

St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church-WELS

Sermon by Pastor A. Schultz
7th Sunday after Pentecost
July 7, 2013 Jude v. 8 to 16



⁸ In the very same way, on the strength of their dreams these ungodly people pollute their own bodies, reject authority and heap abuse on celestial beings. ⁹ But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not himself dare to condemn him for slander but said, “The Lord rebuke you!” ¹⁰ Yet these people slander whatever they do not understand, and the very things they do understand by instinct – as irrational animals do – will destroy them. 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. ¹² These people are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm – shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted – twice dead. ¹³ They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever. ¹⁴ Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them: “See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones ¹⁵ to judge everyone, and to convict all of them of all the ungodly acts they have committed in their ungodliness, and of all the defiant words ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” ¹⁶ These people are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage.

People of God – rescued from the flaming lake of fire in hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

Pericope. If you are a called worker – chances are you know that word – pericope. Very literally it means “a circumscribed portion” – a part set apart. Pericopes are systems that establish the Bible readings – the Old Testament lesson, the Epistle reading and the Gospel reading that you hear when you come to Church – the different Sundays of the Church Year – as well as Festivals like Christmas Eve and Christmas Day – Maundy Thursday and Good Friday and Ascension – and special days to give thanks for the blessings God gave us through Peter and Andrew James and John, Philip and Bartholomew and so on. There were pericopes as far back as the Church Father Jerome – ball park – 400 years after the Christ child was born. There were pericopes in the time of Martin Luther – although most of the time they were Gospel and Epistle readings. In 1865 Gottfried Thomasius chose readings for a year – *none* from Jude. In 1896 there was what’s called the Eisenach Series. A pastor named Lenski made it popular. But it doesn’t have any Sunday when you read from Jude. Pastor Soll – in 1912 published what’s called the Synodical Conference Pericopes – like many before him – most of the epistles are readings from Romans, Corinthians, Galatians and Ephesians – some readings from Luke to his friend Theophilus – some John’s letter to the 7 churches of Galatia – that is the Revelation to St. John. Again – no readings from Jude. If you went to church – like I did when I was little – you heard the same readings year after year – again and again – but almost certainly never from Jude. Why is that? Jude is only 25 verses long. Have you ever sat down and read it? Very likely not. Why is that? I’m not sure. Today and for the next 2 Sundays after that – we are doing what’s called a free text. We are going – with Jesus’ permission to have 3 sermons from Jude. Today God’s Word will encourage us to:

Contend For The Faith!

I. Understand Gross Evil All Around

II. Know That Jesus Protects Us.

The man who was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write down this part of God's Word was in Hebrew named Y'hudah – we would say Judah. Jacob named his 4th son Judah – in the direct line of Jesus – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah. Jesus was born of the tribe of Judah – the southern part of Israel was called Judea – the people of Israel are known as the Jews. See how that all fits together? In the Greek language – the Hebrew name Y'hudah was read as Judas. Thanks to Judas Iscariot – Judas has a permanently bad taste in people's mouth. Jesus' other disciple Judas or Thaddeus was sometimes called **Judas -not Judas Iscariot**. When God's Word was translated into English anyone not Judas Iscariot is called Jude.

Verse 1 says, **"Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James."** This James is one of Jesus' ½ brothers. Remember Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3 list Jesus ½ brothers. Do you remember their names? **James, Joseph, Simon and Judas** – here **Jude** – along with Jesus' ½ **sisters**. Jesus ½ brothers were not the first to believe in Him. That's probably pretty understandable. Remember Jesus said, **"Only in his hometown and in his own house is a prophet without honor."** Matthew 13:57 But after Jesus rose from the dead – his brothers did put their faith in him and preached and taught the Gospel! It has been said Jude's writing style reminds you of his brother James. Jude must have been a fiery preacher – an aggressive missionary. Stop and think about that for a minute – someone eager to share their faith! Where can you share your faith? One place is in the entry way of Church? Have you seen the *Verizon* commercial that starts with a

guy with a sparkler? He uses his sparkler to light another sparkler and another – and before you know it – there are not just a handful of sparklers or even a hundred. There are sparklers everywhere. There are sparklers on bicycle wheels spinning around and around – a whole bunch of bicycles. The next thing you know there must literally be thousands of people with their sparklers – thousands down the block and around the corner and up the street – sparklers everywhere! So – when was the last time we talked to someone about Jesus? If you meet someone in the entry way – you can introduce yourself to them and say you aren't sure if you have met them before? My grandson Samuel Edward is going to grow up to be a very good evangelist. He played soccer this year. Samuel Edward is just 5 years old – but he's very outgoing. When he ran over to the bench the first day of practice he said to the first team mate he met – “My name's Sam. Who are you?” That's all you need to do? Walk up to someone and tell them your name – and ask them who are you? My Uncle Joel never attended a church that wasn't friendly. He would walk up to people and say, “My name's Joel Lamke – I taught shop – woods and metals in Racine. Who are you – and what do you do?” Sometimes people would say, “I'm just a visitor!” Uncle Joel would say, “Me, too! Nice to meet you!” We can do that! It just might be the start of a wonderful friendship! Jude was eager to share his faith. By the grace of God his writing is vivid and imaginative and alive with a sense of urgency because Jesus' returning in judgment cannot be far off! Woe to the unbeliever come Judgment Day! If you know your Bible very well – you would notice that Jude and 2 Peter chapter 2 are so similar – one must almost be quoting the other. Did you know that? False teachers – who mislead God's people will be in serious trouble for misusing God's Word to try to lead God's people astray. To use

God's Word as a tool to do harm to someone's faith? How horrible is that?

⁸In the very same way, on the strength of their dreams these ungodly people pollute their own bodies, reject authority and heap abuse on celestial beings. ⁹But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not himself dare to condemn him for slander but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" Ungodly people – false teachers – are a danger to the faith of the people around them. God's Word says, **"Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies."** 1 Corinthians 6:19 Last Sunday – when Pastor Gartner preached on the text from Galatians – remember – he talked about learning how to drive? Remember that part about driving onto the shoulder – thinking – if Jesus' blood washes away all my sins – no matter how terrible – then I can be as terrible as I want. He will forgive me no matter what! That's just wrong – and you have to be coarse, abusive, abrasive and contemptuous to think like that! And to mislead others into this wicked sinful self-indulgence is especially wrong! Jude takes an example from Old Testament times – to make his point. When Moses died on Mt. Nebo – the LORD himself was Moses' undertaker. The LORD himself buried Moses in a private place. You can read about it in Deuteronomy chapter 34. Apparently somewhere in the middle of all this – Satan tried to interfere! Exactly how God's Word doesn't say. The LORD apparently sent his archangel Michael – to utterly frustrate the devil. And yet – even in this situation where it was obvious – the holiness of the archangel versus the obvious godlessness of the father of lies – the ruler of the kingdom of the air – the murderer from the

beginning – Michael didn't say bad stuff about Satan. **Michael said, "The Lord rebuke you!"** Here, too, is a lesson for us – when we are tempted in the face of gross wickedness and evil – to straighten someone out. Remember the example of Michael. **"The Lord rebuke you!"** The Lord will judge you and the Lord will see justice done! It's not my place to judge you!

¹⁰ Yet these people slander whatever they do not understand, and the very things they do understand by instinct – as irrational animals do – will destroy them. 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. Cain! What a horrible tragedy. Eve and Adam have a son – and before you know it Cain's heart is fatally infected with evil! Remember the Sunday School lessons – the picture of Cain's sacrifice of vegetables – the smoke going all sideways and the jealous hatred in Cain's eyes. He murders his brother Abel – then asks his Heavenly Father, **"Am I my brother's keeper?!"** A restless wanderer with the devil in his heart and the mark of God on his skin – what an eternal tragedy! Balaam! Remember him? Balaam was the sorcerer who was paid by wicked King Balak to curse the children of Israel. But all he could say were words of blessing! Remember his horrible advice – tempt the children of Israel with the women of Moab – they will lead them into fertility cult worship. The LORD disciplined his people – because he loved them – with a plague that took the lives of 24,000 children of Israel! Don't ever be tempted to take comfort in the fact everybody is doing it. What is the LORD going to do – spank all of us? He surely can! Remember Korah? Numbers chapter 16. Remember his position of trust in the Church? Remember his terrible rebellion against the LORD and against the LORD's servant Moses? Remember how the earth opened up and swallowed up

Korah, Dathan and Abirum and their families and their followers? We need to learn from their painful examples – lest we repeat their mistakes and repeat their horrible end!

¹² These people are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm – shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted – twice dead. ¹³ They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever. This is one of the most graphic preachments of the law in all of God’s Word! The position of shepherd is one of great trust. The sheep trust the shepherd with their very life. Shepherds who feed only themselves – betray their calling. Clouds without rain? What is the point? Autumn trees shed leaves – no fruit – uprooted – they fall over. Twice dead – physically dead and spiritually eternally dead is the ultimate tragedy. Wild waves – foaming up their shame. Stars are supposed to be solid – dependable – showing the ship the way – not misleading! Imagine the blackest most frightening darkness – the place where you abandon all hope – the pit of hell! By the grace of God alone – we will not be lost in hell. We are forgiven for Jesus’ sake!

¹⁴ Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them: “See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones ¹⁵ to judge everyone, and to convict all of them of all the ungodly acts they have committed in their ungodliness, and of all the defiant words ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” Enoch – the 7th guy listed – in the genealogy of Adam – in Genesis chapter 5. Enoch lived for 365 years. Imagine that! Imagine living for hundreds and hundreds of years. Think of Enoch’s son Methuselah who lived to be 969 years old – almost a thousand! But what did people do with this time of grace – a

lifetime that lasted hundreds and hundreds of years? **The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. The LORD regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled!**" Genesis 6:5,6 *Ungodly, ungodly, ungodly,*

ungodly – this is the spiritual state of these wicked people – grumblers, complainers, fault-finders! People who complain and find fault no matter what. When you do the right thing and do it well – and there is no denying it – still they say, “Well, it’s about time!” Well, it’s a start!” “Sure it’s good now – but trust me – it will never last!” Such bitter pessimism or the opposite – a self-serving flatters may fool people but it will never fool God.

We live in a sin spoiled world. A mom was watching cartoons with her 3 year old daughter – her 1 year old son sleeping when a 42 year old man kicks in the back door dead-bolt and breaks into her home. The nanny cam records the man beating the mom – punching and kicking her – giving her a concussion and worse all in front of her little daughter – stealing the mom’s wedding ring and an arm full of “things and stuff”. How can you pound a mommy? How can you do that? We live in a sin infected world where each day there is more and more unspeakable sin and evil. It is only by grace through faith that we are forgiven. Only Jesus can rescue us from this soul destroying evil. We will – by the power of the Gospel – contend for our faith even as we pray more and more earnestly, **“Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus!”** Amen!

To God alone all glory! *Pastor Anthony E. Schultz*