

Our Response

Welcome to Harvest Community Church

Series: Discernment for the Last Days

Text: Jude 1:20-23

In light of what scripture teaches us, we will more than likely know and see a believer or spiritual leader who has been deceived and strayed from the truth. It is important that we know how to deal with and effectively confront these issues. There will be people who will be seduced, led astray and will have embraced unbiblical lifestyles or have fallen into strange and unscriptural beliefs. It will require moral courage and compassion as we seek to help restore the fallen and protect those that they influence. **Galatians 6:1-2**

In the same way that Jude urged believers to earnestly contend for the faith, there is an equal urgency to be compassionate toward those who have fallen into any form of deception. When someone that we know, love, trust and respect falls into error or sin, we may be tempted to feel angry and betrayed by that person. This is natural but holding on to a hostile attitude will not set people free or change their heart. It is love that helps to cover a multitude of sins. **James 5:20, 1 Peter 4:8, Proverbs 10:12**

The word compassion in the Greek describes a deep-seated and unsettling emotion that a person feels when they have heard something that is sad and upsetting. An example would be when you see a picture of a starving child or you see the effects that cancer has physically taken on someone you love. This type of compassion means that we have grasped the enormity of the plight of someone who has compromised their walk of faith. To look on someone who has been deceived with contempt is just as unfeeling and uncaring as if we looked on those starving or beaten and robbed and think that maybe they had it coming. Remember this is spiritual warfare.

Warfare is messy, uncomfortable, brutal, hard to look at and leaves many wounded and scared and are difficult to heal. We need to understand the serious implication of error.

Proverbs 7:26-27 When embraced, error infects and sickens a person spiritually and holds the potential of becoming spiritually lethal. This error and its sickness can also infect others that those who are afflicted by it transmit these same error filled beliefs. Error is a killer of destinies and ministries unless a person truly repents.

Compassion is a mighty force that unleashes an astonishing amount of spiritual power. As we love, pray for and allow compassion to flow from us it goes to work to trigger deliverance that a person needs from the deceptive power of darkness. When we are able, we must address the error with the person we are praying for. **Matthew 18:15-20** We also must warn others about false teachers and prophets in order that they are protected from the wolves. **Matthew 7:15**

Several things that Bible tells us we are to do when it comes to false prophets and teachers:

- The Bible tells us that we are to **identify** false teachers. **Matthew 16:6, Philippians 3:2 & 18**
- We are to **avoid** them. **1 Corinthians 5:11, 2 Thessalonians 3:6 & 14, 2 Timothy 3:5, 2 John 1:10**
- We are to **rebuke** them. **1 Timothy 5:19-20,**
- We are to call them out **publicly** by warning others. **2 Timothy 4:10, 2 Timothy 1:15, 1 Timothy 1:19-20, 2 Timothy 2:17**
- If possible, we are to **restore** them.

Another thing that Jude exhorts us to do is – “on some have compassion, making a **difference**” This is a word picture of someone who has lost their ability to separate right from wrong. It is a picture of those unable to tell the difference between the truth and a lie. It describes chronic instability in what one believes and says. This is the type of person Jesus describes when He talks about people with **doubt**. **Mark 11:23, James 1:5-8** These are people who once held to Biblical beliefs but now they are so spiritually deceived that they question what they once held as unquestionable truth. They are unable to reach accurate spiritual conclusions and now embrace what they once deemed to be spiritual error or morally wrong.

Paul told us that deceived believers and errant spiritual leaders will need **help** to get back on track. **2 Timothy 2:24-25 (NKJV, AMP, NLT)** The word **instructing** is key to understanding why many are seduced into doctrinal error. The word instructing describes the training, education and teaching of young immature children. It described children who needed an elementary education in order to progress to higher levels as they grew older. You need to know you ABC’s and 123’s before you can read Shakespeare or do Algebra.

Deceived believers and leaders are still in need of a solid **foundation** before they advance to weightier levels. **Psalm 11:3, Hebrews 5:12-14 (AMP)** Paul tells us unapologetically that those who wind up misguided and deceived do so because they were never educated in foundational teaching. Their knowledge of God is like that of a **baby** and not a mature person. It is easier to lead a child astray than it is an educated adult. The Bible does say however that if it is possible even the very elect will be deceived. While children are easily seduced so are we when we entertain and embrace temptation.

The Bible tells us that we are not to **argue** with people but we are to humbly instruct. **2 Timothy 4:2-5, 2 Timothy 2:23-26** Chronic spiritual instability is only corrected one way. That is going back to the **beginning** and learning the ABCs of God’s Word. Whenever we get off track, we need to get back to the basics and the fundamentals of our faith. This is why professional athletes continue to always work on stretching and on the fundamentals. They keep you flexible in the battle and help you to remember to keep the main things the **main** things. **Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV & NLT)**

Jude 1:23 - but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.

Three things Jude tells us to do here:

- 1) **Save** with fear. This is a command that calls for immediate, fast and continuous action. These deceived saints don't need to be ignored, there is no time to **wait** or to **lose**. If someone doesn't act fast then they could suffer catastrophe. Today there are many who fall for the prosperity Gospel. We need to warn them of what they could suffer. **1 Timothy 6:10**

We are to save with **fear** - it describes a fear that results from a threatening or alarming circumstance. A good example would be seeing a child running into traffic. Jude is telling us that when we see deception taking place, we are to save people like they are running into imminent danger. One of Satan's greatest tricks if he is not able to deceive you is to convince you that there is no **urgency** in helping warn and save others. He will convince you or others that you are overreacting.

Remember Abraham acted quickly in seeking God's help for Lot and the angels helped Lot to leave Sodom quickly. It is imperative that we act decisively and urgently especially when others are not capable of seeing the danger that they are in. This is not living in fear, this is Biblical concern that, at the heart level, registers the **seriousness** of a situation. God is not calling us to a type of fear that paralyzes but actually motivates us out of love. As we pray and are led by the Holy Spirit, He will show us what steps we need to take to see deliverance for those who have been led astray.

- 2) We are to pull them out of the **fire**. To pull means to lay hold of and snatch. It is a picture of us doing everything in our ability to not allow them to be consumed by the fires of hell. Doctrines of demons will burn you, disfigure you, hurt you and eventually kill you. Like the angels with Lot, we are not to just sit idly by and watch errant Christians sink deeper into deception.
- 3) We are to **hate** anything contaminated by the flesh. The word hate means to abhor, to find utterly repulsive. It describes a deep-seated animosity towards something that one finds completely objectionable.

We are to hate the garment that is contaminated. This word for garment describes an **undergarment**, to describe moral contamination that is not merely surface but it is decay that has begun to contaminate the deepest parts of a person's being. Jude is saying don't look for anything attractive or amusing here. There is nothing about the situation and the deception that is morally redeeming. Hate the fact that it has begun to affect a person so deeply, so completely that it is defiling their character before God. Remember that what was once dirt on the surface of a person, if not cleansed and washed away, will begin to affect their health.

When you put Jude 1:22-23 in the Greek it could read like this –

“You must have a compassionate attitude toward those so spiritually calloused that they no longer know the difference between right and wrong. The truth is that these unstable people are living right on the brink of disaster and are in real spiritual jeopardy. Their plight is so grave that it requires an immediate rescue plan to snatch them from the fires of destruction.”

Through this study we have seen that the Bible teaches that there would be increased activity of seducing spirits and doctrines of demons. The Bible also prophecies that there will be a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the Church age nears the end of time.

Joel 2:28-29 The Bible also says that while some are departing from the faith there will be a great last day harvest of souls.

We must remember that it is the responsibility of all believers to contend for the faith AND fulfill the Great Commission. It is also imperative that we keep our heads on straight in a world that has gone crazy. It is time for us to move forward with discernment, wisdom and in the power of the Holy Spirit.