



Sermon Transcription • Abbotsford

April 14/15, 2018 - Jeff Bucknam
Contend - (Jude 3-4)

[Please Note: This transcript has been lightly edited for ease of reading. Also, some headings have been added in square brackets to aid the reader in locating portions of the sermon.]

I have a friend. He's a New Zealander, and New Zealanders, especially the men, tend to be quite reserved sort of guys. He grew up in the church, so around lots of Christian things, a committed believer in the Lord Jesus, but not a very expressive believer in the Lord Jesus, do you know what I mean by that? You know, if you're singing, they tend to -they sing and stuff, but maybe with his hands in his pockets type thing, would probably feel very out of place in a more charismatic church and has, in his life, felt that way. So when he told me this story that I'm about to relay to you, I was inclined to believe it, because he's not the sort of person to exaggerate anything, about the matters that are involved in this story.

So here's his story. He went on a mission trip with some leaders from the church I used to work at in New Zealand, and when he came back, he was telling me about some of the adventures they had with the missionary they went to visit. Their mission trip involved them going and showing the *Jesus* film, which is the Gospel of Luke in film fashion, Campus Crusade for Christ, and Power to Change, same thing, have been using it for years and year, actually since the 1970s, been using this. And they show the video, what they'll do is take a semi truck, and they'll go into a very far out village in places like Africa, and they'll show the video on the side of the semi truck which serves as a screen, and then afterwards they'll do a ministry time. Ministry time means that the people who are there, the missionaries and others, will stand in front and say, "Listen, if you want to come and you want to talk to someone about believing in the Lord Jesus, you should come forward, or if you are sick and you need healing, we'll pray for you, if you have some issue, we'll pray for you. It's going to be great." So, his job, as one of the visitors to this thing and working together with the missionary was to stand in front of the entire congregation, right, and to, at the end, be part of this ministry time where he'd be praying for people. When they arrived at this one particular village, he told me, it threw them off initially because they gathered around this house. And most of the town was standing around this one house that had a hole in the roof, where somebody had somehow come through, something large had come through the roof. And she he came there, he was standing next to the missionary, and the missionary asked the townspeople, "What's going on here?" And one of the townspeople just turned and matter-of-factly said, "Well, last night a witch was flying over and she fell through the roof, and we're just trying to dig her out." My friend said, "What did he say?" And the missionary told him that, and my friend was like, "A what did what? What flew? What? What? No." No categories for that sort of thing, so he kind of knew at that point, okay, we're into something that might be outside the bounds of my understanding of a lot of things, growing up in the West, as I do." He was warned before he went that



this sort of thing happened there, a lot of what we call power encounters, a lot of demonic oppression, that sort of stuff.

Well anyway, they show the video, they show the movie that night, and then afterwards he's standing there, he said, "My first time ever doing anything like this," again, not very expressive sort of guy, he's standing in the front with his hands in his pockets, right, people are going to come and they're going to be prayed for. He said, "Well, a number of people started walking forward," and he said, "I'm standing right in the middle of the aisle, and in behind a lot of these people is this guy who starts to jump and make some noises, and then all of a sudden he dives on the ground, not on all fours, on his belly, starts to slither forward." I said, "No!" He goes, "I am not kidding you. It looked like -I had never seen a human body do that. Slither forward. Okay, the guy stood up in front of me. I said, 'Can I help you?' The missionary next to him translates, 'Can I help you?' And the guy says, in a voice I swear was not his own, it was not his own, because later I heard him talking to others, and he said, <in a low voice> 'Pray for me!'" Okay, now, in the West, what do we do when someone asks you to pray for them, in the church when you're new to church this tends to be the approach we take is, okay, I might put my hand on your shoulder just to express solidarity with you, you know, like hand on your shoulder, bow our heads, that what your mom and dad teach you when you're growing up, right, bow your head so you don't look at your sister and brother, and make faces and stuff like that, bow your head. So he said, "I put my hand out, put my hand on the guy's shoulder, bowed my head, and as soon as I bowed my head the first word came out of my mouth, 'Oh Lord,' and then all of a sudden I got punched in the face by the guy who I was praying for. And the missionary, as soon as I got punched in the face, starts laughing, right, because apparently this is funny." So the missionary takes over, he prays for the guy, keeping his eyes open, pulled my friend aside and says, "Here's the thing, when you pray for a guy who's probably demon possessed, you probably want to keep your eyes open, because they like to punch you in the face." [Laughter]

At this point in telling me the story, my friend says to me, "Is that something that you guys learned," like totally serious, "Is that something you learned in seminary? Did they teach you that?" And I said, "No actually, I must have missed the day when they taught the 'don't close your eyes because the demon will punch you in the face' talk." Right? Um, they didn't teach me that one in seminary. In fact, I would go so far as to say that in seminary, I learned very little about engagement with demonic forces, or with Satan's strategies. Seminary was great for me, it was a place where they taught you all sorts of positive things, about here's how you interpret the Bible, this is what Scripture says, and that's what should be majored on. But I don't ever remember a time where they sat down and said, "Listen, you've got to understand, guys, there's going to be false teaching in the church, and here's how you need to engage it." Satan doesn't just, you know, hurt the church by power encounters, by slithering guys coming forward and punching the missionaries in the face, that's not the only way he does it. He also twists the truth in the mouths of false teachers, and buries the faith and those who believe it in a pile of false doctrine. I didn't learn that. I wish I would have, I wish they would have taught me that. I've been out of seminary for twenty years and I've found repeatedly, one of the biggest challenges I have as a pastor is engaging in the volumes of false teaching that people in my church believe.



Sometimes you might see me riding my bike around the town, I ride my bike quite a bit, lots of commute, often to the church here. I don't listen to the music because you can't hear the traffic, but I will listen to sermons. And when I do listen to sermons, I usually choose ones that are from famous preachers, often in the United States, guys who are on Trinity Broadcasting Network. I will listen to those, and if you ever see my riding, screaming at no one in particular, I'm listening to one of those sermons, right? I often will make sure, if I've got to climb some hills that day, I'm listening to that sermon, right? Right up to the top of that hill, it's a piece of cake for me, the adrenaline going, I get fired up about it. I cannot believe the kinds of things that are said in the name of Christ to the people of God, and I cannot believe, further, that the people of God believe it so easily.

But I wish somebody would have told me how to engage it. Because, do you? How do you engage that, as a pastor, how much time do you spend talking about that kind of thing? Should you? And when you do it, should you name names? Should you talk about the names of the people or should you avoid that? I mean, Paul, the apostle Paul, talks about names in 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Hymenaeus and Alexander, Hymenaeus and Philetus, do you do that too? Do you name them? I wish somebody would have told me about that. I'm thankful for the book of Jude, to be honest with you, because this book is all about confronting false teaching. It's Jude, basically, wanting to write another letter, but he ends up having to write a letter about the false teaching. Because people have come in after him, as he's planted these churches, they've come in after him and distorted the doctrine that he's taught them in those churches.

So in these two verses, in Jude 3 and 4, are kind of at the very beginning of this letter, you're going to learn his heart regarding the confrontation of false teaching. And in it I want to just point out four things that we learn about false teaching. Number one, that confronting false teaching is sad, number two, it's necessary, third, it's expected, and fourth, it's hard. It's sad that we have to do it, but it's necessary that we have to do it, it should be expected by God's people, but ultimately it's hard for us.

[Confronting False Teaching is Sad]

So here's the first of those: confronting false teaching is sad. Look at Jude 3,

“Dear friends, [he writes] although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people.”

I don't know if you've ever gotten a letter from a friend that you haven't talked to for a long time, I got one this last week from a friend I used to work at a church with. And I was so excited to get it. The moment I saw his name on the screen I said out loud, “Donald!” I sat down and I wrote a response. He told me all the things that had happened in the church that he and I used to serve in. People's names, things were happening. A lot of the letter was about the common joys that we have in ministry, and the challenges that we have, sure, but how God is working in those, and I responded by saying the same kinds of things. So, here's what's happening in our location, here's how it is that we're trying to reach out to our community, this is what the Lord's doing in our setting. Totally positive letter, sharing the



joys of our common salvation. That's the letter that Jude wants to write. But when he sits down at his desk, and he's thinking about these people, to whom he writes this letter, he's thinking, man, I'm so excited to encourage you guys with the salvation that we commonly share, but in his mind he has to stop, check himself, and say, actually, I can't write that letter, because I've got to talk about these false teachers.

So what you have in front of you in the book of Jude is actually a concession. It's Plan B for him. "These guys have come in after me and changed the doctrine you guys have believed. And so, even though I want to talk about positive stuff, I find myself having to address this." That's the way that every pastor I know of worth his salt feels about addressing false teaching. That they just feel like it's sad that we even have to talk about it. I'm not excited, I wasn't excited to come and preach this weekend, I don't like talking about false teaching. I don't like the fact that in the church, there are so many people who are twisting God's word. It bothers me, I don't like the fact that I listen to it on my bike rides, it bugs me. There are more positive things that I wish I could listen to, people who are professing good things about God. Living lives that reflect God's character. Instead, I find myself commonly, often being asked questions and having to engage in this sort of thing. It's really sad.

There's a guy named Shai Linne, he's a rapper. He rapped, I can tell by many of your faces that you're all into rap. [Laughter] He's a rapper, Christian rapper, he wrote a great album called *Lyrical Theology*. In that album, it came out a number of years ago, like four or five years ago, he actually has a song called *False Teachers*, the "s" in "false" and "teachers" is a money sign. In the song, he actually names 12 people who he thinks are false teachers. So when this song dropped, it made a thud in the Christian world. And in most of the Christian periodical magazines and stuff, there was a headline that read, "Shai Linne Names Names of False Teachers." And some people were livid about the fact that he said things in such specific terms about these people. Some of them, the people he names, interact with him. All angry. Why would you do this, Shai Linne? Since some of you aren't acquainted with his work and with the song itself, I'm going to read to you, note the word "read" and not "rap," to you. [Laughter] Although, if I rapped it, it would be awesome. [Laughter] Pretty good. I'll read you some lines from it, here we go,

"And I ain't really trying to start beef. [It sounds way cooler when he says it, by the way.] But some who claim to be part of His sheep got some sharp teeth (they're wolves). You cast at me when you criticize them. But Jesus told us: Matthew 7:16, we can recognize them! And God forbid that for the love of some fans, I keep quiet and watch them die with their blood on my hands! So, there's nothing left for me to do except to speak to you in the spirit of Jude 3 and 2nd Peter 2. And I know that some would label me a Pharisee. Because today the only heresy is saying that there's heresy: How dare they be specific and drop some clarity on the popularity of the gospel of Prosperity."

The rest of the song goes on for him talking about the Prosperity gospel, about the promise that so many are saying these days, if you pray the right prayer and you claim the right things from God, he will give you money. The promises of God's kingdom and its fullness are here now, for you, in its fullness. So if you don't have a big jet and a big boat, you should name it and claim it. So he interacts



with all these people, quoting Scripture all over the place. People responded, of course, angrily, and they say, “You know, Shai Linne, for you to name these names and criticize these people, you do realize that outside the church these days, we are being assaulted on every side by a culture that is increasingly skeptical of our claims, don’t like Christians, we are kind of in a foxhole here, and you are sniping at the guy next to you in the foxhole? Shouldn’t we be more focused on unity? Especially in this day?” Shai Linne’s response to this has actually been a video, and other places when he’s interviewed, and he’s basically said, “Do you actually think that I wanted to write a song like this? This saddens me that it’s actually happening in the church. But the reason I wrote it is because I, as an African American, I go to places like Africa, and I see how this false doctrine, it is *killing* people. And what am I supposed to do, just sit there and watch that happen? As if the only way that Satan engages the church is like, frontal assault? No, I’m not going to sit by and watch it infiltrate our ranks.”

When I reflect on his story and all that, I feel that, because there have been several times in our church that I’ve had to stand up and talk about false teaching, and days like today where I have to talk about it. It’s not something I relish, but it’s something that’s necessary, right?

[Confronting False Teaching is Necessary]

So it’s sad, first, but it’s necessary. Read Jude 3 again,

“Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God’s holy people.”

I want you just to note a couple of phrases there. I want to point them both out. First of all, notice the last phrase, it is a faith, once for all entrusted to God’s holy people. I had a professor in seminary, he used to say that you need to beware of clever theology. If you’re the first person to ever think about that theological point of view, you’re probably a heretic. Now, when we heard that in seminary, we were like, really? Come on. And the reason we’d say, “Come on,” is because in our culture these days, we value the new and improved stuff over the tired and boring stuff, right? I mean, everyone in the room, nobody’s got an iPhone 4 here, right? A 5 is better than 4. You know what’s better than 5? X. Whatever that is -it means 10. Oh we’re in Roman numerals now, are we? Like it’s the Superbowl. The Superbowl of iPhones. Superbowl X4, iPhone X49. It’s better, it’s got cooler gadgetry and stuff. We live in a technological age. The more advanced stuff is better. You go to the grocery store and you’re going to buy toothpaste, none of you could get the white Crest there, right? It’s just white. But next to it is new and improved Crest with little sparkles, and a green thing in the middle. [Laughter] And you’re thinking to yourself, well, this is not even a discussion. I’m getting the green sparkly one. Right? Because that’s better. Technological advancements are *better*, we live in a *better* day than we used to, and so we apply that to our theology, and we say, “What we need in theology is the new and improved kind.” And yet the Scriptures are going to argue, actually, the better theology is the one that’s been handed over faithfully, been received and passed on in the same condition as it was received. Now, I get that language from 1 Corinthians 15, where the apostle Paul’s describing the gospel, I preached on this during our Easter services this year. Listen to what he says, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, he said,



“For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.”

In other words, “My gospel is according to the Scriptures, and it’s something that’s been handed to me, and then I handed it on to you.” When I was a youth pastor all those years ago, we used to have this silly game where you gave people two chopsticks or two toothpicks, and you’d line everybody up, and you’d tell the first person in line, “I want you to take this egg, and I want you to pass it, using only your two chopsticks or toothpicks, to the next person, then the next person, then the next person.” They’re supposed to receive the egg and pass it on in the same condition that they received it. It never worked, because it’s a dumb game, right? Because you drop the egg, and you’re just excited when the egg dropped on someone’s foot and they freaked out. That was awesome. But that’s the image, that’s the idea that Paul’s trying to get at. Listen, that’s your job as a teacher of God’s word, is take what you’ve received and pass it on. Somebody who believes in the Lord Jesus, take what you received, pass it on to others. Don’t fiddle with it, don’t add a green stripe in it, it doesn’t need it. It’s the faith, once for all, entrusted to the saints.

But what are you supposed to do with that faith? Notice that Jude, he tells you. He says, “I’m writing you that...I urge you, to contend for it.” It’s a great line. “Urge” means a passionate plea. Come on! We can do this! That’s what he means, that kind of urging to contend. And the word “contend” there means, it has a military nuance, it’s used in athletic contexts. So he’s picturing...who urges others to do things in military or athletic contexts. Well, the answer is the captain or the coach does, right? The general of the troops or the coach of the teams. He’s trying to give you a picture in your mind. You know, you’ve been on teams before, many of you. “Okay guys, the other team’s better than us. They’re bigger, they’re faster, they’re stronger, they’re better looking -everything is better than you guys. I look at you, and I think, there’s no way that we can possibly win this game. But I’m telling you right now, that what you lack individually, that when you come together as a team and you operate together for each other’s sake, you act like brothers and sisters, and you fight to the end, we can shock the world!” The kids run out there onto the floor, “YEAH!” Okay, they come back at half time, “That didn’t work.” [Laughter] “Now, I need you to go win one for the kipper.” That’s what he’s saying, the coach is urging you to get in the game, to contend.

We watch movies like this, we see the beginning of, you know, they go into battle against the aliens. “We will not go quietly into the night!” William Wallace riding back and forth in front of his hoards of Scottish men: “They can take our lives, but not our freedom!” That’s the image that he’s working with, he’s basically saying, look, I’m urging you to take up arms against this. To protect it. This faith that is once for all entrusted. Because if you don’t everything is lost. People are dying if you don’t intervene. Or if he doesn’t intervene with them. I’m sad, but it’s necessary for me to do this. Because if I don’t, however awkwardly I do it, if I don’t people are going to die. I’m going to fall off a cliff.

I actually saved somebody from falling off a cliff once. We were in Austria, I was travelling around Austria with two of my friends. Well, three of my friends, well, two, the other one wasn’t a friend. I’m



just kidding, there were four of us travelling around Austria. We went up on a chair lift to the top where we could eat lunch, it was a free chair lift to the top of one of these ski lifts, and then you could see the Austrian Alps all there. Right next to the lodge at the top was this very steep, snow-covered, actually, ice-covered, hill, and the end of that hill were signs that said “Achtung! Achtung! Achtung!” Because there was a cliff, a literal cliff, that went right there. Well I said to my friends, “Wouldn’t it be fun, I’m going to go halfway down this hill,” I had my tennis shoes on, right? “I’m going to go halfway down this hill, and I’m going to turn around, and behind me is going to be this sign, and the Austrian Alps are right there, and it’ll look like I’m on the edge of the cliff. So take a picture.” My friend Carly, she was at the top, and she came down a little bit on the hill, and I was halfway down, and she took the picture, and I don’t know what happened but she turned right at that moment, to show the other two at the top of the hill something, and she slipped and fell. And so she’s on her back now, the camera’s going right next to her, and she’s sliding down this hill, increasing hill. And she’s aiming between the goal posts, the achtung signs. She’s going over the cliff. And the only thing between her and the cliff was me. And so when she comes near me, I just, what else do you do. So I just thought, if I can jump on her hard enough, I can push her sideways, and we’re going to hit that sign. And so I did, just, boom! And I just landed on her. Later she said, “It was like an elephant landed on me.” [Laughter] Thanks, Carly. I landed on her and pushed her sideways, and we ended up hitting this sign. She’s laying there, crying and shaking. And I said, “Are you okay?” And she said, <in a raspy voice> “My ribs hurt.” [Laughter] I said, “I know. It was really an awkward jump, I didn’t know what else to do. But you need to know, I did it because I didn’t want you to die, right? Even though it was really awkward.” Right.

Sometimes confronting false teaching is an awkward thing. Sometimes you don’t say it right, sometimes it’s too rough. Sometimes you don’t do the process appropriately. But understand that the impulse of a pastor who does it is to love you. Because if left alone, you’re going through the wickets and over the cliff. It’s sad that false teaching is among us, but the confronting of it is a necessary act.

[Confronting False Teaching is Expected]

Third, it’s also expected, it should be expected anyway, that false teaching should be among us. Look at Jude 4, Jude writes,

“For certain individuals...”

That’s an interesting phrase in itself, that phrase “certain individuals” is often used in the Bible to refer to people that the author and the audience know, and so they don’t need to mention the name. Okay, we do this sometimes, “Um, I’m talking about *certain people*, wink wink. You know, that guy.” So, certain individuals, and you guys know who I’m talking about, he says to his audience,

“whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.”



Isn't that an interesting description of the false teachers? They are those whose condemnation was written about long ago. In other words, if you were to look through the Bible, you should see at every point where God is speaking to people, people coming along the side of that and twisting the words that he's used to speak to people, to deceive the people who are supposed to hear it. A little Bible trivia, who's the first false teacher in the Bible? The serpent is in the garden. Right? The Lord says to Adam, "Listen, you can't eat from that tree in the garden. You can eat from any of the trees, but just not that one." The serpent comes to Eve and says, "Really? It really seems to me that God says, 'You can't eat from *any* of the trees,'" this is not what he said, little twist. "But will you really die if you do it? I mean, come on. If he were a good God, surely he wouldn't make these rules." Little twist. She buys it, the world falls into sin, and ever since then, every time the people of God have been around, every time the Lord has communicated with people, there are those who are next to it, who are saying about that communication, "Really? You think that that's really what God has to say about that? I don't know, what about this?" Twist.

One of my favourite passages, actually, in the Old Testament about false teaching and false prophets, is in Deuteronomy 13. It's usually the place that I go to if somebody asks me, "Why do you think that God allows false teachers and false prophets in the midst of God's church? It seems to me that if God is sovereign, he'd stop this sort of thing from happening, so we could protect all the people who believe." But here's Deuteronomy 13:1-3,

"If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a sign or wonder, and if the sign or wonder spoken of takes place, [So like, they're a successful prophet here] and the prophet says, 'Let us follow other gods' (gods you have not known) 'and let us worship them,' you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul."

The Lord's basically saying, "Look, I let them be there to test your professions. You guys talk about how you love me and want to serve me with all your heart, alright, here's someone who's trying to draw you away, and they back that up with all sorts of cool, crazy, amazing prophecies and miracles. But you know that even though they do those thing, you shouldn't listen to what they say, because what they're saying is idolatry. So what are you going to do?" See, it was a test. So in other words, you should expect them to be there. You should expect false teachers to be in your midst.

The apostle Paul, when he's going to his impending doom in Jerusalem, he takes a stop on a boat and he speaks to a bunch of elders of a church in Ephesus. And to these elders he says these words, in Acts 20:29-31,

I know that after I leave, [gentlemen, he says, after I leave] savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. [Here's my prophecy of the future of your church in Ephesus, that there will be false teachers who come in among you, and they will not spare the flock.] Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples



after them. So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.”

You guys need to expect them to be among you. 1 Peter 2:1,

“But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you.”

Listen, if you don't believe that there are going to be lots of false teachers in the church, even today, you're not paying attention. They've always been there. Until the Lord returns, they will be there. You should expect it, and don't you think that the expectation that someone is going to lie to you when they pick up a Bible and try to teach it, should change your posture regarding how you listen to people like me, right? Even if you know me and you say, “Oh, he's a really nice guy.” You should probably change your posture at some point, thinking, yeah but, everytime he opens the Bible, I'm going to make sure that what he's talking about is lined up with the Scriptures rightly interpreted.

One of the things that we share in common, living in this part of the world is the experience of crossing the border, dealing with American border agents, and then complaining about them for the next 20 minutes. Right? “Why did they have to be so mean? Like seriously, come on, knock it off. Why do you doubt me at every turn? Don't I look the part? I'm obviously not trying to bomb things.” As an American citizen, I get a real chip on my shoulder living in Canada, because when I cross the border and they ask me stupid questions like, “Where are you going?” I want to say, “Wherever.” [Laughter] “No no, where are you going?” “Doesn't matter. Let me in.” “How long are you going to be there?” “Til I'm done.” [Laughter] “What are you bringing in?” “Whatever I need, alright? Just let me in, it doesn't matter. I can go anywhere I want to go. See on that thing? ‘USA! I'm an American patriot, let me in!’ Right? I've never actually done this. [Laughter] They always act like you're trying to cheat them, or steal something from them or bomb something or whatever. My wife gets really fired up about it, “Why do they have to be so mean? Don't they understand, they even know us!” We do, we actually know some of the American border agents, they live nextdoor to my brother-in-law, right, we see them in the yard, “Hey, how's it going?” And then you go to the border and they're like, “What are you bringing in?” Stop it! “What's inside your dog?” I don't know! [Laughter]

But you know why they're that way, right? Because they expect you to lie. I said to my wife, “Honey, do you know how many pretty, kind, considerate people with kids in the back are like, stowing away drugs underneath their cars? So many!” So they're just not going to buy it, they're asking their questions because there's this level of expectation they have that you're trying to dupe them. Not everybody's going to dupe them, but some are. And so because some are, they're on their guard. Shouldn't that be your posture? When you turn on the TV and you listen to so-and-so start spouting off about the Bible and twisting it here and there, shouldn't you be like, “Huh? I know that there's



things that are good about you and your ministry and stuff, but when you do that, man, I start having question marks.” You should expect it.

[Confronting False Teaching is Hard]

The last one is confronting false teaching is hard. Jude 4 again,

“For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.”

Again, a couple of phrases that stick out, they’ve secretly slipped in among you. It’s a word that means infiltrate, it’s like dripping with military imagery. They’re the enemy, and the enemy himself has sent somebody into your midst who looks like you, because that’s the way infiltration works best, right? They look and they talk like you. They’re there to twist and turn you away. During World War II actually, the Nazis, one of the best ways they found to extract information from the Allies was taking young men who had grown up in the United States but had German ancestry and then came back to Germany to fight for the Nazis in the war. They took those guys who spoke impeccable English, grew up in the US, and they took them and placed them in POW camps. And they’d concoct a story, yeah, they were flying over doing a bombing mission and they fell and their friends died, and they’re here. Now the POWs, they came to realize that this was happening from time to time, and so they would have this kind of defensive posture, and they’d start asking questions, often about baseball. Funny enough. They’d say thing like -because who outside of the United States and Toronto knows anything about baseball? And so, “What do you think of Ty Cobb?” You know, he was a player in the early 20th century. And, “What are Babe Ruth’s batting statistics in 1916?” Stuff like that. And if they could answer it right, you kind of knew that maybe they did know what they were talking about. But the secret to a good infiltrator is the ability to speak the language properly, the ability to look the right part. Listen, if you want to infiltrate Texas, ladies, you’ve got to get big hair, and boys, you’ve got to <with Southern accent> start talking like this a little bit, <without Southern accent> right? You’ve got to look the part.

And that’s what makes it really hard with false teachers is they do, Jude is saying, “These guys who have come in after me, I get it, they say the right things, they do their ‘Hallalujahs,’ and they pray the right way, and they generally fit in. They’re your friends. They know how to talk well enough to get you to buy it. They know. But they’re not what they claim. They secretly slip in, he also says they pervert the grace of our God. Isn’t that interesting? It’s not like they’re coming in and just teaching something completely alien, they’re taking true doctrine like, Jesus is gracious, and if you sin against Christ you can repent and he will forgive you, over and over and over and over again, and they’re adding to that, this phrase: so you can do anything you want. Well, wait a minute, what? Right. If Jesus will forgive you every time, it doesn’t really matter what you do. Therefore, you can live however you want. That’s half true, Jesus will forgive, but wait a minute, his forgiveness, grace, it actually has implications in your life. You’re saved by grace, through faith, until obedience. But they were leaving that last part off. And the result was, the lifestyle of these teachers and the lifestyle of those they were teaching, was



contrary to what Jesus taught one's lifestyle ought to be. The point I'm making here is, what makes confronting false teaching hard is, the false teachers often look and sound a lot like true teachers. Some of what they say sounds, or what they do, is good, some of their ministries look the part. They help kids with water, they do all sorts of wonderful things, right? Jesus talked about them himself, he said in Matthew 7:15, 21-23,

“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves... Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' [Isn't that amazing stuff that they did? Prophecy, miracles, driving out of demons? If somebody did that, I'd be like, "Woah! That's amazing! You're obviously the real deal." Jesus says] Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'”

Why? Because ultimately, their lifestyle was contrary to what Jesus taught. They twisted Scripture in such a way that it justified a lifestyle contrary to their master and sovereign, Jesus Christ. Listen, can I just be really honest just at the end here? Pastoral heart for a minute? One of the biggest challenges I've had in ministry over the last number of years at Northview is how quickly and readily some of the people in this congregation listen to false teachers and buy it. I've received emails, I've talked to people personally, and I walk away, and I pray desperately, that the Lord will protect his people from so much of this rubbish, because I'll tell you, when I read the historical background of what's going on in Jude's letter here, you have itinerant teachers who are slipping in secretly, twisting Scripture and justifying a lifestyle that is alien to what Jesus would teach, man, that is just like exactly what TBN teaches. And they slip in easily these days on your smartphone and on your TV while you're sitting on the couch. They twist the Scriptures, they use the Bible, sure, but they twist it just a little bit to say things that it doesn't say, and ultimately come to the conclusion that you, and they together, can be greedy for gain. And yet, Jesus has an awful lot to say regarding money, doesn't he? He talks about rich fools and rich rulers who were unwilling to give up all that they have to follow. So I'm pleading with you, with every ounce that I've got, I am urging you to contend for the faith that was once for all given to the saints. Let me pray for us,

Lord, you know my heart, I'm desperate, actually, that the people of this congregation, and certainly Christians in several of the churches in our area, Father, would have a renewal of Biblical discernment. And that you, by the power of your Spirit, would bring it about. We don't like talking about this sort of stuff, Father, but we see it as necessary, we expect it to be there, Father, but help us through the hardness of it, help us to see these things. Help us to play the border guard. Change our posture, I pray. Help us be Berean, I pray. In Jesus' name. Amen.