

“The Firemen’s Alarm” *At Risk in the Community*

God’s Word:

Jude 3-8, 19-25

Key Verses:

“And have mercy on some, who are doubting; save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.”

--Jude 22,23

Breaking It Down:

Throughout the history of the church, there have been those who have tried to destroy the Christian faith. They range from the Pharisees who tried to discredit Jesus, to Ananias and Sapphira who tried to steal favor with the early church (Acts 5), to the beast that is to come and is spoken of in Revelation 13:15. The devil and his demons try any and every means to turn people from the truth and from following Jesus. We should not be surprised when there is conflict in the church or even conflict in our hearts towards the church, because this is the way it’s always been and always will be until the devil and his supporters are cast into the Lake of Fire.



The surprising thing is not that such men and creatures exist, but that we give them authority in the church. Jude 3 says that we who know Christ need to contend for the faith that was entrusted to the saints. It is vitally important that the message of the gospel remain intact and true to its original meaning. In Jude, certain men who did not know God nor obey God had entered the churches and changed the apostles’ message.

Jude specifically talks about people who made the gospel into a license for immorality. These men were ruled by their lusts and justified them religiously (verses 4 and 19). These men had three big problems with their behavior: sexual immorality, rejecting authority, and slandering God and angels. Verse 5 of Jude reminds us that God had saved His people, Israel, by bringing them out of Egypt, but He later destroyed those who lost faith in Him. The demons also fell from God’s presence, and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by fire. The angels had seen God’s glory, yet some of them

thought they were better than God and chose a new leader. These words in the book of Jude should spark in us a fear of God's punishment and gratitude for God's love and mercy.

Living It:

I hear a lot of young people talk about God as their best friend or the One who is always there for them, regardless of what they do. If you talk with them, they actually don't think about God all that often or ask Him if what they're doing is the right thing. To get a grasp on the book of Jude, you need to come to terms with the fact that if you give up on Jesus, or if you change His gospel, God's going to punish you just as He let the Israelites waste away in the desert, and has reserved hell for the demons. God punishes people who try to love God and love the world as well. If you're someone who does this, I'm urging you to consider the Lord's discipline and get yourself right with God!

It's not a matter of whether God can no longer forgive you. Matthew 6:14-15 says that if we forgive others when they sin against us, that God will also forgive us. That is not the issue. The issue is whether you are going to build up yourself in faith, pray in the Holy Spirit, keep yourself in God's love, and wait on the mercy of Christ (verses 20-21), or are you going to follow your lusts and worldly desires, which will eventually kill you, hurt all who love you, and, if not addressed, lead you to burn in hell?



We don't hear enough about hell these days. Sure, a lot of people use it as a curse word without thinking about what it means. I'm not afraid of talking about hell, because it's a real place that I want to keep a lot of people from going to as a result of rejecting Christ.

Hell is not the gathering place of all the cool people in the world who will then get to forever enjoy hanging out with their bad selves and pursuing the same pleasures they enjoyed on Earth. God is the only One who creates pleasure, and in hell there will be no pleasure. Despite the popular belief, there's no sex in hell. I can't even begin to describe how horrific it will be, but this is how it looks to me. People will torture and fight each other, and they will never be fully satisfied with what they've done so they'll keep doing it over and over. People and demons will humiliate you, create ways to put you in pain, and murder you over and over because you can't die in hell. It will be a place of gruesome darkness, a place of screaming, and a place of fire.

I'm not writing this to give you nightmares. I'm writing this so that those who keep messing around and living like the rest of the world, thinking they can live that way and then go to church, pray and sing really loud in worship and everything will be O.K., will wake up and realize that there are consequences to the choices we make. Hell is not a place you want to go! Yes, following Jesus and living for Him is fun when you really understand what it's about, but it's not just about having fun. God's Word is a double-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12), like a surgeon's knife that cuts away the dead tissue that can infect our lives--stuff that, apart from the blood of Christ, will lead us to hell. Live for Jesus and get rid of the junk in your life that the world is shoving down your throat! Don't go back to it no matter how many times Satan tries to tempt you with it!

If you have confessed your sins and accepted Christ as Savior, He has redeemed your past. He paid the penalty for all of your sins on the cross and He has wiped the slate clean. He has cleaned up the muddy waters for you. God is able to preserve you for heaven. There's nothing that can stop you from going there if He is Lord of your life. Depend on God. Get together with strong Christian men and women and ask them to keep you accountable. Share with them where you are weak and tempted so they can help you overcome. As Jude 24 says, He is able to keep you from stumbling!



Understanding It:

1. What are the five accusations that Jude makes about the godless men in verses 3-8?
2. Why does the book of Jude say that the godless men do these things?
3. According to the scripture reading, how are we to deal with such godless men?
4. Have you bought into the lie that once you accept Christ as Savior, you can do as you please? What are some of the things you do that you think Jesus would not want you to do? What can you do to overcome these habits?



Doing It!

Make a list of what you think are three of the core beliefs of Christianity. They don't have to be the three most important beliefs, but three beliefs you think are important to being a Christian. For each of these beliefs, write out what the world says about them and then write out one verse from the Bible that addresses them. Be prepared to share what you've written with your class the following week.

