



## JUDE - WEEK 3

### LIE #1 - "YOU SHOULDN'T JUDGE ANYONE."

At the end of our last sermon in the letter of Jude, I made the claim that no one really rejects authority. We just abandon wise and loving authority (God) for foolish and selfish authority that's centered in self or another human being or a system of thought that simply replaces God. The point is that we have all inherited our worldview (whatever it is) from other authorities.

Take the phrase, "You need to learn to think for yourself." Have you ever been told that? Who told it to you? Someone else. In other

words, it came from an authority figure in your life. The idea that we just decide to think for ourselves independently of others is mythological. It's like saying you can get through life without being influenced by others. Influence is authority. And everyone is influenced by someone.

Now, thinking is a good thing. "Love God with all your mind." Thinking for yourself apart from outside influences is cultural mythology.

**But influence is key and churches are failing at influencing people regarding the truth.**

- The teenage spiritual crisis of moralistic therapeutic deism
- "One of the most important predictors of whether or not a child as a teenager and as young adult will be a believer is whether or not that child sees his or her father actively identified and believing and participating in the life of the church. For Christian fathers, this means we have a responsibility to live before our children in such a way that they see us believing in and living by" our faith in Christ.

We want to influence them toward a Christian worldview. In Christianity, we do not proclaim our own ideas or our own authority, but the authority of God. That's what we're going to look at today — the authority of a worldview and how that influences the judgments we make.

So, we pickup in verse 9 of Jude:

9 But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you."

Whenever you are having a conversation with someone about Truth with a capital T, meaning that it's universal and applies to everyone, the objection you are sure to hear in such conversations is, "Doesn't your religion teach that you shouldn't judge?"

And that's the lie we're going to be dealing with today: **LIE #1: "YOU SHOULDN'T JUDGE ANYONE."**

Let's begin by defining the word judgment. A judgment is simply an evaluation. The question is what do we base our evaluations upon, because we all make them. Basically,

our evaluations will be based upon the prevailing authorities in our worldview.

What are the authority sources in your worldview? Culture itself? The latest psychological study? The latest Barna Group poll? The latest scientific findings? Your family?

Now, here's where we all need to take a step back as Christians. Many times, Christians will just condemn a cultural value wholesale simply because it is a cultural value, not realizing the Christian roots of many of our culture's most cherished values today.

This cultural value of "you should not judge" clearly comes from the teachings of Jesus. So, we can affirm the truth of this cultural value, which is asking good questions, such as, "Who are you to judge? Why should I trust what you say?"

Christianity demands that all our evaluations be held with humility because we will also be judged not only for our evaluations, but for the spirit in which we make them.

Right judgments can be made with a know-it-all-spirit that likes being right all the time,

which is the wrong way to evaluate anyone or anything.

But where this value falls short in our culture is that it's rooted in the individual, like so many of our cultural values. The culture we live in which says, "Do not judge," makes evaluations, but the source of those evaluations is nothing more than the authority of the self.

Now again, in Christianity, we say that is not the case, that the authority for our claims does not lie within ourselves. Because we do not present our own ideas based upon own authority, but on the authority of God.

If that were not the case, then we can only surmise that out of all the people on the face of the earth, Christians are the best sales people in the world. We're just so incredibly persuasive that we're able to talk people into believing this story about God coming to earth, performing miracles, living a sinless life, dying on the cross, rising again from the dead and then ending it all by telling people they should deny themselves and follow Him. Yeah, people all over the world embrace all that because we're able to spin a good yarn.

**The Bible says the exact opposite about Christians:**

## **1 Corinthians 1:26**

26 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

**So, we didn't go to the right schools, we didn't have the right friends and we didn't come from the right families.**

**The Bible says we don't persuade people because we're influential at all. It's because God blesses the message of the gospel. The gospel is intrinsically powerful. It's a message that comes with the power of God Himself.**

## **Romans 1:16**

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

**Now, what is Jude getting at here when he says that Michael the angel "did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment"?**

9 But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to

pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you."

**Well, blasphemy is saying something untrue about God. It's to misrepresent God. Blasphemy is to present God other than He actually is.**

**For instance, when someone says, "God will not send anyone to hell," they are saying something biblically untrue about God.**

**Bestselling author Elizabeth Gilbert assures her readers, "There is no such thing in this universe as hell, except maybe in our own terrified minds." Now, that is quite a statement. This is what we often fail to realize, but a statement like that is just as dogmatic as the statement that hell exists. Both statements are claiming to know something true about the universe. The question is, as always, "Based on what authority?"**

**But let me say this. Someone can also say, "God will send you to hell," and it can also be blasphemous. Why? Because they can communicate it in a way that misrepresents God, like God can't wait to send people to hell. Like He's looking forward to it.**

Here's the thing: We can say a true thing in an untrue way. We're not just unfeeling truth dispensers.

When Psalm 36:9 says, "In your light do we see light," it means not only will we know the right thing to say (the truth of the matter) but the right way to say it. We'll have a right evaluation all the way around. There will be both light in our judgment and in our delivery.

Now, to be in God's light is not just to have an understanding of the gospel, but to be in God's light means to be in fellowship with Him through prayer and devotional Bible reading.

Do you either have a time of prayer or do you pray throughout the day? Do you read the Bible to fellowship with God? To know Him? Because that is the only way to grow in discernment or right evaluations. It's one of the primary ways we are influenced by the truth.

What Jude is referring to here is that Michael did not pass judgment upon something of which he had little knowledge. He did not make a judgment that was above his pay grade. There are things we leave to the

judgment to God alone. And there are things we are in accord with concerning God's judgment, things that are revealed. Michael was in agreement with God's judgment, because it was God's judgment.

But even in evaluating Satan, Michael does so with an attitude of humility, conceding the fact that ultimately the Lord is Judge.

Now, the issue in this verse is that when Moses was buried, his grave was kept secret. This was done so that people would not make an idol of him, making pilgrimages to his grave and beginning superstitious traditions, etc.

Satan wanted the burial place of Moses to be known, because Satan promotes false and superstitious religious practices. For instance, though controversial to say, praying to saints or praying to Mary is found nowhere in the Bible. These are religious practices based upon superstition. It is simply a fact to say they are unbiblical.

## **Jude**

10 But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand,

So, these false teachers speak untrue things about things they do not understand about God and this is how false doctrines develop.

Theologian John Frame makes a great point when he says that “the danger is that poor answers to questions” about God can lead to false teaching.

For example, if someone doesn't understand the Bible's teaching about the nature of Christ, then they will say untrue things about Christ.

This has been part of the church's battle since it began. In the 3rd century there was an Alexandrian priest named Arius (c.250-c.336) who taught that Jesus was not divine, meaning He was not God, but that the Son of God was created by the Father and was therefore neither coeternal with the Father, nor consubstantial, meaning of the same stuff.

Jesus being fully God and fully human can lead people to all kinds of confusing thoughts. Historically, it did.

Some ancient false teachers said that Jesus being fully human and fully God meant that He was two people living in one body.

Others taught that Jesus only had one nature, because He was one person.

Early church councils confirmed the biblical teaching that Jesus is one person with two natures, one nature fully human and one nature fully divine. Now, all that can be unpacked even more, proven from Scripture, but it just serves as an example.

The point is, false teachers blaspheme all that they do not understand. They say false things because they do not have a grasp of the things they are speaking about.

- Allah versus the Christian God - When people say, “Muslims, Jews and Christians all worship the same God,” this is a patently false theological claim. It shows they do not have a grasp of the things they are speaking about.

If we don't define God the way He's defined in the Bible, it changes the nature of who Jesus is. That's why the authors of the New

Testament deal with false teachings and false teachers so much.

## **2 Corinthians 11:4**

4 For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough.

The point is, both Paul and Jude are concerned about a specific Jesus — the one they knew and loved. Definitions matter. Look how much they matter:

## **Jude**

and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively.

So, these false teachers are destroyed, but it means that those who embrace their false teachings will be destroyed also. That's why definitions matter.

These false teachers were not reasoned in their thinking about God. They were driven by lesser instincts, by physical and emotional factors. What is true reason? What is true understanding?

God is a reasonable God. The reason we can reason (justify a thought or action) is because we are created in His image.

This doesn't mean we ignore our emotional or physical needs. But we are more complex than just being driven by reason alone or emotion alone. Even while we're reasoning we are feeling and while we are feeling we are reasoning.

Some people have this false idea that we access God mystically apart from any type of knowing or thinking process.

“It has been a dangerous, damaging mistake to postulate that there is a kind of nonrational knowing by means of which we access God.”  
(Esther Lightcap Meek)

I love how she explains this: *One of the Bible verses that has been quoted to support this idea says,*

## **Isaiah 55:8-9**

8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts,  
neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord.  
9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so are my ways higher than your ways

and my thoughts than your thoughts.

***People who cite these verses to show that we can't know God rationally have missed its point in the context of the passage: God is not like us, not because he is above our knowing, but because he shows mercy (we don't, always) and because his words accomplish what he means them to accomplish (ours don't, always— just try telling your kid to clean up his or her room!). The whole point of the passage is that he means us to seek him and his mercy (which assumes that he thinks we can know him).***

Reason and faith are not separate entities working opposed to one another, otherwise Paul wouldn't instruct us to grow in our knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith comes by hearing the words of Christ, words that we must process rationally and reasonably. Faith is not on one side of the street with reason on the other.

If you struggle with how do we know that we know anything, then I would suggest reading Esther Lightcap Meek's book *Longing to Know - the Philosophy of Knowledge for Ordinary People*.

**11** 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.

Woe to them — this is not a curse, but a warning. Then Jude gives three examples of the character of these false teachers.

Cain, Balaam and Korah, each refer to a corresponding sin.

### CAIN

To walk in the way of Cain is persecute other Christians for various reasons. Cain left the way of the Lord. If you remember the story, the two brothers brought sacrifices to the Lord. Abel brought the best portions of his livelihood to God while Cain did not give God his best. Even after the Lord encouraged Cain, he sought out his brother and killed him. This is the way of Cain. It is the way of manipulative persecution of a brother or sister in Christ. This is in-house persecution we're talking about here. Professing believers persecuting another Christian or Christians. It's the sign of a false teacher or a false believer, many times.

## **1 John 3:12**



12 We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous.

**When you find Christians persecuting Christians it's often because some Christian is trying to hide a sin.**

### **BALAAM**

**Balaam was a prophet of God who was hired by a pagan ruler to ask God to curse the people of Israel. Balaam would inquire of the Lord and the Lord would speak to Balaam. God told him in no uncertain terms that He would not curse Israel. So, the pagan ruler asked Balaam to try again later.**

**Now, instead of just saying, "It's not gonna happen," Balaam keeps inquiring for the cash. He's all about the money. This is another sign of a false teacher. He or she is all about the money. Now, listen, Balaam was a legitimate prophet, but he became corrupt because of money. Your favorite false teacher can have some legitimate things to say, but ultimately what they're teaching boils down to (however blatantly or however subtly) is that money proves the blessing of God.**

### **KORAH - Numbers 16 & 17**

**LIE #2 - "BUT I GET SO MUCH OUT OF THEIR TEACHING."**

**Power, money and rebellion: the devil's trinity. (Numbers 22-24; 31:8)**

12 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; 13 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.

**It is fitting that their end is utter darkness because what they proclaim spiritually is utter darkness.**