of blood." That was Martin Lloyd Jones' way of saying, "I'm going to keep at it no matter what happens." I would like to say I want to do that. I would like to say I would do that. I would like to say that all of the evangelical preachers that I know would do that, that they would truly stand for what they say they believe and persist. Because we are living in very, very trying times for the Christian church. "Jude is a tract for the times. It's a fiery cross to rouse the churches," someone has said.

Not surprisingly some scholars have urged that Jude be removed from the canon. They don't think it belongs there. Curt Ollet, who has done a great deal of work on the text of the New Testament has said that this doesn't really belong in the New Testament. Caizman, one of the leading New Testament scholars of recent years also says this doesn't belong in the New Testament. It's not surprising that some say that, because this text speaks to individuals who sit in our churches who do not believe those things that they've professed, not those who sit in the church who haven't come to believe; but those who say that they belong to the Christian church but do not really believe the teaching of the apostles. I wouldn't be surprised that we have some in Believers Chapel; most of the churches have them. They are people who sit regularly in the church who do not believe the things that are written in the word of God. This is a tract for us, and it's for them.

It was written by the Lord's brother. Now, he doesn't say he's the Lord's brother. He says he's the brother of James. There are other Judes in the New Testament. There was an apostle named Jude. But the consent of the majority of New Testament students is

that this is Jude, the Lord's brother, because he says he's the brother of James. So he doesn't say, "I'm the Lord's brother." He says, "I'm the brother of James." And you can get something of the temper of the man's personality. He's not a man that would stand out, not be a boastful braggart kind of an individual. He's a concerned man. He's a concerned old man. He's Jude the aged.

So his opponents, so far as we can tell, were teachers. Later on in the epistle he refers to them as people in their love feasts, who sit in their love feasts, that is in the Lord's Supper. They are teachers. They instruct people, but they're in the church, but they're not of the believing body. Now, his opponents he believes, we believe probably we cannot be absolutely positive about this, were teachers from apocalyptic Jewish Christianity, flouting biblical standards of sexual ethics. So Jude's going to the Hebrew Bible, because that's what he had. He didn't have the New Testament. He's going to turn to the Hebrew Bible, that's basically his text, from Genesis through Malachi, and he's going to subject their teaching to the word of God.

Now, he begins with, "Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James." You know, you can learn a whole lot about an individual by listening to what he says of himself. If you know who Mohammed Ali is, you know one of the great entertainers of the sports world. Magnificent fighter, but even better as an entertainer. He came on the scene many years ago. He didn't have the name Mohammed Ali, he gave himself that later. His name was Cassius Clay, he arrived on the scene, won a few matches, began to tell people a few things about himself. And do you know what he said, right from the beginning? "I'm the greatest. I'm the greatest." Well, that should have told us a lot about Mohammed Ali right in the beginning, "I am the greatest." You can tell a whole lot about a person by what he says about himself. And so Jude is a person who says not that I'm the brother of Christ, I'm the brother of James.

Now, he calls himself a servant of Jesus Christ, what a change. He not only did not believe earlier, but we have record in the Gospel of Mark that Jude believed that Jesus

Christ was off his rocker. He was a deranged man at one time. Jude thought of our Lord in that way. You can look back in the Gospel of Mark and see it if you pay attention to verse 21 and verse 31, he thought he was deranged. This is this man. He's the brother of James. He's a man who's prepared to play second fiddle. A great change has taken place in Jude. Do you know what the change is? He has been, we're not ashamed of this expression, he has been born again, born again. May I ask you a question? Have you? Have you been born again? It's an expression that comes from the mouth of our Lord. Have you been born again?

Now, Jude as you can see is an individual that we should pay attention to. Now he tells us, those to whom he's addressed his letter, three remarkable descriptions about them. I'll just pick them out for the sake of time. First of all he says in verse 1, "To those who are called." Now, let me explain what that means. I could ask you are you called? This is a biblical term for the effectual invitation to faith. If a person has come to believe in Jesus Christ he has been called. He's been called by the Holy Spirit into the faith of the church of Jesus Christ. So he writes to them as called. The Holy Spirit has worked in their hearts, and they have been called to salvation, but not simply to salvation; the New Testament goes on to say, I won't emphasize this, but they are called to holiness also. That's important for this epistle, but called to holiness.

He says secondly, now my text reads sanctified, but instead of sanctified just let me use the term beloved. Some of the manuscripts, important ones, have beloved. If beloved is correct, I'm not against sanctified, if it's sanctified it means that once for all sanctification that attaches to everyone that ever believes in Christ so that from the moment they believe in Jesus Christ they have been set apart for God. They are saints. Call me Saint Louis [Laughter] if you like. Now, I don't hope you call me that, but biblically you could. If my confession is real, I'm Saint Louis. Paul wrote the Corinthians, they weren't so saintly, but he called them saints. And not only that, he said that they had been sanctified. That is in the past when they believed. So every believer is a saint.

You're one who has been set apart. So he addresses them as those who have been set apart. He says they are beloved, and the ground of their calling is that they are loved by God. "Having been loved by God," I prefer that reading, "having been loved by God they are called by the Holy Spirit to faith." That's the story of our salvation. We have been loved eternally by God and in time he has worked in our hearts to call us to faith. And so now we are saints.

And thirdly, not only are we called, but we are preserved in Jesus Christ. Now, I don't like preserved too well, because preserved sounds too much like you're not alive. [Laughter] You're preserved; you've been put away in a bottle or something. Let's use the term kept, kept for Jesus Christ. This is the goal of the calling. This is the reason God works, calls him to himself. He does it in order that we might be kept for Jesus Christ. All these terms incidentally are transferred to New Testament believers from Old Testament descriptions of Israel, because Israel was called. Israel was loved. Israel was kept. As Paul goes on to explain, the genuine believers within Israel. So Jude is saying these terms of the Old Testament, but applying them to this New Testament church.

Now, the aim of the letter in verse 3 and verse 4; I don't know how to think of Jude, you know. I think of him as sitting around a table. We have a breakfast table, a round table we around the breakfast table. And I see Jude's pushing aside everything, and he's got a manuscript now. That's going to be his desk. And he has a few books, manuscripts perhaps of the Old Testament, copies of them. Those parchments were around him. It's possible, many scholars think, that he had a copy of 2 Peter, because so much of Jude is similar to passages in 2 Peter, particular 2 Peter chapter 2, that scholars think there's some connection. Maybe he had a copy of Peter's Second Epistle. That's possible. Whether he had any of Paul's letters or not we don't know, but that's possible. He had the papyrus upon which he was writing. He had a pen with which to write.

Now, I'm just going to suggest this. This doesn't have any biblical authority whatsoever. I just suggest that he might have had a small glass of wine, because it was

customary for them to drink wine, as we know, and a bagel or two. [Laughter] Can you imagine that? Well, I can imagine it. It's just pure imagination. But Jude is sitting down with the intent, he says, of writing about our common salvation. In other words, it's going to go over the faith. But as he's sitting and gets his pen ready, taking a sip of the glass of wine. He puts the bagel over in the little dish, and something comes over his spirit, and what he hears within himself is, "Don't write about the common salvation. Warn them to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." And so a change of mind, and he moves from salvation teaching to polemics; what might be called from soteriology to apologetics. The dulcet tone of the harp to the strident alarm of the trumpet. He's a true pastor. He's a person who has them upon his heart, and so he wants to shepherd them.

He talks about our common salvation. This is for the faithful. It's obvious as we read the latter part of the epistle that he's thinking of the Second Advent. So it's our common salvation as he looks forward to the coming of our Lord in which the salvation will be completed, for the last verses of the epistle have to do with the Second Advent, 21, 23, 25. And he then charges them to contend for the faith, to agonize we might render it. It's an athletic metaphor for struggling. Not like a fellow running a hundred yard dash or the 220 or the 440, but about the fellow who's running the 26 mile marathon, to agonize. You see them the last few laps or the last few steps, and they can hardly wait to reach the finish line. So Jude wants them to contend for the faith, struggle. The faith is something to be defended. And what he means by it is described in verses 20 through 23.

Now, I'm going to denounce some things that are happening in the church. But Jude, when he comes to the climax doesn't so much talk about denouncing as he talks about such things as keeping themselves in the love of God. Look for the mercy of Jesus Christ at his Second Advent. Things like that. Have compassion on the lost. These are the things that he talks. But he also has talked about the other in the intervening verses.

So he says, "I want to exhort you to contend earnestly for the faith." Now, notice the article. It's not faith, it's the faith. It's fides qui credit, the faith which is believed, not the faith by which we believe, but the faith which is believed. The objective principles of the Christian faith, the faith. He says it's been once delivered, unchangeable. The unchangeable regulative message for the church of Jesus Christ, not invented, given; given by our Lord, once for all given. Isn't that interesting? Once for all handed over to the church. There's nothing else. It's been once and for all. It has been delivered to the church. If you want to know what our Lord desires for the church today, here it is. It's in the word of God. It's once for all, delivered to the church, the Scriptures.

Why is he concerned? Well he tells us. You know when you read the Bible; one of the most important things is to read the little words. The little connectives between verses. You know, I've said this so many times I'm sure that Martha can probably say, "I remember you saying that in your sleep the other night." [Laughter] Watch the connectives. Notice the fourth verse. Why does he tell them to contend earnestly for the faith, once for all delivered to the saints? Why, for, for this is the reason, this is the explanation, "For certain men have crept in unnoticed." They didn't come in the back of the door and say, "Well, you simple professing Christians. I've come in. I've come in to corrupt your faith." No they crept in. That word means just that, they were creepers. They crept in. And Satan is marvelous at creating creeper.

We have them in Believers Chapel. You know how we know that. Ten years from now you'll know it too. You can tell only over a period of time often. Very rarely does a creeper come in and say, "I've come in to destroy the church." He doesn't say that. He doesn't come in and say, "I've come in to change the doctrine that you proclaim." No, he sits there with the idea that he would like to have a part in doing it, and then over a period of time he gathers people together who are dissatisfied as he is. And the creepers finally get together, and finally when the votes come it's not long before they're in charge of things. That's what's happened in the PCUSA. It's reaching that stage.

It's that significant. It's already overboard in many of the large religious organizations. They're in the hands of the creepers. So "For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation." That is, Jude's looking at the Old Testament. He says, "If you just read the Old Testament, you'll know this is going to happen. It happened in Israel over and over again. Read the Old Testament, read the Scriptures."

It's not surprising. So these are "ungodly men who turn the grace of our God to lewdness." Now, he's talking in particular about moral departure from the faith. But he has other things that have to do with doctrinal departure. He has other things to say about that too, but here moral departure. "Ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." The Christian church today is troubled by homosexuality. It's one of the issues of the professing Christian church. We're not surprised just like the individuals came from Russia, crept into the political affairs of this country, and we have the leftists and the rightists over the years in spiritual things. It's much the same way. So we're not surprised that the gay rights movement has now entered the church in the large denominations.

I take *First Things* magazine. I also take *Commentary Magazine*. *Commentary's* a Jewish magazine, and some marvelously high class articles are written within it. *First Things*, Richard John Newhouse is a Roman Catholic, but again high class articles in it. In both of these magazines they have sought to hold the line against the gays, against the homosexuals, and have done a very good job really. But they have not won the battle. In fact, Norman Podhoretz, the Jewish man who wrote an article just a short while back said, "We've lost the battle. The battle's really been by the homosexuals. They are now into our churches. And they are now in our churches in authority." And that's what we see in that vote fidelity and chastity amendment. They are in the church now. They are close to taking over that church. They've taken over other churches. I'm looking forward to saying some things about this in more detail and I cannot here. Time flies.

You know, about four years ago, four or five years ago feminists in some of the large denominations had a reimagining conference. Now, these were not unbelieving people. These were professedly believing people. Their conference was on reimagining the Christian faith. They want to give us a different kind of faith, a syncretistic kind of faith, one that is a mingling of Christianity with other religions, many of them false religions, clearly. And so they've gathered together and do that. And essentially what it became has been a conference dominated by lesbians. But the striking thing about it that one of the leaders in it is a professor at Yale Divinity School, a Presbyterian elder, Presbyterian elder. Do you know what she teaches? Theology in the theology department, Letty Russell. For four years now they've met, the churches have not done anything about them, so we are seeing very, very strange things that are happening in the Christian church. Now, the subject of gay marriage and the church is affected by that and so on. Well, I don't have time to talk further about this, but the problem of homosexuality is become big and unfortunately it's something that we have to face in the Christian church.

Jude winds up after having said, "turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." Immorality is the expression of unbelief, as we know. I remember that one of my favorite men, Charles Haddon Spurgeon makes reference to the fact, I thought I had it cited here somewhere, but I can't seem to find it now, in which he said that immortality is the product of unbelief ultimately. And that if we continue in our unbelief it's inevitable that there should be immortality.

But now let me go on and finish. He says "Denying our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." And concludes the section then with that. As you look at this you have wonder at why Jude's plans were interrupted. What has come to his mind is that the church is filled, as he understands it, the church is filled with apostate teachers. Notice verse 11, 12, and 13. I won't try to read everything in them, but "Woe to them! For they have gone

in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah. These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving *only* themselves." Now notice, "*They are* clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. These, he's obviously talking about those who speak in their meetings, "These are spots in your love feasts while they with you without fear, serving *only* themselves." They are teachers, they are the leaders in the congregation and this is their status. Apostate, antinomian teachers have crept in and the gospel and souls are at stake, and Jude is terribly concerned, warns them and reminds that the only hope is in God our Savior.

Many years ago there was a British preacher by the name of Dr. Charles Barry. He was a liberal preacher. He was preparing for bed one night, and as he was preparing for bed he heard a knock on the door. He went to the door and there was a woman who had come to his door, and when Dr. Barry appeared she said, "My mother is dying, I want you to come and get her in." Well, Dr. Barry knew what she meant. She wanted him to come and to give her the gospel so that she would have the confidence of faith and have an assurance of eternal life. "So Dr. Barry come and get her in." He consented to go but said that while he was going he wondered what he would say to her. After all he didn't have a message for sinful, dying souls who were willing to confess it. So when he got to the woman he talked to the gasping woman about the advantage of having a good record, that is of having lived a good life. "He's a good person." Don't we say that? He's a good person. Paul says, "There is none good, no not one." But we say, "He's a good person." We and Paul are at odds. But at any rate Dr. Barry said, "You've got a good record. Things are going to be all right. That didn't give her a whole lot of comfort. She knew she was a sinner. He told her there was no reason to fear since God is love and

all is God. God's love. He loves everybody. He loves you, you have hope. That didn't help her either.

He told her to blot out the past and throw herself on the mercy of God, but none of this even brought relief to her, because she had no concept of a mercy-giving God, and why and how he could be that. So he's desperate. He said, he knew what she was wanting to hear, but the only thing he could think of was a hymn that his mother had sung when he was a lad, and so he began to sing in broken fashion, "There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins. And sinners plunged beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains." He saw as he was talking to her that something like a light came over her face, and he realized that by the grace of God he had finally managed to get to this lady.

Well, one of the interesting things about Dr. Charles Barry was he got her in, but the next Sunday morning in his church he got up and he told the story. And then at the end he said, "It got me in too." Now, that's what the gospel is all about. It's about the blood of Christ. It's about an atoning Savior. It's about the free offer of eternal life to people who are sinners, to people who need to know that they are sinners, to know that they are at enmity with God in their hearts and to acknowledge that in their hearts to the Lord God. And then in confession to him of their inability to come of themselves, to cast themselves upon him that he might call them to life, as Jude does. Call them to life, because in the marvelous plan of God they belong to those who are loved by him from eternity.

I have no doubt that there are some in this audience who fall into that category. Some who perhaps have been coming here for a long time, came here as a youngster, went off for a while, now back. But you're lost. You do not know what it is to have that hope; you're not in yet, to use Barry's friend's word. The apostles, Jude, Ben Dunkin, the minister of the word here, I, others want you in. The gospel message is very simple, for those who by the grace of God have come to see that they are lost, it's simply believe on

the Lord Jesus Christ and Thou shalt be saved. Nothing else, nothing else, believe. Well, of course, that belief must be genuine. You must know something that you believe. You must give thyself to it, and you must trust that message, that is the one who stands behind that message. The reformers talk about faith as being notitia, assensus and fiducia, knowledge, assent, trust. You know them, notitia, notice, knowledge, then assent from assensus, fiducia, fiduciary institutions, banks. That's what faith is, so for those who believe. John Calvin says that ample. What's ample? What Paul told the Philippian jailer, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and Thou shalt be saved. That's ample, so I call upon you, if you haven't believed in our Lord Jesus Christ, confess your need and believe. Let's stand for the benediction.

[Prayer] Father, we give Thee thanks for the word of God, we give Thee thanks for the wonderful message that we are able to proclaim. We thank Thee for the once for all delivered faith that has come to us. And we ask Lord if there should be one person...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]