

Jude 11-13 — How Apostates Work

September 26, 2021

If you are a visitor, it is great to have you. My name is Kurt. I am one of the pastors. This morning, we continue our study of the book of Jude. Take your sermon handouts out and open your Bibles to Jude 11.

While you are getting ready, I have some good news. As many of you know, we were in a position to purchase the north side of the north mall in Spencer. That will be the new home of our Spencer campus. As a church, you approved the purchase, and we have the funds in bank for the purchase. What we thought would be easy became months of difficulty. Due to multiple parties

having a stake in the property and errors in the deeds, the purchase was delayed by months. With the help of our realtor and multiple lawyers, the purchase finally went through this



week. The good news is not just that we finally own the property, but due to some errors in the deeds, we also now own more storage space on the property, and we didn't pay a penny more.

We are excited to move to the next steps. We have a proposed budget for renovations in the building to transform it into a CrossWinds campus. That budget is mostly for Spencer but it does address a few needed items on the Spirit Lake campus. If you are a member, that budget will be emailed to you in the next two weeks. It is done. We are simply putting some finishing touches on it. If you are not a member, please feel free to talk to Pastor Shane. I am sure he will be

comfortable walking through it with you. We will have four open houses giving you a chance to ask questions on that budget. Two are in Spirit Lake and two are in Spencer. The ones in Spirit Lake are on October 10 after second service and on the evening of October 18. The CrossWinds annual meeting is Monday, October 25. All campuses will meet here on the Spirit Lake campus to vote on the election of elders and deacons, plus, we will vote to approve the renovation budget.

Once the budget is approved, we will begin receiving funds for that budget. Some of you have already been giving to this project. We believe the budget is small enough that we hope God will provide all of the funds needed for this transformation. We do not plan to go into debt on this project.

There is a lot of exciting stuff happening at CrossWinds. Let's get back to Jude and pick up our study.

In our study of Jude, we have learned that Jude is a book about apostasy and spiritual terrorists. An apostate is someone who has come to know the truth about Jesus --- he or she may have even professed to be a Christian --- but has walked away from Jesus. That is a terrible place to be. To walk away from Jesus is to walk away from the only hope people have for forgiveness of sin and a relationship with God. The book of Jude is about a particular kind of apostate. It is about spiritual terrorists. Most apostates don't just leave Jesus, they leave the church. Spiritual terrorists are those who leave Jesus but stay in the church. They stay in the church to pull more people away from Jesus. They stay in the church

to undermine people's faith and to pull them away from the only hope that have in this world.

Last week, we saw spiritual terrorists and regular terrorists have a lot in common. Both dress in plain clothes so they blend in. They are hard to spot until after they have done their damage. In addition, both are suicide bombers. Just as traditional terrorists blow themselves up to take the lives of a people around them, in the same way, spiritual terrorists stay inside the church to spiritually detonate themselves and send other people to hell with them.

While our nation has done a good job of fighting terrorism since September 11, the church often has not done a good job of protecting itself from spiritual terrorists. Churches, and even entire denominations, have been destroyed by the work of spiritual terrorists, apostates who have assumed positions of leadership and power. There are entire schools, denominations, and churches who once professed the Christian faith but are no longer following the Christian faith because of the work of spiritual terrorists in leadership positions.

The book of Jude calls us to wake up to the reality that there is a real battle going on around us. Satan has send his best operatives not to attack the church from the outside but to destroy the church from the inside by working as spiritual terrorists in and among God's people.

This war to protect the truth of Jesus in the church is far more important than any war against physical terrorists. It is not just people's earthly lives that are at stake but people's eternal lives that are at stake. That is much more significant than earthly death.

Last week, I also told you Jude is not a casual letter. It is a carefully written letter. In the part of Jude that we are studying, which is Jude 5-11, Jude made three points, then he gave us three examples to support each point. Let me briefly review what we learned.

In verses 5-7, Jude made the point that it never ends well for anyone who turns his or her back on Jesus. It doesn't matter who you are. It is always a disaster to walk away from Jesus. In Jude 5, we see that God judged and destroyed the Exodus generation. Even though the Israelites were miraculously saved by Jesus out of Egypt, even though they walked through the Red Sea on dry ground, even though Jesus gave them manna every morning --- except for one day a week --- and even though Jesus gave them water from a rock twice, they still rebelled against Jesus 10 times in the wilderness. As a result, the Jesus who saved them became the Jesus who judged them. They died in the wilderness. Only their children went into the Promised Land. The Exodus generation knew the power, goodness, and salvation of Jesus, but the Israelites rejected Jesus and were destroyed. It never ends well to turn your back on Jesus.

The second example of apostasy Jude gave us came from Jude 6. That verse talks about fallen angels. Those are angels who rebelled against Jesus in heaven. They were kicked out of heaven. According to Genesis 6, the worst of those fallen angels possessed men who married women. The result was demon-dominated families. This shows us the horror of the world before God drowned it in the flood. The world was far worse than it is now. Jude tells us that not all of

these angels but the worst of these angels at the time of the flood were taken by Jesus, chained and bound in a dark pit in the universe. There they will remain until the day of judgement. It didn't work out well for the angels who rebelled against Jesus. The worst of them are already bound by Jesus and locked in a pit.

The third example Jude gave was in Jude 7. It was Sodom and Gomorrah. God obliterated them with fire and brimstone because of their gross immorality, which especially included homosexuality. As Genesis 19 told us, they knew from their own consciences and from the witness of Lot that what they were doing was wicked and rebellious. They did it anyway.

We see it doesn't matter if you are God's chosen people or if you are the angels in heaven or if you are Gentiles. It doesn't end well for anyone who knows the truth of Jesus, who understands the power and salvation of Jesus, then turns his or her back on Jesus. When anyone turns one's back on Jesus that spells disaster. That is not just true in history. It is true for each of us today.

Last week, we were in Jude 8-10. In those verses, Jude taught us how to spot a spiritual terrorist. Once again, there were three characteristics that distinguished these apostates. They can be recognized by their sexually immoral lifestyles. They are recognized by their insubordination toward those in authority. They are recognized by their irreverence toward what is holy.

This brings us to verse 11, which begins this morning's study. Like the earlier verses, Jude is making a main point which he will illustrate with three examples. In these verses, Jude showed how spiritual terrorists go about their destructive work.

Like last week, Jude wanted us to look at the way spiritual terrorists did their destructive work among God's people in the past. They use the same tactics and techniques to try and destroy Christians in the present.

Instead of looking at large-scale events in history, this time Jude selected three people from history who proved to be spiritual terrorists so we can study them.

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. Jude 11–13 (ESV)

Let's begin in verse 11.

How Do Apostates Work?

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. Jude 11 (ESV)

These three apostates from history show us the way modern day apostates work. They have gone the way of Cain. They have rushed into Balaam's error. They have perished in Korah's rebellion. You will notice, there is a progression in this list. The nouns are: Way, error, rebellion. Each one is getting worse. The verbs are: Taken, rushed, destroyed. Each of these is more intense. This list shows us the way spiritual terrorists go about their work in increasingly more destructive ways.

Cain — They reject God's word for self-styled worship.

Let's think about Cain for a moment. His story is found in Genesis 4. Without getting bogged down, let's look at some highlights of his life. We begin

with his parents. They were Adam and Eve. Cain was the first person born via natural birth on the planet. Adam was created from the dust of the earth. He was supernaturally created by God. He never experienced those awkward junior high years. Eve was created from a rib in Adam's side. She was also created by God. She also never had the teenage problem of pimples. Cain was the first human to go through those stages. Thankfully he wasn't alone. He had a brother to go through those awkward years with him. His name was Abel. He was the second person born on the planet. Let's read about them.

Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have gotten a man with the help of the LORD." And again, she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a worker of the ground. In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell. The LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it." Cain spoke to Abel his brother. And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. Genesis 4:1-8 (ESV)

Cain was the first farmer. He tilled the ground. He was a grain farmer, maybe a little corn and soybeans, I don't know. Cain would have done well in Iowa. Abel was also a farmer. He was into the livestock side of farming. He raised a little cattle, sheep, maybe chickens, and goats. I don't know.

In the course of time Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the ground. He brought some vegetables. Essentially Cain gave God a salad for an offering. Abels also brought an offering but Abel brought the firstborn of his flock and the fat portions. Abel gave God a big juicy steak. When it comes to the type of offering Abel gave, he gave what was first and what was best.

The Bible tells us God was pleased with Abel's steak but he was not pleased with Cain's salad. Cain knew this. He hung his head. He was depressed and angry.

I love this part. God didn't condemn him. God was so patient with him. He simply said to Cain, "Why are you down in the mouth? Why are you angry? If you do well, will it not be accepted?" In other words, Cain knew the right kind of offering to give. This implies that God had instructed Cain and Abel what was the right type of offering to give. Abel followed God's instructions. Cain rejected God's instructions and decided to worship God his own way. He decided to make up his own rules. That is why God was not pleased with his offering. God didn't like Cain's self-styled worship. He liked Abel's worship because Abel followed the instructions about what God told him was acceptable worship. Cain did not.

Rather than repenting of his sin, Cain persisted in his sin. Cain's jealousy turn to anger. Anger turned to rage. Rage turned into murder. He murdered his own brother, but in truth, he was the problem. He knew what right worship looked like but he decided to worship God with his own style of worship --- a style that was comfortable and easy for him.

Isn't this the way spiritual terrorists work today? They know what the Bible says but rather than submitting to God's Word about what is true and how to worship, they attempt to change God's Word into something that is comfortable and easy for them.

In the Bible, Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. Nobody comes to the Father but by me." Spiritual terrorists don't want to submit to God's

Word. They want to change God's Word and say Jesus is only one of the ways to God. In a similar way, the Bible says the Word of God is truth. Different denominations will act like Cain and tell you the Bible is wrong on that claim, that the Bible has errors and is not the truth, that it needs to be reinterpreted. My friends, that is the way of Cain!

Spiritual terrorists always cause damage to God's people. That is exactly what happened in this case. Cain murdered Abel, the righteous one.

Hebrews 11:4 provides a good commentary on what happened.

By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he was commended as righteous, God commending him by accepting his gifts. And through his faith, though he died, he still speaks. Hebrews 11:4 (ESV)

We often wonder what the faith of Abel looked like that made his sacrifice more acceptable than Cain's. It was simply that Abel believed God's words about what acceptable worship was like were true and he worshiped God that way. Cain did not believe God's words about acceptable worship were true so he worshiped God in his own way. The end result was disaster. It resulted in bitterness, anger, jealousy, and murder.

In the same way, apostates today will claim to be religious. They will come before God in their own self-styled fashion. When they get close to people who are actually pleasing God, they will get angry and hostile.

This reminds me of an article that was passed to me this week. It was an article on a Free Methodist pastor who was advocating for her Christian employer to pay for her preferred methods of birth control.¹ Her preferred method was an IUD. If you know much about birth control, an IUD doesn't prevent pregnancy, it

¹ <https://www.lifenews.com/2018/09/07/methodist-pastor-uses-bible-verse-to-defend-forcing-christians-to-fund-abortions/>

aborts pregnancy. This is why her employer refused to pay for that method of birth control. She ended up testifying in front of a panel about how this was wrong on her denomination's part. She said they were violating the Bible. She quoted John 10:10

Methodist Pastor Uses Bible Verse to Defend Forcing Christians to Fund Abortions



which says that Jesus came that she might have life and have it to the full. By her employer not paying for her preferred method of birth control, she was not having life to the full. That woman is off her rocker. She is completely misusing that verse. She is completely ignoring what the Bible teaches about the sanctity of life. She is like Cain. Rather than submitting to what God says, she is making up her own rules, her own religion, which is what spiritual terrorists do. She is also attacking the righteous ones. She is trying to make her employer, which is a church, look like it is the bad guy.

Balaam — They lead others to destruction for the sake of greed.

Next, we move to Balaam. This takes things up a notch. Instead of one person dying, a lot of people were about to die.

The question always comes up with spiritual terrorists is, "If they have left Jesus, why do they stay in the church? Why don't they get out?" It is one word. Money. Spiritual terrorists stay in the church to tear apart the church because they can make good money doing it.

Spiritual terrorists today often make good money from writing books that undermine the faith and everybody buys them. As I was writing this message, my eyes glanced to the bookshelf on the right side of my desk. There I have Brian MacLearn's book "A New Kind of Christian." He lives in Minneapolis. For a while, his book was all the rage but when it comes to Biblical fidelity, he is like a cow that has left the farm. He made such good money on the first book that he wrote a second book. The problem is that it is not a biblically faithful book. However, he is happy, because at the end of the day, he made good money.

The story of Balaam is a story of a spiritual terrorist motivated by money. Balaam's story stretches across Numbers 22-24. He also shows up again in Numbers 31. We don't have time to work our way through his entire story so let me hit the highlights.

Israel wandered in the desert for 40 years. The Exodus generation died in the wilderness and a new generation was in adulthood. As this new generation moved toward the Promised Land, these Israelites ran into some conflicts with people groups in the area. One of those groups was the Moabites. Balak was the king of the Moabites. Balak knew what God had done for the Israelites. It was roughly only 40 years before when God put plagues on the Egyptians and split the Red Sea. Balak knew that since God was supernaturally fighting for the Israelites, there was no way he could defeat them. This is why Balak tried to hire the prophet Balaam to curse the Israelites. He figured that if Balaam was able to curse the Israelites and God would start fighting against the Israelites, maybe he had a chance at defeating them.

At first, Balaam looked like a stand up guy.

But Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, "Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the command of the LORD my God to do less or more." Numbers 22:18 (ESV)

In truth, he did care about money. He was motivated by greed. Even though he said he would not go beyond the command of the Lord, three times he tried to curse the Israelites to get a big paycheck from Balak. Each time the words Balaam intended to use to curse Israel were changed supernaturally into words of blessing as they came out of Balaam's mouth. When God is changing curses to blessings in your mouth as you speak them, you should reevaluate your plans.

Balaam went home without the cash. He couldn't curse the Israelites. He couldn't get God to stop fighting for them and start fighting against them.

When Balaam went home and thought things over, he figured out a way to get paid. He told Balak to have the Moabite women go into the Israelite camp and seduce the Israelite men. Once they had seduced the men, they were to invite the Israelite men to join them in the worship of their gods.

Balaam knew Israel was just given the Ten Commandments from Mount Sinai. In one of those commandments, God said, "Have no other gods before me." In another of those commandments, God said, "Do not commit adultery." If Balaam could just get the Israelites to start violating God's commandments, God would go from fighting for them to fighting against them. It worked!

While Israel lived in Shittim, the people began to whore with the daughters of Moab. These invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. Numbers 25:1-2 (ESV)

This was serious sin. The holiness of the people was compromised. If the sin of the last generation led to 40 years in the wilderness and death, who knows what would have happened if the new generation pursued this sin. Moses began to get radical.

And Moses said to the judges of Israel, "Each of you kill those of his men who have yoked themselves to Baal of Peor." Numbers 25:5 (ESV)

In addition, God got in on the action. He broke out a plague against his own people and 15,000 of them died. I told you a lot of people were going to die! It was only by repenting of their sin and by the death of many that this plague passed and God stopped fighting against his own people.

In Numbers we find it was Balaam's idea to tell the women of Moab to seduce the Israelite men so God would begin fighting against them instead of for them.

Behold, these, on Balaam's advice, caused the people of Israel to act treacherously against the LORD in the incident of Peor, and so the plague came among the congregation of the LORD. Numbers 31:16 (ESV)

So Balaam is another apostate, a spiritual terrorist of history. He looked like a godly prophet. He even started out saying he only was there to please God, but in truth, he was in it for the money. Even though God supernaturally changed words of cursing to blessing in his mouth as he spoke them, he was so greedy he found a way to be paid handsomely by Balak by telling the Moabite women to seduce the Israelite men. Balaam didn't care about how many thousands of men died. He didn't care about how many single mothers were left to raise their children without a father. He was happy. He had a big fat paycheck. Money was the only thing he really cared about in the first place.

Isn't this the way many spiritual terrorists go about their work in the church today? They are driven by money. They are like Benny Hinn. He doesn't care how many poor and distraught people give him their last dollars as long as he drives a Mercedes and has a house on the beach. He leads God's people astray for money. Think of some of the recent implosions of mega-church pastors. Wasn't it revealed that many of them were driven by money, not love for people?

By the way, Balaam's plan never worked out. While Balaam was filthy rich, once the Israelites conquered Canaan, they killed Balaam. All that money doesn't do a bit of good once you are dead. It would have been better to be on the side of God's people instead of being motivated by greed to fight against God's people.

The book of Revelation speaks about Balaam this way.

But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality.
Revelation 2:14 (ESV)

Korah — They create rebellion to undermine legitimate leaders.

Korah's story is told in Numbers 16. He was a Levite. A Levite's job was to take care of the temple and help with worship. As a Levite, he was a cousin of Moses. He would normally have been part of the priesthood but the text hints at him having been excluded from the priesthood for some reason. Maybe there was something about him that threw up red flags for leadership. This irritated him. It infuriated him. Korah followed the same path as Cain and let his anger turn into rebellion and sin. He decided to conduct a coup and try to overthrow Moses as a leader.

Korah grabbed a couple of his friends named Dathan and Abiram to get this rebellion underway. Korah and his buddies had a little catch-phrase they used to inspire their rebellion. It was this, "Isn't all the congregation holy?"

At first, this sounds good and reasonable. Aren't we all God's chosen people? This phrase was meant to do more than just recognized their status as God's chosen people. It was intended to undermine Moses as a leader. Korah was saying, "Why do we need Moses? Aren't we all holy? Why do we need a spiritual leader? Why do we need Moses to pray for us? Aren't we all holy before God? Why do we need Moses to teach us? Aren't we all holy? Can't we read God's Word on our own?"

Haven't you heard this same line of reasoning today? People say, "I am a Christian, but I don't need to be part of a church. I am a Christian but I don't need a pastor to pray for me or a pastor to teach the Word of God to me. Can't I just read it on my own?" Others will say, "Who do you think you are to tell me my opinion about the Bible and what it says isn't right? Aren't we all entitled to our own opinion about the Bible? Don't we all have the Holy Spirit in us guiding us to the truth? Why do we need pastors, elders, or other spiritual leaders in our lives? I don't want a spiritual authority over me. I don't need a spiritual authority over me. All I need is my coffee, my Bible, and a beach. That way I can take a picture for my Instagram feed."

What is so dangerous about this? How does rejecting God's legitimate spiritual leaders destroy God's people? Let me put it to you this way. Sheep

without a shepherd are vulnerable. Let me say that again. Sheep without a shepherd are vulnerable.

That is why spiritual terrorists will not listen to legitimate spiritual leaders but instead will encourage God's people to undermine, overthrow, or reject legitimate spiritual leaders.

How does this end? Numbers 16 tells us Moses did not need to defend himself. God put an end to the whole thing. He had the ground open up to swallow Korah, Dathan, Abiram and all that was theirs alive. They all fell into a giant sinkhole that opened up right under them. Once they went down to the grave, the sinkhole closed in over them. If that didn't make a clear statement about what God felt about them, I don't know what else would.

In addition to the giant sinkhole, God dealt with a bunch of guys that were following them in the rebellion. It was like a scene from the movie "Backdraft." The Bible tells us fire then shot out from the tent of the Lord and burned to a crisp 250 of Korah's buddies. Each of them was left looking like overcooked strips of bacon. In addition, God broke out a plague against the people and 15,000 died. If it wasn't for Moses and Aaron coming to the rescue, the plague would have consumed even more people. Thank goodness they still had God's leaders to intercede for mercy upon them!

So Korah was an especially effective apostate. He was an especially deadly spiritual terrorist. He caused a lot of damage and led many people astray by encouraging rebellion and irreverence toward God's chosen leaders.

In Jewish history, these three guys are famous. They are the trinity of apostasy. They are the three musketeers of spiritual terrorism. Cain was the first person to rebel against God. It led to the death of one person. Balaam was the next apostate to rebel against God. It led to the death of thousands of people. Korah was the next apostate to rebel against God. His apostasy also led to the death of thousands of people, and it almost resulted in the overthrow of Moses who was God's chosen leader.

The way these apostates went about their work in the past is the same way apostates will go about their work today. They will want to worship God in self-styled worship. They will be in it for the money. They will be undermining and rebelling against God's chosen leaders.

In verses 12 and 13, Jude gave us brief windows of insight into what the results of an apostate's life are and why we want to stay away from them.

What is the result of an apostate's life?

They are like hidden reefs. They are an unseen danger that is ready to destroy.

**These are hidden reefs at your love feasts, as they feast with you without fear...
Jude 12 (ESV)**

Jude called them hidden reefs. This speaks of rocks or coral that rise up from the bottom of the ocean and sit just below the surface of the waves. As boats sail just off shore they have no idea these reefs are just below the surface of the waves. The boats hit these reefs and they tear a hole in the bottom of the vessel, which sinks the boats, just like the Titanic.

Jude said these people are like hidden reefs. They are eating with you when you take the Lord's Supper. They are right next to you but you don't see it. They are intent on destroying you. They want to ruin your life. They want to send you to hell, and you don't see it happening in the church right under your nose.

They are like bad shepherds. They only care about themselves.

...shepherds feeding themselves... Jude 12 (ESV)

Shepherds should not be caring for themselves. They are to care about the sheep. Jesus said the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. These guys are not good shepherds. They do not want to care about the sheep. They want to use the sheep. They are not giving to people. They are taking from people. They are not givers of life. They are takers of life who do not think about anyone but the person in the mirror.

Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord GOD: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? Ezekiel 34:2 (ESV)

Jude told us to stay away from these kind of people. They claim they care for you but in reality they just want to use you and ruin you.

They are like clouds without water. They claim to bring life but never deliver.

...waterless clouds, swept along by winds... Jude 12 (ESV)

This summer, we experienced waterless clouds. We desperately needed rain. We watched the storms coming our direction from the south but they floated over us and never dropped their life-giving water on us that we desperately needed.

Jude said that is a good description of these people. They make all kinds of promises about giving you life and spiritual refreshment, but they are all empty. They are just words. There is no substance to them or life in them. None of us like people who are all talk and no action, but that is what these apostates are like. This is why Jude begged us to stay away from them. The result of their lives is empty promises and wasted words. They never deliver.

Like clouds and wind without rain is a man who boasts of a gift he does not give.
Proverbs 25:14 (ESV)

They are like fruitless trees. They are nothing but death.

...fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted... Jude 12 (ESV)

Jude was laying it on thick at this point. Cindy and I used to live in Michigan. We lived next to Welch's grape fields and apple groves. All summer long the grapes and apples were watered, sprayed, and tended. The fall was the payday when the harvest had come and the trees were heavy with fruit. Imagine what it would be like to head into the field after tending the vines and trees only to find no fruit, no reward. That is what these people are like. Their lives produce no fruit. There is nothing good that comes from them.

Jude took it up a notch. He said they are like uprooted trees that have been plucked from the ground and are thrown on the burn pile. Their roots aren't connected with the life-giving soil. They are trees that are not just missing fruit, they are missing leaves. They are missing life. The result of their lives is completely fruitless and lifeless. Stay away from spiritual terrorists and apostates who want to pull you away from Jesus. They are dead end roads.

They are like waves casting up foam. The result of their lives is garbage.

...wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame. Jude 13 (ESV)

We don't see this in Iowa. I grew up on the East Coast and spent time on the New Jersey Shore. After a storm with all the pounding waves, the shore is littered with debris as the sea vomits up dead seaweed, dirty foam, silt, and trash. Jude said all the work of apostates' lives and the churning of apostates' lives only results in a pile of garbage. There is nothing good that comes from their lives or from following them.

But the wicked are like the tossing sea; for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up mire and dirt. Isaiah 57:20 (ESV)

They are like wandering stars. They shine for a brief moment but spend an eternity in utter darkness.

...wandering stars, for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever. Jude 13 (ESV)

Technically stars don't wander. They follow an orbit. They follow a path. One kind of star that doesn't follow a path is a shooting star. I think this is what Jude was describing. Shooting stars come on the scene. Nobody knows where they come from. They burn bright for a bit as they brush against our atmosphere. Then they pass out of the atmosphere and catapult into utter darkness where they exist in darkness never to be seen again.

Jude said that is an apt picture of the way the life of a spiritual terrorist. They come from nowhere. They burn brightly for a short time and everyone is interested in them, but in the end, they pass into obscurity and darkness forever.

They don't lead anyone to life and they don't end up in life. They end up in eternal darkness.

This is why it is never worth following a spiritual terrorist who wants to pull you away from Jesus, even if he or she claims to have something better.

Conclusion

So we see that apostates, these spiritual terrorists who attack the church from inside the church, go about their work in three ways. First, like Cain, they disregard God's Word and try to rewrite God's Word into something of their own making. They are after self-styled worship. Second, like Balaam, they are not genuinely interested in pleasing God and leading people to Jesus. They are just in the church business for the money. Third, they will undermine God's legitimate leaders and encourage rebellion against those leaders.

Where does the life of these spiritual terrorist lead? They are fruitless and lifeless. They are filled with empty promises that never deliver. Their lives are just piles of garbage. They are not good shepherds that feed sheep. They are selfish shepherds who only use people and care about themselves. They are like hidden reefs in the ocean --- danger just below the surface, just under your nose. They intend to destroy you. Jude begged us to reject them and stay away. Do not let them get a foothold in the church. They are dead end roads.



Dr. Kurt Trucksess is ordained in the Evangelical Free Church of America. He enjoys reading, writing, and time with his family. Feel free to contact him at www.Christ2RCulture.com (www.c2rc.com)

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