

# An Ungodly Fate

**Jude 5–16**

**Truth and Perseverance**

**Key Idea:** If you accept ungodliness, you accept its fate.

## Getting Started

### Opening Question

Think of a time when something that initially seemed harmless turned out to be much more serious than you expected. What made it difficult to recognize the danger at first?

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## Getting into the Word

Read **Jude 5–16** together.

### 1. Remembering What God Has Done

Jude begins by reminding his readers of things they already know.

**What three examples does Jude give in verses 5–7?**

- Israel's wilderness generation after the Exodus
- The angels who abandoned their proper position
- Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities

**What do these three examples have in common?**

**Why do you think Jude reminds Christians of examples from the past rather than simply telling them that false teachers are dangerous?**

Jude says that these events serve as examples of God's judgment.

**What do these examples teach us about the seriousness with which God views rebellion against him?**

Notice that Jude's first example involves people whom God had actually delivered from Egypt. Why might that be significant for Christians who assume that experiencing God's salvation makes ungodliness unimportant?

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## 2. When Ungodliness Enters the Church

Read **Jude 8–10** again.

Jude identifies three things these ungodly people were doing:

1. Polluting their own bodies
2. Rejecting authority
3. Speaking abusively about celestial beings

**What do these three behaviors reveal about their attitude toward God's authority?**

**How is sexual immorality more than simply a private matter in Jude's argument?**

**What does rejecting authority have to do with ungodliness?**

Jude contrasts these people with Michael the archangel, who simply said, *"The Lord rebuke you!"*

**What does Michael's response suggest about humility and recognizing God's authority?**

**Why might people who reject God's authority also be especially prone to speak confidently about things they don't actually understand?**

### Think About It

Our culture often encourages us to think:

"Can't we simply disagree about these things?"

**When does disagreement over Christian teaching become something more serious than simply having different opinions?**

**How can a church distinguish between legitimate differences among Christians and teaching that actually undermines the faith?**

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## 3. Three Dangerous Paths

Read **Jude 11**.

“Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam's error; they have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion.”

Jude gives three Old Testament examples: **Cain, Balaam, and Korah**.

## **Cain**

**What do you remember about Cain's story?**

**What does “the way of Cain” suggest about the direction a person's heart can take?**

## **Balaam**

Balaam became willing to use his spiritual influence for personal gain and ultimately became associated with Israel's spiritual compromise.

**Why can money and personal advantage become especially dangerous temptations for spiritual leaders?**

**What are some less obvious ways Christians today might be tempted to compromise truth for personal benefit?**

## **Korah**

Korah challenged the God-given authority of Moses and Aaron and led others into rebellion.

**What made Korah's rebellion especially dangerous beyond his own personal disobedience?**

**What happens when someone else's ungodliness begins influencing other people?**

## **Bringing the Three Together**

What do Cain, Balaam, and Korah have in common?

Consider:

- **Cain:** rebellion expressed through destructive sin
- **Balaam:** compromise motivated by personal gain
- **Korah:** rebellion that draws others into division

**Which of these three dangers do you think is easiest to overlook in the church today? Why?**

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## 4. Ungodliness Doesn't Stay Private

Read **Jude 12–13**.

Jude describes these people with a series of vivid pictures:

- blemishes at the love feasts
- shepherds who feed only themselves
- clouds without rain
- trees without fruit
- wild waves of the sea
- wandering stars

**What do these descriptions communicate about the character and influence of the false teachers?**

Jude says they were present at the church's **love feasts**—meals associated with Christian fellowship and communion.

**Why is it especially troubling that these people were participating in the life of the church rather than simply attacking Christianity from outside?**

**What does the phrase “shepherds who feed only themselves” tell us about their leadership?**

Think about the four images from creation:

- Clouds that promise rain but produce none
- Trees that should produce fruit but don't
- Waves that bring disorder and shame
- Stars that fail to guide

**What do all four images have in common?**

**What should spiritual leaders and mature Christians actually produce in the lives of other people?**

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## 5. The Danger of Empty Grace

Jude's concern is not merely that these people believe incorrect things. Their teaching produces **ungodly lives**.

Look back at **Jude 4** and then read **Jude 12–13**.

**How does Jude connect false teaching with ungodly living?**

**What happens when God's grace is treated as permission to continue in sin rather than God's transforming work in our lives?**

Your sermon described this as “**emptying the grace of God.**”

**What would it look like for someone to claim God's grace while actually using grace as an excuse for disobedience?**

**How can we make sure that our understanding of grace leads us toward holiness rather than away from it?**

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## **6. God's Judgment Is Coming**

Read **Jude 14–16**.

Jude quotes Enoch's prophecy concerning the Lord's coming judgment.

**What words or phrases are repeated in these verses? What does that repetition emphasize?**

Jude repeatedly describes these people as **ungodly**.

**What does Jude say God will ultimately judge?**

Notice that Jude mentions both:

- their **ungodly acts**
- their **ungodly words**

**Why is it important that God cares about both what we do and what we say?**

Verse 16 describes these people as:

- grumblers
- faultfinders
- people who follow their own evil desires
- people who boast about themselves
- people who flatter others for personal advantage

**What do these characteristics reveal about what is happening inside these people?**

**How do complaining, self-promotion, manipulation, and following our desires fit with the larger theme of ungodliness?**

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# Living It Out

## 7. “Call Sin, Sin”

One of the dangers Jude addresses is the temptation to minimize ungodliness.

**Why are Christians sometimes reluctant to call sin “sin”?**

What are some reasons we might:

- excuse it?
- rename it?
- tolerate it?
- overlook it?
- call it someone else's problem?

**How can we distinguish between lovingly confronting sin and becoming judgmental toward other people?**

Your sermon emphasized that Scripture's warning is directed particularly toward the **church**, because Christians can be influenced by ungodly teaching and influences.

**Why do you think Christians can become more concerned about the ungodliness of people outside the church than the ungodliness within their own hearts and churches?**

## Personal Reflection

Which of these is the greatest danger for you personally?

- Minimizing sin
- Rationalizing sin
- Following cultural values rather than Scripture
- Resisting legitimate authority
- Compromising convictions for personal advantage
- Influencing others toward ungodliness
- Becoming more concerned about someone else's sin than your own

**What would repentance look like in that area?**

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## 8. A Warning Meant to Protect Us

Jude's warning is severe, but it is ultimately an act of love. He wants Christians to recognize the danger before it destroys them and others.

**How can a warning about God's judgment actually be an expression of God's grace?**

**What is Jude trying to protect his readers from?**

**What might happen in a church that refuses to take ungodliness seriously?**

**What might happen in a Christian's life when he or she stops taking sin seriously?**

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### Taking One Step

Complete this sentence:

**Because of Jude 5–16, I need to take seriously**

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Now complete this one:

**One step I can take this week to resist ungodliness is**

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If appropriate, share your answers with the group.

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### Pray Together

Pray for:

- **Discernment** — that God would help us recognize false teaching and ungodly influences.
- **Holiness** — that we would not excuse or minimize sin in our own lives.
- **Courage** — that we would lovingly call sin what it is without becoming self-righteous or judgmental.

- **Protection** — that our church would be guarded from teachers and influences that lead people away from Christ.
- **Humility** — that we would examine our own hearts before focusing on the failures of others.
- **Perseverance** — that we would contend for the faith while remaining faithful to Jesus.

## Closing Thought

Jude does not give this warning so that Christians will become obsessed with judgment. He gives it so that Christians will **take holiness seriously, recognize ungodliness for what it is, and remain faithful to Christ.**

**If you accept ungodliness, you accept its fate.**

**How will you respond to God's warning this week?**