

CHRISTIAN KILLERS
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JUDE 16
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First-time guests today need to know that we are examining the book of Jude during our teaching time. Jude is often called *The Acts of the Apostates*. Since the Bible predicts that a large-scale turning away from Christianity will occur immediately preceding the second coming of Christ, it stands at the doorstep to Revelation as a fitting description and warning about men and women who start out as Christians and then turn their backs on Jesus. This morning we will examine verse 16.

Which picture looks most like Jesus?

- SLIDE #1: The angry one?
- SLIDE #2: The laughing one?
- SLIDE #3: The serious one.
- SLIDE #4: This black one?
- SLIDE #5: If you only had one picture to choose from, which one would you pick? Which one is the real Jesus? Well, He is sort of a combination of all of these. Or is He?
- SLIDE #6: How about this one with the long brown hair?

This is no small issue. One picture is worth 1,000 words. One picture speaks volumes. So if you are going to make up a picture, you had better get it right! Of course that is hard to do, when no one has any real idea what Jesus looked like.

Invariably, when we make up a god out of our own imagination—that picture is invariably flawed. Idolatry always begins in the mind of the artist—long before the idol is ever painted on paper or fashioned out of clay.

- SLIDE #17: Jude 16: These men are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage.

Now, let me summarize Jude's teaching succinctly.

- SLIDE #19: "Apostates don't like God so they make up a god they can like."

This goes on all the time. The tendency is for every culture to make gods in their own image. It has happened in America. Study history and see the trends.

- SLIDE #9: Before WWII and on in to the decade of the 40s, Jesus was the unquestioned divinity who was worshipped by the faithful.
- SLIDE #10: In the 1950s Jesus was seen as family oriented. He was the man in the gray flanneled suit who strived to make every person successful with a mix of psychology and religion.
- SLIDE #11: In the 1960s Jesus' image was transformed into a long-haired, bearded young man—a radical who loved peace and not war.
- SLIDE #12: In the 1970s, the so-called, "me decade," people turned inward to discover themselves and the image of Jesus is a faded picture.
- SLIDE #13: In the 80s Jesus was a conservative republican.
- SLIDE #14: In the 90s He was the sympathetic listener to everyone's hurts and problems.

•SLIDE #15: And what DID He look like in the year 2000?

•SLIDE #8: USA TODAY reported that the editors at the *National Catholic Reporter* is sponsoring an international art contest to find a “face, a persona, an image that best represented Jesus. Sister Wendy Beckett, a British nun who hosts art history on public television will be the judge.

How many think that they have one chance in 1,000 of accurately representing the real Jesus who created the universe, put on a body, died on the cross, and was resurrected back to life?

I think Jesus would say to us, “Stop making up things out of your own imaginations and read what it says about Me in the Bible. Listen to my words and live by what I say and stop making up a religion you like out of your own imaginations.

Our view of God must come from a detailed understanding of God, as He is unveiled in the Bible—not something we make up in our minds that seems to be right to us—that is what apostates do.

•SLIDE #19: “Apostates don’t like God so they make up a god they can like.”

•SLIDE #20: Jude 16: These men are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage.

Jude gives 5 markers of apostates. We will examine each marker, and then drill home the idea that if apostates are like this, we want to be just the opposite.

•SLIDE #21: These men are **GRUMBLERS**

Grumblers are always a nuisance, but Jude has in mind a special Biblical category of people who do more than merely make a constant background noise of criticism.

He is talking about the people who continued to complain about the way God was caring for them on their journey from Egypt to the Promised Land.

•SLIDE #22: Numbers 11:1: Now the people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the LORD, and when he heard them his anger was aroused. Then fire from the LORD burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp.

Then they got tired of the manna God sent every morning for food.

•SLIDE #23: Numbers 11:4-5: The rabble with them began to crave other food, and again the Israelites started wailing and said, “If only we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost-- also the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic.

That is one crowd you would never ask to sing, “Breathe on me.”

•SLIDE #24: Numbers 14:26-30: The LORD said to Moses and Aaron: “How long will this wicked community grumble against me? I have heard the complaints of these grumbling Israelites. So tell them, ‘As surely as I live, declares the LORD, I will do to you the very things I heard you say: He goes on to say, “I will let them all die in the desert.” And they did.

These people grumbled against God because they did not like the way He cared for them.

The idea is that they have a better plan than God.

God hates this—this is a sign of apostasy.

While we are here, I want to show you my favorite murmuring passage.

- SLIDE #26: Numbers 21:4-5: They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!"
- SLIDE #27: Numbers 21:6-7: Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us." So Moses prayed for the people.
- SLIDE #28: Numbers 21:8-9: The LORD said to Moses, "Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live." So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, he lived.
- SLIDE #29: Moses made a bronze serpent and lifted it up on the pole. Serpent represented what was killing them. Look and believe on the uplifted serpent and lived.
- SLIDE #30: John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Who can quote the verse before John 3:16?

- SLIDE #31: John 3:14-15: "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life."
- SLIDE #32: That serpent was a foreshadowing picture of Christ on the cross. Sin is killing us. Jesus became sin and if we believe on the uplifted Jesus, we can have our sins forgiven.
- SLIDE #33: The antidote to grumbling is to Recognize and Submit to God's hand at work.

Watchman Nee's book, *The Release of the Spirit*: "Recognize the thing in hand."

- SLIDE #58: John Wyatt always sees God's hand at work in a positive way in every situation.
- SLIDE #34: These men are **FAULT-FINDERS**.

Whereas murmuring was directed against God, faultfinding was directed against His followers.

Mariam and Aaron muckraking Moses over his Cushite wife.

- SLIDE #35: Numbers 12:1-3: Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his Cushite wife, for he had married a Cushite. "Has the LORD spoken only through Moses?" they asked. "Hasn't he also spoken through us?" And the LORD heard this. (Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth.)

God came down in a cloud and rebuked Aaron and Miriam for their behavior and when the cloud departed Miriam was covered with leprosy with half of her skin rotted away. They pleaded for God to heal her. Which He did.

Faultfinders usually start with one but they soon have groups of recruits. Miriam was punished because she started all this, Aaron just went along for the ride.

- SLIDE #36: Faultfinders are like monkeys at the zoo picking over each other's body fur.

•SLIDE #37: The antidote to faultfinding is to Encourage at least one person every day.

•SLIDE #38: Bud Wright: “I never heard him say a bad word about anyone.”

Ralph Tacker: “My ministry is to encourage my pastor.”

Recently in hospital. Pastors from 40 years ago were calling and coming by to see him: Jimmy Allen, Neal Jones, Dean Dickens, Wade Jones.

•SLIDE #39: These men **FOLLOW THEIR OWN EVIL DESIRES**.

Korah in Numbers 16:1-50 wanted to run the show himself. Glenn described his rebellion against God three weeks ago.

Becoming a Christian means that a person changes allegiance, and decides to “follow the Lamb wherever he goes.” These men are going back on their initial commitment to Christ. They want to live their way instead of God’s way.

So, they put away the God of the Bible and found another master to follow—themselves. Now they make up a god to fit their own imaginations.

Allow me to make three observations here:

•SLIDE #41: “Once we cease to believe in the God of the Bible, we will feel free to design a god of our own choosing.

This has happened in America. George Barna research on America’s religious beliefs.

•SLIDE #42: American view: 76% of all Americans believe in Heaven, Only 15% believe in Hell. Bible view: You can not have a heaven if you don’t have a hell to match it.

•SLIDE #43: American view: If a person is generally good or does enough good things for others during their lives, they will earn a place in heaven (55%).
Biblical view: No one is righteous in God’s eyes; salvation is by grace alone (Rom. 3:10, Acts 4:12).

•SLIDE #44: American view: All people pray to the same god or spirit, no matter what name they use for that spiritual being.
Biblical view: There is no other name under heaven whereby men may be saved.

•SLIDE #46: American view: All people will experience the same outcome after death, regardless of their religious beliefs.
Biblical view: Only those who believe in Christ will be saved (Romans 3:21-26).

•SLIDE #47: People are making up their own custom-designed religions—like a cafeteria or buffet line spirituality.

Get a little bit of what they believe from many different sources.
Everyone picks out the sweets. No one wants the vegetables.
“I love the stuff on parenting but I don’t want the sexual purity stuff.

Here is a second observation.

- SLIDE #48: “Once we think that we are free from God’s scrutiny, we will feel free to ignore His standards.”

This has happened in America.

Talking with Allan in the culdesac. Solve America’s problems. I said, “We need a new constitution. Time for a constitutional convention—that is the only way to sort out some fatal flaws in our ability to address the complex issues of society. He was shocked.

The constitutional framers did not put in for every contingency. Read carefully and see that they had an underlying assumption: that people would live and behave properly as long as they believed in personal accountability before God after they die. If people stop believing they will be judged by God for their actions after they die, the constitution will not work.

Our constitution is not designed to work in a secular society where people are loosed to live with no ultimate accountability. We are getting farther and farther away from that idea.

A third observation:

- SLIDE #49: “We cannot lower God’s standards in the hope that if the terms are easier, more people will come to Christ.”

People today want authenticity. Shoot straight. They want to know what is real. Give your life to Christ. It is the only way to be right with God.

- SLIDE #50: The antidote to following your own evil desires is to Believe in the God the Bible reveals.

Billy Graham: In all these years his message and ethics have never changed. Result millions saved. Not complex or trendy.

- SLIDE #51: These men **BOAST ABOUT THEMSELVES.**

They are so arrogant. They remind me of the politician in *Reader’s Digest: All in a Day’s Work*: My son works at an auto dealership, and was surrounded by customers who were waiting to leave cars for repairs. He finished writing a service order and called out, “Next please.”

A woman stepped up, but a familiar-looking man pushed in front of her before she could speak. “Please wait your turn,” said my son.

“Don’t you know who I am?” the man rudely demanded. Then my son recognized him as a local politician.

“Sure, I remember you,” he said, smiling mischievously. “You’re the guy who delivered my new sofa last week.”

They were not necessarily denying that God would come (which was the very different error Peter had to answer in 2 Peter 3:3-13), but simply that when he came, it would mean trouble for them.

- SLIDE #52: Bumper sticker: Heaven doesn’t want me and Hell is afraid I’m going to take it over.” Not true: Heaven does want you and no one is going to take it over.

- SLIDE #53: The antidote to Boasting about yourself is to See yourself from God’s perspective.

Richard Murphy: “See ourselves from God’s perspective.

•SLIDE #54: These men **FLATTER OTHERS FOR THEIR OWN ADVANTAGE.**

The most dangerous flatterer, of course, is the person who misleads about spiritual status, and who tells lies about God because he wants the hearer on his side.

Study God's descriptions of the priests in Ezekiel's (34:1-31) and in Malachi's (2:1-9) day.

Arthur's church in San Mateo being destroyed by a spirit of niceness. They won't deal with any of the problems under the surface. Pretend all is well when when it is rotten.

Not honest in relationships

•SLIDE #55: The antidote to flattering others for their own advantage is to be honest in every relationship.

•SLIDE #56: [Blank] What apostates do is choke the spiritual breath and life out of people

I want to close with a DC Talk video, entitled *Consume Me*. The young people will have no trouble following the medium. For the sake of some here who don't watch much MTV or VH1 let me explain.

In Modern Art anything goes. The artist paints or sculpts according to his feelings, emotions, and whims. It doesn't have to mean anything. (Some of you art teacher don't kill me—this is a broad oversimplification, I know.) The beauty of modern art is that every viewer can get his or her own meaning out of it.

Some of you will view this music video and think of it like modern art. It is just pictures that go by too fast and incomprehensible lyrics and allusions with no meaning whatsoever—and you would miss everything.

Not so—most every music video is carefully planned and full of symbols to teach all kinds of lessons.

I thank God for Christian groups and music videos that give our children an alternative to the secular groups who may or may not be teaching lessons that help us enjoy and live life better.

It is a video about people in bondage who long to be set free.

Forced to utilize Life support systems when they are not needed.

Life under bondage to hard task masters in a highly controlled and sterile environment.: guard, sticks,

One finally rips off masks means to throw away life—expects to die—finds freedom: Air symbol of pneumatic regeneration by the breath of God.

Others saw testimony of one who broke free and decided to follow.

Bridge: all walking to freedom; bridge to God, one way

And through out the video are the haunting words, "You consume me" implies complete surrender, focus, and allegiance to Jesus Christ.