

Title: The Jesus Most Don't Want to Talk About  
Text: Jude 5-7  
Theme: The judgment of Jesus  
Series: Jude #3  
Prop Stmtnt: The judgment of Jesus is real and serious.

Read text:

There is still a sentimental attachment to the song Amazing Grace to many people who do not attend church. I'm glad, but am always surprised to see a bunch of people call themselves a wretch. A wretch is a despicable and contemptible person. Imagine any kind of civic gathering, large corporate function, charity event, athletic contest, or even a church service where someone gets up in front and announces that all those who consider themselves to be despicable and contemptible to gather over here. That would be bizarre, off-putting, upsetting and offensive to many. But, yet people will sing that song and say that about themselves. Why, on earth did John Newton ever write that? He wrote it because it was true. John came to realize that his sin was so offensive to God and that his sin had so polluted him that he was, in that condition, a despicable and contemptible person. If John Newton was in the crowd, he would go "over there" and if we understood the reality of our sin we would to.

Foundational to understanding the gospel is this truth: Only God can save us from God. The grace of God poured out through the life and death of Christ saves us from the just and righteous wrath of God. Because God is immutable, he doesn't change. He doesn't evolve. God is righteous and therefore, he has to punish sin. We are the sinners. We deserve to be punished, but we cannot bear the punishment. It is too much for us. Compared to the holiness and purity of God, we are filthy, despicable and contemptible. We are wretched. We owe a debt we cannot pay, but unless we pay it we are condemned. Left to ourselves, our condition is hopeless. But God, in his grace did not leave us to ourselves. He did the most incredible thing ever. The Son of God became a son of man. And as the God-man was able to pay for our sins by offering his infinitely righteous life as a justice-fulfilling, wrath-appeasing, righteous-satisfying, debt-paying sacrifice for our sins. At the cross, in the offering up of the perfect life of Christ to the horrendous death of crucifixion, the justice of God and the grace of God embraced. The grace of God is amazing only if you understand the real and terrifying justice of God.

God is the God who condemns sin and the God who saves from sin. He is both. If you deny or distort the grace of God, then people are conditioned to be terrified of God and distrust him. If you deny or distort the judgment of God against sin, the people turn his grace into sentimentalism. Amazing Grace is not really amazing then. It is nostalgic, maybe a little goose-bumpy, when in reality, God's grace is incredible! But, we are prone to forget this. And what is worse, there will always be people who try to minimize the judgment of God against sin by rejecting God's view of sin or God's response to it. In our text, Jude is telling these believers to be on guard against people who do that. And he does so by reminding them that the Jesus who saves is the same Jesus who condemns. Our text this morning has 3 examples of this. Like the recipients of this letter, we need this reminder.

I. **God destroyed the unbelieving Israelites.** (5)

Look at Jude's comment at the beginning of verse 5. It is very kind, I would say, pastoral. I know that you know this, at least you used to know this. But, I need to remind you of it. The same Jesus who saved the Israelites from the land of Egypt is the same Jesus who destroyed them because of their unbelief. I want you to see what is going on here. Here is God's interpretation of history. The NT tells us how we are to understand the OT. The facts are this: The children of Israel (Israel was the name of Jacob who was the father of the 12 brothers from which the 12 tribes came) were in bondage as slaves to Pharaoh and the Egyptians and had no rights, no resources, no weapons, no means of escape and no hope. There was no U.N. or human rights organization putting pressure on Egypt to be humanitarian. Israel had no hope. If they were going to be saved, someone else had to do it, because they couldn't.

Side note: When you are in conversations with people who claim to be agnostic or atheistic, and if they have a measure of intellectual honesty (many do not, but some do), I find it helpful to ask them how to explain Israel. The existence of Israel is incredible. The only reason why this ethnicity became a nation who had her own constitution, land, monarchy and religion was because of God. They could not save themselves.

And how did God save them? He saved them by means of the judgments that he brought upon the unbelieving Pharaoh. Pharaoh heard the Word of God and he rejected it. Moses told him that the LORD commanded Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go. Pharaoh responded by saying, "Who is the LORD that I should obey him?" He did not believe. Was it ignorance? Initially, but God enrolled Pharaoh in a crash course called Theology Proper and this course was not zoom or virtual learning. There was nothing virtual about it. It was very real. God says, I am the Creator and you Pharaoh are the creation. You are under my word. If you do what I tell you to do, it will go well with you. If you don't it will go badly for you. Pharaoh was not ignorant for long, but soon his problem was not ignorance but rebellion. Over and over God made Pharaoh stay after class in detention (they still do that?). I majored in that course. He wasn't getting the point. And God used Pharaoh's rebellion as the means to destroy the economy, the agriculture, the military and the government of Egypt. In short order, the most powerful kingdom of the Ancient Near East was reduced to rubble, not from a neighboring empire but because Pharaoh would not believe. So, on the surface it looks like Israel escaped from Egypt and became their own nation. That is true, but the reason why that is true is because Jesus saved them out of Egypt. How did he save them? He saved them by means of the blood of an innocent lamb (atoning sacrifice) being applied to the doorposts of their dwelling places. God came to destroy the firstborn of the unbelieving Egyptians and save the people of Israel who (believed God's Word) put the blood of the lamb on their doorposts. Do you see this now? Even in saving a people out of Egypt, he did it as an act of mercy in the midst of an act of judgment. (PASSOVER) - 4,000 years later! Pharaoh arrogantly and idiotically (they go together) challenged God by saying, "Who is the LORD that I should obey him?" 10 plagues later Pharaoh should have learned. But then in a classic example of how sin causes brain damage, Pharaoh ordered his army to go after Israel and bring them back. Who is the LORD that I should obey him? He is the LORD who basically said, you drown my little babies (which is how Exodus begins) and I'll drown your entire army. What is wrong with Pharaoh? What is wrong with Pharaoh is the same thing that is wrong with Israel. Sadly, most of Israel did not learn the lesson. "afterward (after rescuing them from Egypt) destroyed those who did not believe." Unbelieving Israel was no better than unbelieving Egypt.

Israel came out of Egypt and was poised to go into the land promised to them. They sent 12 spies into the land who came back with a report that was full of unbelief. The people are too strong, the cities are too well defended, we are no match for them, we have no hope. Only 2 of the spies, Joshua and Caleb disagreed. The nation as a whole believed the unbelievers. The nation did exactly what Pharaoh did. They disbelieved God even though they had been on the receiving end of God's deliverance. They were delivered from Egypt They were delivered through the Sea. They were given manna to eat every day and in spite of all of the evidences of God's miraculous grace, they did not believe God's promise to get them into their land. This event happened in Numbers 14. The book of Hebrews summarizes in 3.16-19. Who heard and rebelled? It was those who left Egypt and were led by Moses.

Other than the life of Christ, has there ever been a time when there was a more concentrated time of miracles and overwhelming evidence of God's power and involvement? We are tempted to think that if we just had some miraculous experience that we would always believe and never doubt, ever again. Now, some of you have had some experiences that are really amazing, but the truth is, miracles do not turn everyone into believers. You have to believe God. The fact that you see something amazing does not make you a believer. You have to believe God. In spite of the odds, or what others say and do, or what the world thinks, do you or don't you believe God? It's that simple. And when I say, do you or don't you believe God, do you believe what God says in his word? The evidence of your belief will be seen in the submission of your life to him.

Unbelief produces disobedience and disobedience brings judgment. The miracles were not enough. The evidence of power was not enough. The presence and voice of God was not enough. You have to believe. If you do not believe God, it doesn't matter if Lazarus is resurrected in front of you, if the tomb of Jesus is empty or if Noah's Ark is discovered. There is no amount of evidence that will convince you if you want to be in rebellion and disbelieve God. Does that make sense? No. Sin doesn't make sense. Sin causes brain damage. But know this. God will not be mocked. He destroyed the unbelieving Israelites because they did not believe him. And for the next 40 years, they died and died until the last one of that generation was dead. Then, they went into the promised land. If unbelieving Israel was no better than unbelieving Egypt, then what is Jude's message to those who want to pretend that God is not serious about his Word?

## II. **God judged the rebellious angels.** (demons) (6)

Wow! What is that? Jude is describing a rebellion on the part of angels. He could be referring to one of two events. 1) This is describing the original rebellion of Satan and the angels he was able to convince to join him in seeking to overthrow God, which did not work and resulted in Satan losing his position and the angels becoming demons and being condemned. If that was the case, then, from this text it sounds as if some of them (perhaps some of the higher ranking angels) were from that point on, kept in Hades in chains waiting for their day of judgment.

The other possibility is that this is referring to Genesis 6 that describes how the sons of God (another name for angelic beings) who had rebelled, did not stay in their lane. They left their position because they wanted to indulge themselves with the daughters of man. I have generally viewed the sons of God reference in Genesis 6 as describing the godly line of Seth and not

angelic beings who were able to join themselves to the human race. However, the more I look at this, the more I am coming to believe that Genesis 6 is referring to angelic beings who were able to cohabitate with humans. I do not have time to go into this now, perhaps at another time, but the reason why Jude brings this up is this. God made angels to be incredibly glorious. Angels were the audience that rejoiced and sang when he laid the foundation of the earth. Angels were the very first act of God's creation. They got to see it all. They were dazzled by the origin of the earth, the formation of the galaxies, the setting of the tectonic plates, the sculpting of the mountains and the filling of the oceans. But being the first of God's creation, witnessing his power, seeing his glory in such an unveiled way was still not enough. Nothing is good enough if you want to be God.

As a parent, or grandparent, you might learn this the hard way. You can never satisfy spoiled. If you have spoiled your child, it does not matter what you do for them, it will never be enough. For these angels, seeing and experiencing the glory of God in ways we can only dream about was not enough. They rebelled.

God is Creator. God makes the rules. God has order in his design. He made angels to be angels. He made humans to be humans, animals to be animals. And he gave clear instructions. You don't cross those lines. As the Creator, he gets to make the rules. As the creation, we follow them, unless we are idiots who think we don't have to. If you think for a second that God is not serious about his Word, look at how he responded to Israel and look at how he responded to these angels. Did he care for them? Of course he did! Did he do amazing things for them? Of course he did! Did he tolerate their disobedience? No. Did he judge their sin? Yes. Was it severe? Yes. It was severe because their rebellion was severe. They knew. They saw. They experienced and they made a calculated decision to rebel. Does that make any sense? No. Sin causes brain damage – even for angels. And God responded with a calculated decision to judge. The same God who saves is the same God who judges.

### III. **God punished the immoral citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah.** (7)

The 3<sup>rd</sup> example that Jude uses is Sodom and Gomorrah. God judged unbelieving and rebellious Israel in a severe, decisive and permanent manner. God judged the rebellious angels in a severe, decisive and permanent manner. They twisted (perverted) their created role as angels in order to pursue fleshy desires. Now in v. 7, Jude begins with "just as". There is a similarity to the sins of the angels to the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah. Both of them are condemned for perverting their God-made and God-ordained roles. For Sodom and Gomorrah, they indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire. The Greek literally reads they pursued unnatural flesh which simply means instead of pursuing sexual relations with women, the men became consumed with pursuing sexual relations with other men. And God punished them in a spectacular fashion the point of which is not lost on Jude. The localized response of God (fire and brimstone) to the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah point to the universal and cataclysmic response of God to the sins of all those who reject God's Word and make up their own laws.

Beloved, I am so completely aware of how politically and socially incorrect these words are. But, the world is not my audience. God is. This is his Word. Do you realize that if I skipped this verse, or if I watered it down I would be the false teacher who crept in unnoticed, and would be

guilty of perverting the grace of God and denying our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. I would be that false teacher because I would have failed to warn you of one of the things that God judges. But you cannot understand what you are saved to unless you understand what you are saved from. The good news of the gospel begins with the bad news of our sin. According to Romans 1, when people rebel against God, they make their own gods and make up their own rules, which means they are worshiping and serving the creation instead of the Creator. The consequence of this is that God turns them over to sexual immorality. When people indulge themselves in this without repentance then God turns them over to lesbianism and homosexuality which in turn results in God given them over to all kinds of evil. The end of Romans 1 says this, *“Though they know God’s decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.”*

Now, let me address the elephant in the room. I am fully aware that the current administrations in the White House and in Lansing do not share our views on this. But, my greater concern, much, much, much greater concern is how many of you view pornography or readily accept soft-porn in the shows you follow and movies you view. When you give your mind to that while lying to yourself and others “that you can handle it” you are taking an eraser and wiping out all of the lines that God has drawn. Do you see what happens? If you are indulging in this stuff, then you are in no position to protect your children and in fact, you probably won’t. And, you really don’t want me to talk about it, because its uncomfortable. You feel guilty. But, do you see the text? God judges sexual immorality. He is serious about this. But, isn’t there forgiveness? Yes, but forgiveness is God’s response to our repentance. Forgiveness is not God protecting you from the consequences of your sin. Forgiveness is God not holding the guilt of your sin against you. I say this to those of you whose media and internet usage does not look like or smell like Jesus. You need to have a come to Jesus meeting. And you need to know that the same Jesus who saves (that you presume upon) is the same Jesus who judges (that you may not want to talk about).

To those of you who are fighting this battle and you hate that sin and you hate what it has done to you and others, want to encourage you, keep fighting. Your fighting is the fruit of repentance. And what I want you to know in your heart of hearts is that the same Jesus who judges is the Jesus who saves completely all who come to him in faith. Jesus knows your battle. Every sin of yours was placed on him and he became guilty of it. He felt all of your guilt because he was in that moment that guilty. But, he died. The offering for your sin was given. The price was paid in full. It is done. It is finished. Your freedom was purchased. His judgment is real, and his salvation is real. Which one will you have? If you don’t believe him, you will make excuses. If you do, you won’t.

Tis grace that taught my heart to fear. It was God’s grace that taught my heart to fear so that I would know how serious my problem was. And grace my fears relieved. How could my fears of God’s judgment be relieved? They can only be relieved when I realize and believe that Christ took my judgment in my place. How precious did that grace appear, the hour I first believed.