

Take Back the Rainbow

Richard Hardy / General

Raising of a Banner

Yesterday I woke up early. Typically, I turn back over and sleep some more but I was stirred. I got dressed, and poked my head out and my wife asked, "What are you doing up?" At some point I sat down and my phone dinged at me with a few live video of this thing that was going on in our area. People were gathered around a flag in downtown Watertown giving speeches culminating in the raising of a rainbow flag proclaiming June not only as LGBTQ month, but specifically June 22nd as LGBTQ Day. There were lots of people there. At least hundreds.

In stark contrast to that I remembered photos of "Prayer at the Pole." I also did not know the day that that was taking place. But there were very few people there. There was no special flag. But then again we don't need one.

Exodus 17:15 ESV

And Moses built an altar and called the name of it, The LORD Is My Banner,

Song of Solomon 2:4 ESV

He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

That Being Said...

The Church is under attack. LGBTQ aside, there is a movement afoot to try to make Christianity something that it isn't; or to put it better, to make Christ something that he is not. You see there is an idea that goes something along the lines of, "If you love me you will accept me the way I am." So I have no problem with that statement, but often implied or expressed is the continuation of that

statement, “and not require me to change.” Or in other words, “I like the sin I’m in. It makes me feel good. So I’d prefer to keep it.”

In Jude, we see the phrase “ungodly people, who pervert (that is twist) the grace of God into sensuality” meaning this: God’s grace, which is a getting a blessing you don’t deserve, is being twisted into the idea that feeling good takes precedence over living holy.

Today let’s take a look at Jude and see how the Word of God teaches us to deal with the challenge facing the Church of that day.

About the Book

1. The Salutation, vv. 1-2..
2. The occasion of the letter and an exhortation concerning the defense of the faith, because of the immoral and heretical teachers, vv 3-4.
3. Warnings from God’s dealings with sinners in the past.
 - a. The punishment of Israel for unbelief, v. 5.
 - b. The fate of the fallen angels and the corrupt Sodomites, vv. 6-7.
4. The Characteristics of Godless teachers described, and a woe pronounced among them, vv. 8-13.
5. References to prophecies.
 - a. Of Enoch, who foretold of the doom of ungodly men, vv. 14-16
 - b. Of the apostles, concerning scoffers in the last days, vv. 17-19.
6. A summary of Christian duties.
 - a. Spiritual growth and prayerfulness, v. 20
 - b. Love toward God and trust in Christ for eternal salvation, v. 21.

c. Activity in soul-winning, vv. 22-23.

7. The Benediction, vv. 24-25

Salutation

Jude 1–2 ESV

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

Importance of the Letter

Jude 3–4 ESV

Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Warning if We Fall into False Teachings

Jude 5–7 ESV

Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day— just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

What Godless Teachers Look Like

Jude 8–13 ESV

Yet in like manner these people also, relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones. But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, “The Lord rebuke you.” But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively. Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam’s error and perished in Korah’s rebellion. These are hidden reefs at your love feasts, as they feast with you without fear, shepherds feeding themselves; waterless clouds, swept along by winds; fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted; wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever.

What a Bad Guy Looks Like

- relying on their dreams

I can say this because the next section saves my hide. There is this thing that people can fall into. Most recently it has gotten a lot of press, and I want to be careful as I proceed.

The Word of God is the Word of God. It gives life. It leads and Gods. It points to Christ as the redeemer. but most importantly....

THE PROPHECIES THAT ARE GIVEN TODAY DO NOT EQUAL THE WORDS IN THE WORD OF GOD.

- defile the flesh,
- reject authority

Often times you will see and attitude of a person lifting themselves up, taking their own authority. They might even say the magic words “in the name of Jesus” but their attitude is lifting themselves up for their sake.

- blaspheme the glorious ones.
 - But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, “The Lord rebuke you.”
- But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand
 - They don’t understand how the Holy Spirit works.

Acts 8:18–19 ESV

Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money, saying, “Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.”

- The Holy Spirit is always given to build up the church (strengthens it growing closer to God.

1 Corinthians 14:12 ESV

So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in building up the church.

- like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively.
- These are hidden reefs at your love feasts, as
- they feast with you without fear,
- shepherds feeding themselves;
- waterless clouds,
- swept along by winds;
- fruitless trees in late autumn,
- twice dead, uprooted;
- wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame;
- wandering stars,

The Bad Guy looks like people who are altogether useless. Everything they do glorifies themselves or their own desires instead of building up the Lord. They don't have any authority over them. And they are swept around by every wind of doctrine.

Prophecies

This is where my hide is saved. Sometimes I speak in such strong terms against dreamers and prophesiers that I can leave the impression that I think all people who say "this sayeth the Lord" are really demonic. I don't think that. I just think that the inspired word of God penned long ago made complete in the Book of the Revelation is worth way more than the word of man. Some of the best prophesiers that I have known of would agree with me.

And here Jude quotes a couple prophecies to back up what he is writing .

1. Judgement is Coming

Jude 14–16 ESV

It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him." These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own sinful desires; they are loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage.

2. There is a guarantee that there will be scoffers.

Jude 17–19 ESV

But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said to you, "In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions." It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit.

3. More Characteristics of the Bad Guy.

1. Grumblers
2. Malcontents
3. Following their own sinful desires
4. loud-mouth boasters
5. Showing favoritism to gain advantage
6. Scoffers
7. Following their own ungodly passions
8. cause divisions
9. worldly
10. devoid of Spirit.

In case your counting that's 24 things to look for. However they all hover around a few things, They seek to glorify themselves first. They seek to please themselves first. They sensualize the Gospel, meaning that we are saved for our pleasure not his. They are tossed about by every wind of doctrine rather than being grounded in His word. They disrespect authority, complain about everything, and cause division.

Our To Do

When we see this out there, what are we to do? We can't kill them. This passage seems to lead us in the direction that the Lord casts them away rather than us. He wants us to watch out but then what?

Prepare yourselves.

Jude 20 ESV

But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit,

1. Build your faith
 - a. Faith comes by hearing and hearing from the word of God.

2. Pray in the Spirit

a. Repentance

John 3:6 ESV

That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

i. You can never pray in the Spirit if you are stuck in the flesh

b. Allow the Spirit to Lead You.

Romans 8:26–27 ESV

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

c. Plead with Holy Boldness

2 Corinthians 1:20–22 ESV

For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory. And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

His promises given in His word are already yes... it is established. Some versions describe that we can stand firm.

d. Now this topic is obviously much bigger than this, but speaking broadly that's how we get there.

Watch Yourself

Jude 21 ESV

keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

There is a teaming up that we do with the Lord when we get saved. He redeems and sets us free. He agrees to keep us as we will get into in a bit. But it is not without effort on our own part to “keep yourselves.” That means despite the fact that we will stumble from time to time, we still do the best we can. When we stumble, we are supposed to feel bad, repent, and move on. As a friend of mine once said, basically the Bible just tells us, “Do the right thing.”

Philippians 2:12 ESV

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,

Have Mercy

Jude 22–23 ESV

And have mercy on those who doubt; save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

In this passage we talked about the judgement that is coming. If we are saved, we know that we are well — saved. Rescued. Plucked from eternal destruction. This verse tells us there are those that are doubters. Those people that we are being warned about... they are doubters. Those people that raised the flag yesterday.... doubters. They doubt that Jesus is the only way the truth and the life. They doubt that Jesus came to show them not just His way, but THE way. They doubt the meaning of sin and it’s punishment. They doubt that there is a right way to live. This passage tells us 3 things

1. Have Mercy

- a. In the middle of that long list of characteristics of the people we are being warned about are these 3 words. “Woe to them!” (v.11) This is not threat. It is a proclamation of great sadness.
- b. So, here we are in this world. It’s in trouble. People all around us are choosing the wrong path either intentionally or by default. God does not

sit on his throne and say, “Ha, you should have listened to me.” He pronounces deep grief.

2. Rescue Them
3. Have fear (you can be duped)
 - a. Hate the sin.

Benediction

Jude 24–25 ESV

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

We started this letter with Jude saying, I wanted to talk to you about how awesome it is that God saved us. The greatest story of them all. But there is a pressing matter at hand that trumps that. And he warns us in great detail about those that have snuck in deliberately or as doubters. He gives us some tools to effectively survive the threat.

In these verses he goes back simply to say, “Jesus is awesome.

He will keep us.

He will present us spotless

To His Glory

For his joy (and by extension ours)

Cuz he owns all the stuff.