

**Message #4****Jude 1:5-7**

I want to speak a moment about the subject of the grace of God. This is a key subject of verse 4. It is a wonderful subject. We are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, apart from works and apart from O.T. Law and we live our lives depending on God's grace.

None of us are perfect, certainly I am not. If the Apostle Paul said well into his Christian life, "O wretched man that I am," then those of us who are honest about ourselves will quickly admit the same thing.

There is not one of us who believes in Jesus Christ who has not done something, said something, looked at something or thought something that puts us in need of confession and depending on God's grace for His free forgiveness and cleansing grace. Paul was working on his own life and every single thought. There were times he failed and there are times we do too. We have wonderful liberty in Christ to be able to make it through life, but the more we grasp of God's grace the more profound it becomes.

When grace is truly at work in our lives, it "instructs us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in this present age" (Titus 2:12). When we fail, we go to God and confess it and get back on track so God can bless us and use us.

Now this is the truth about the grace of God. But back in Jude's day there were teachers who were telling people that the grace of God actually supported and promoted sinful rebellion. Instead of these teachers telling people they need to be sick of their sin, they were telling them to go enjoy sin. There were religious leaders who were telling people that there was nothing wrong with it.

Jude wanted God's people to realize that God does judge and will judge those ungodly leaders who turn the grace of God into licentiousness (Jude 1:4).

The church in Jude's day was a church filled with creepers who were preaching a seductive heresy. Their teaching was we may sin up a storm because we are justified by the grace of God. You may live an immoral libertine lifestyle once you have experienced the grace of God. You may pursue sin. They were not challenging people to be convicted about sin or to confess sin; they were challenging people to indulge in it because it was okay with God.

What Jude does in these next verses is give a series of illustrations of those who were very religious but pursued things contrary to God's Word. He gives some illustrations of those God classifies as unbelievers who ultimately end up burning in "eternal fire."

Jude wants these believers on high alert. He wants them specifically looking out for those who creep in and promote immoral things.

Now notice how Jude begins **verse 5**, namely, “I want to remind you of something you already know.” They already knew these things because God had revealed these things in the “once for all” Word of God. This was part of the once for all truth of the grace Gospel that they knew. So these illustrations will further substantiate the “once for all” truth. Jude knew that these people had been properly instructed in the grace doctrine. He also knew that there were times we need a reminder of these things because we all have a sin nature that is, as the hymn says, “prone to wander and prone to leave the God I love.”

Now each of these examples are examples of people who were connected to some part of the true family of God but had not believed, were not interested in responding to truth and had defected into their own way.

**AFTER CHALLENGING BELIEVERS TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH IN VIEW OF THOSE WHO HAVE CREPT INTO THE CHURCH, JUDE GIVES EXAMPLES OF THE KINDS OF PEOPLE GOD ULTIMATELY DESTROYED BECAUSE THEY TURNED AWAY FROM HIM AND PURSUED AND PROMOTED IMMORALITY.**

There are certain people who have a fixed destruction. The most amazing thing today is that we have these men in pulpits today who are promoting horrible things. They are not trying to elevate worship to the God of heaven, they are trying to bring God down and put Him into sin.

There are certain things God’s people knew. Jude is reminding the believers of Biblical examples of things they know about: What do these examples have to do with contending for the faith? These examples prove that there will be religious imposters who will try to sneak into the sphere of the church.

Since we all have a sin nature, there will be times when we sin. What we never want to do is to excuse it by saying God’s grace is okay with it. What we want to do is go straight to God and confess it. We want to be honest about it and call it what it is and claim God’s cleansing grace. In this way it does not fester to a greater level of depravity. James, the brother of Jude, uses a good example of this with lusts. If lusts are not dealt with they can lead to sin (James 1:15). So it is critical that we stay on top of things like that. We do not ever want to excuse our failure by falling into the trap of saying that God’s grace is okay with it.

However, having said that, just because grace is misused, we do not abandon grace. We are to proclaim it in a sensible, responsible and Biblical way. The grace of God is the teaching of the Word of God. The grace of God is operative in salvation and Christian living.

Now there are three examples that Jude gives of those who were judged by God:

**JUDGMENT EXAMPLE #1 – The example of unbelieving Israelites who were destroyed. **1:5 (Numbers 14:11-12)****

There are a couple of Biblical stories that Jude could be referring to with this example:

### **Biblical Story #1 - Numbers 13-14 (I Cor. 10:1-5)**

The children of Israel were now at Kadesh Barnea, which is the land God promised to them. God was ready to give Israel the land (13:1). Twelve spies were chosen by Joshua to go into the land and look it over and see what it was like and what the people were like. At the valley of Eschol, the fruit was so great they actually had to carry it back on a pole (Num. 13:23).

Ten spies decided to give their majority report (Numbers 13:26). They said this land does flow with milk and honey and they showed them fruit. We would naturally think they would say since God's Word has told us to go take the land, let's go get it. But that is not what they said. Instead they said, "nevertheless" the people are strong, cities fortified and there are lots of enemies and the implication is we better not try it (Num. 13:28).

Two spies decided to give their minority report. The two spies were Caleb and Joshua. Their view was let us take the land because we will surely overcome every enemy (Num. 13:30).

The report concerning what is in the land and who is in the land is identical from both groups of spies—the ten who were unbelieving and the two who were believing. They both saw the same things, but one group said, "nevertheless" the other said, "we are able." **The ten put difficulty between themselves and God; but the two put God before themselves and the difficulty. The problem here is "unbelief." Not believing the Word of God is serious business.**

### **Biblical Story #2 - Exodus 32:1-35 (I Cor. 10:6-11)**

Contextually, this is the story I think Jude has in mind. Moses had been up on the mountain with God and the children of Israel didn't think he was coming back so they made an idolatrous calf and then participated in a drunken orgy. God literally killed His own people.

I think this is exactly the point Jude is making. Jude quickly moves in **verse 5** from the divine act of salvation to the divine act of destruction. The destruction is done by the "Lord." Probably this is a reference to Jesus Christ.

Now the warning as I understand it is aimed at God's people who do not believe the Word of God. **The specific warning in the context is a warning against those who don't think there is anything wrong with sexual immorality and are turning the grace of God into a promotion of sexual immorality.**

**Jude warns that God will destroy His own people and He has done it in the past.**

This clearly coincides with a warning Jesus Christ gave to the church of Thyatira. There was a woman in that church who was promoting immorality and actually teaching that there was nothing wrong with it (Rev. 2:24). Jesus Christ said I am going to start physically killing people in the church (Rev. 2:20, 23).

What Jude wanted God's people to know is that you start turning the grace of God into a promotion for immorality and God will destroy His own people. He did it in the past and He will do it again.

It is one thing to struggle with our flesh. It is one thing to deal honestly with things before God; it is quite another to claim that His Word teaches something it does not teach, especially in a matter like promoting immorality.

**JUDGMENT EXAMPLE #2** – The example of defecting angels who were judged. **1:6 (Genesis 6:1-9)**

There were a group of angels who chose not to remain in their privileged position near God. They left their assigned sphere and apparently took on a human body and actually were involved with human women and produced a godless offspring. This produced such godlessness that it brought about the flood. They left the dignity of their angelic position. They left their own habitation which was heaven and chose to come to the earth and get involved in immorality. Ultimately, these angels incurred the wrath of God and are kept in eternal bonds until the Day of Judgment. In fact, the Apostle Peter said these angels are burning in hell and committed to the “pits of darkness, reserved for judgment” (II Pet. 2:4).

Now some have said that this comes from the secular writing known as book of Enoch. It describes an angelic rebellion and many assume that Jude is citing this book (*I Enoch 6-19*), because he actually refers to it in **verses 14-15**. However, Jude is presenting truth and the truth he is presenting is inspired whether or not it shows up in the book of Enoch.

The point is there were some very religious angels who had left their position in order to pursue immoral things. That is what had happened with some leaders who abandoned their knowledge of the grace of God and used it to promote and pursue immoral things right in the church.

God judged the angels and He also will eventually judge and destroy the men. In this case, the reason for the judgment was an arrogance that was not content with what God had given them.

Think about this—these angels saw God in all of His glory. They experienced the greatness of God and now they are bound in eternal bonds until the great judgment day.

There is no question that demons are involved in nudity (Rev. 16:14-15). So this is certainly not something to promote in the church. Furthermore, according to I Corinthians 6:3 says we will judge angels. I am certain that some of the angels will have been these.

**JUDGMENT EXAMPLE #3** – The example of immoral Sodom and Gomorrah, who were punished in eternal fire. **1:7 (Genesis 19:1-11)**

This is an illustration of what happens to people who pursue immoral, lustful, sexual perversions.

The story comes from Genesis 17-18. The “these” refers to the angels. “Strange flesh” equals different flesh or another type of flesh than the norm. Two angels in the form of two men go to Sodom and the Sodomite men want to have sexual relationships with them.

The words “gross immorality” describes immorality that is out of the norm for immorality. This word describes an excessive immoral behavior that is at an abominable level (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 141). There is a natural sexual desire that is normal between a man and woman and then there is an unnatural sexual desire that is abnormal.

This example is an example of the fact that men wanted to have sex with men and God ultimately destroyed them for their abominable sexual perversion of homosexuality.

In this case, the reason for the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah was because of this “strange flesh” pursuit.

All through the O.T. and N.T. there are references to Sodom and Gomorrah and the judgment against it.

What happened in Sodom and Gomorrah and three other cities was surgical. He punished the Sodomites as an example of eternal fire.

The Bible has much to say about homosexuality—Ex. 18:13 says it is an abomination to God. This is a violation of the natural order of God. In Romans 1:26-28, Paul says God gives up people and condemns them to hell for this very sin.

Paul says the rise of this sin is evidence that God has already judged. We are already under the judgment of God. We are already under judgment heading to the final judgment of eternal fire.

Some say God just loves everyone the way they are and cannot really punish someone in hell forever. What does the Word of God say here in **verse 7**—Sodom and Gomorrah is illustrative of **“eternal fire.”**

Let us be clear on the purpose of every one of these examples. God’s grace does not promote a pursuit of sexual immorality; it condemns it.

Jude’s point is that God’s people know this and they have always known this. They may have some struggles, but they never say God promotes immoral behavior. God’s grace will forgive someone of “any sin,” but it is not a grace that says it is okay to sin and those who promote otherwise are those heading to hell.

Jesus predicted that shortly before He returns there will be an escalation of sexual immorality and homosexuality (Luke 17:26-30).