

“Waterless Clouds”

Jude 1: 8-16 & Luke 6: 27-38...June 2020

Let us pray: Heavenly Lord, may the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be pleasing to you, Father. Amen.

The book of Jude is one we rarely hear from.

And in this morning's lesson, it sounds like an attack...

An attack on Romans, Gentils or non Christians.

It's not.

Rather, the author is denouncing a group of Christians.

He is denouncing their steadfast self-centeredness and their egotistical belief in themselves.

This Christian group was totally going their own way!

They were uninvolved and unconcerned with others.

They were capable of living with their Christian beliefs, but being uninfluenced by any of the Christian concepts.

Does that make sense?

They talked a good game...similar to a stereotypical politician.

They talk the talk...but don't walk the walk.

You see, their ultimate concern...was themselves.

Verse 12 reads: “These are blemishes on your love-feasts, while they feast with you without fear, feeding themselves.”

The difficulty seems to be that they got carried away with their own greatness as Christians.

They got carried away with their own wisdom...their own goodness.

They got carried away with their own devoutness.

rrThey were extremely proud of themselves.

rrThey were so spiritual (so self-centered), they were no longer concerned

with people of the human race.

rrThey were so Christian, that ordinary, common decent rules of living , didn't apply to them.

rrThey were so saved...they could do anything.

rrThe verse says, they followed the instincts of "Irrational animals".

rrThey could do no wrong.

rrThey were above and beyond everybody and everything.

rrHumility had no meaning.

(Pause) Let me ask you, does this sound familiar to you?

I mean this very early after the death of Christ.

These are events that happened long, long ago.

(Pause) but it certainly sounds like some feelings and actions we see today! (Re-read some of above)

RETURN-Jude, does not see this as an ideal Christian community.

For good reason, right?

He compares them with the most infamous Old Testament characters:

Cain, Balaam & Korah.

Here's an all-star cast to be compared to

Cain killed his own brother

Balaam tried to out-power God...and

Korah- attempted a coup against Moses & Aaron.

Needless to say, the fate of those Christians who are above and beyond codes of decent living, who's world superseded the teachings of Jesus, is not too promising.

They will be consumed in their own isolated pride.

Our danger, is to quickly assume that Jude isn't talking about us!

This group of Christian's actions sounds a lot like what we see today!

And we agree with everything Jude says,

Providing: he's not talking to us!

Perhaps, there are times when we as Christians put ourselves on a high and remote pedestal.

We rationalize that we are too good... too educated...

maybe even too white for others.

Other people simply don't have the same values and beliefs as us.

They don't have the same wealth, or tastes, or status.

Are we as Christians, too righteous for the sinner?

Too rich for the poor.

Too materialistic for the needy.

Too much a purist for the commoner.

Are we too educated for the weak...too isolated for the lonely.

Too carefree for the sad

Are we too busy for the forgotten.

In Second Peter we read:

“Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another.”

Jude remarks:

“They indulge their own lusts, they are bombastic in speech, flattering people to their own advantage.”

The danger is that we become too proud in ourselves.

Too elite....too important.

Too overwhelmed with our own ideas and ways.

With such an attitude, (pause) we can only hurt and offend others.

We actually alienate other members of our community.

We can't see or hear them...we don't want too.

What can they offer us?

(pause) The proud and conceded tend to make the world small & narrow.

It's really the easy way out if you think of it.

You are God....and everyone else is the fool.

Jude doesn't seem to approve of this attitude.

But after all....aren't we Christians?

I mean, we're saved!

We are set free! Right?

We have the truth, we have the light!

(Pause) So why should I worry about others?

Why should we show any concern?

Why should I have any regard for my fellow man?

(pause) Because, if they don't think like me...If they don't look like me

If they don't vote the way I do...

If their sexual orientation is different than mine.....

then, they're not really my fellow man, (pause) right?

(pause) This is heresy; this contradicts Christian thinking and action.

This isn't consistent with the teachings of Christ!

Beyond that, it's not conducive to life and happiness!

Peter refers to us as being "unfruitful":

"For if these things are yours and are increasing among you, they keep you from being ineffective and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." From 2nd Peter 1 verse 8.

In other words, our contribution to mankind is zero.

What has our contribution been to our family, Church, Community?

Jude refers to us as : Waterless clouds...fruitless trees....

Wild waves....or darkened stars

Again, as Christians, we serve NO functional purpose.

Our greatest and most consistent skills

lie in the ability of pointing out fools and their faults...

pointing out other people's sins.

But this is a total and absolute waste of energy.

Cause all we do, is end up pointing at each other!

And we end up with our own little think-a-like, look-a-like group.

And of course, each of these groups, must have their own private club.

Black Lives Matter community...The LBGTQ community...

Republicans....Democrats...(Pause) Christians!

So let me ask you a question....

What has any of this contributed to mankind, or Christianity,

Or to the Church? Or to the community?

Do you remember Christ's parable about the fig tree:

“A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. ⁷ So he said to the gardener, ‘See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?’” Luke 13: 6-8

If something's wasting space, cut it down!

(Pause) If we can do no more in this life, than find ignorance
in one another, and look down on others...

(pause) well, then we are that fig tree

For we give off no love.... no kindness...no understanding.

We exist as parasites, feeding on the members of the human race.

Does that make sense? (pause)

We feed upon their ignorance...their misfortune...

We feed on their lack of good taste (according to us).

We feed upon their differences...skin color, political view...religion

Any concept of oneness is absolutely foreign.

Any concept of humanity is totally wanting.

How much energy do we expel for others?

How much energy do we expel for ourselves?

Do we seek happiness of another...or ourself?

Do we seek the well-being of another, or our self?

Now I can't speak for any of you, and Jude may not be speaking to you,

(Pause) But he's definitely speaking to me.

I am the waterless cloud.

I look pretty floating around in the sky.

I may look good, but I produce no life giving rain

I don't aid in the growth of a single human being,

(pause) let alone the human race.

I'm the fruitless tree...Oh I may look good, but I give no nourishment.

I don't offer up, or give of myself.

I don't feed, or nourish or sustain a single soul.

I'm the wild wave: All I do is churn things up.

Somehow there aren't enough problems in the world,

so I have to create more.

In all my wave action...there is no set pattern,

No definite direction...I offer no security.

I'm the wandering dark star.

I give no light, or guidance to anyone.

In this self-analysis...and with no disrespect...

I'm not interested in your agreement or disagreement.

(pause) **Rather, I'm interested in your looking at yourself.**

The book of Jude was written about 125 AD...long ago.

The notes that I used to write this message that

I'm delivering right now... are from my father's notes ...in 1969.

This behavior was not appropriate in 125 AD

This behavior was not appropriate in 1969.

It's not appropriate now.

Let us pray:

Let us each, look within ourselves to find our Christian roots.

Help us Lord to remember the teachings of Jesus, and utilize

Those ideas, that compassion and that love to make this World
a better place for all of us.

A-men.