

Jude Verse 4

The influence of Deceiving Spirits in the Church

“Sound doctrine is under siege. In fact, it always has been. The attack on truth is as old as human history. It began in the Garden of Eden, when Satan twisted God’s Word and convinced Eve to disobey her Creator... Ever since, the father of lies... has tirelessly continued his bitter offensive against divine truth... His goal is simple, to resist the advancement of God’s kingdom at any cost. His tactics are stealthy, as he baits his victims through deception and distortion. And his strategy is successful among unbelievers (within God’s sovereign limits), as the muddled quagmire of modern religion makes abundantly clear.

*Jude certainly understood what was at stake; he knew that the church was being infiltrated by its enemies. He recognized that a battle was brewing—a conflict that marked Satan’s newest campaign in his long war against the truth. And that is why Jude wrote this letter to alert his readers to the doctrinal dangers they faced from Satan’s covert agents. Like a general briefing his troops about the enemy, Jude **“profiles”** these apostate foes for his audience. Thus, in this section, he dealt with their presence, prediction, portrayal, and perishing so that his readers might be well-equipped to expose and disarm any such **spiritual terrorists**.” MacArthur (emphasis added)*

Vs. 4 The false teachers who secretly slipped into the church offered cheap grace which held little regard for full submission to Christ’s authority over the church, let alone a believer’s life. Why did they listen to them, they were godless idiots with no regard for the spiritual wellbeing of those they were deceiving.

- Are you well enough equipped through the truth of God’s Word to recognize someone who has slipped into the church for the purpose of leading her astray through false teaching. Would you be able to see through their duplicitous ways no matter how popular, bright, eloquent, friendly, and Christlike they might seem? He or she makes you laugh, treats you well, gives you a hug, shows great concern for what you are going through, knows Scripture, and has worked their way into a leadership role, yet they aren’t who they seem to be. What if you see it and no one else does? What would you do?

Acts 17:11 *Now these people were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.*

- Apparently, the church or churches Jesus’ brother wrote to failed to address the problem of false teaching in the church. These spiritual terrorists had to be called out because their deceptive influence was taking deep root. We see that going on today in liberal, progressive churches and even in some so called evangelical conservative churches who control through legalism or give light treatment of the Word to make church a more pleasant experience.

Acts 20:29-31a *I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. 30 Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. 31 So be on your guard!*

Col. 2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons,

παρεισδύνω pareisdýnō, par-ice-doo'-no; to settle in alongside, i.e. lodge stealthily:—creep in unawares. Strong's Concordance

“The word translated crept in unnoticed (pareisdýnō) appears only here in the New Testament. It has the connotation of slipping in secretly with an evil intention. In extrabiblical Greek it describes the cunning craftiness of a lawyer who, through cleaver argumentation, infiltrated the minds of courtroom officials and corrupted their thinking. Having already permeated the church, the apostates were in position to ‘secretly introduce destructive heresies’ (2 Peter 2:1).” MacArthur

2 Peter 2:1 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

- The question we must ask as we walk by faith is, has anything crept into my relationship with Christ that is not of Christ? Is my ideology, i.e., my system of belief, true to God's ways or have I allowed the world's ways to influence me away from a sincere devotion to Christ? Am I maintaining a biblical worldview? What are Satan's means of deception aimed at believers and am I wise enough to recognize and resist them? What deception will be powerful enough *that in the last times some will turn away from the true faith; they will follow deceptive spirits and teachings that come from demons (1 Tim. 4:1).* What about the ever increasing influence of A.I., or the strong emphasis being put on extra-terrestrial beings with so called full government disclosure coming?

“The Greatest Danger in the Last Days is Deception

Jesus warned more about deception than perhaps any other sign of the end times. “Take heed that no man deceive you.” — Matthew 24:4 (KJV)

In the last days, Satan is not simply attacking people — he is deceiving them. His aim is not just to oppose truth but to twist it, distort it, and make lies appear attractive. The tragedy is many are falling for his traps — even inside churches...

1. Twisting God's Word to Justify Sin “Yea, hath God said...?” — Genesis 3:1 (KJV)

Satan's first recorded tactic was manipulating God's Word. He didn't blatantly deny it — he subtly twisted it.

Today, this manifests in: Cherry-picking Bible verses to suit sin. Preaching grace without truth. Overemphasis on God's love without mentioning holiness or judgment

Real-life Examples: Churches that affirm immoral lifestyles, claiming “God is love.” False teachers who teach universal salvation regardless of repentance.

Historical Note: In the 4th century, the Arian heresy denied Christ's divinity by reinterpreting Scripture. Even early Church leaders like Athanasius fought this deception, showing how early Satan tried to twist truth...

Protection: Read the full counsel of Scripture (Acts 20:27), Use trusted study tools and compare translations, Pray for the Holy Spirit's guidance (John 14:26)

2. Promoting a Counterfeit Gospel "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel... let him be accursed." — Galatians 1:8 (KJV)

A counterfeit gospel is close to the real one — but fatally different.

Signs of a Counterfeit Gospel: Promises prosperity, not sanctification. Preaches blessings without brokenness. Focuses on the self, not the Savior

Modern Movements: The "Prosperity Gospel" The "New Age Jesus" that lacks the cross

Result: Millions believe they are saved without ever repenting.

Protection: Compare teachings with Scripture Ask: Does this teaching glorify Christ or man? Return to the Gospel of the Cross (Luke 9:23)

3. Encouraging Compromise in the Church "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." — Galatians 5:9 (KJV) The Church was once a counterculture — now it often mirrors the world.

Signs of Compromise: Tolerance of sexual sin and greed. Entertainment replacing worship. Watered-down preaching lacking conviction

Church History: The Church of Pergamum (Revelation 2:14-15) was rebuked for tolerating sin inside its walls. Today's churches face the same danger.

Protection: Uphold biblical standards, even if unpopular. Call sin what it is — and preach freedom from it. Raise leaders who prioritize character over charisma

4. Normalizing Immorality through Media and Culture "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil." — Isaiah 5:20 (KJV)

Hollywood, music, and pop culture are not just entertainment — they are discipling generations.

Satan's Strategy: Desensitize people to sin. Glamorize rebellion, pride, and lust. Erase moral standards.

Examples: Shows that promote casual sex and mock marriage. Lyrics that glorify drugs and violence. Memes that normalize witchcraft and mock prayer

Protection: Practice media discernment (Philippians 4:8). Encourage godly content creators. Protect children from ungodly influences

5. Redefining Truth Through Relativism "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes." — Proverbs 21:2 (KJV)

Relativism says: "What's true for you may not be true for me."

Impact: People reject absolute truth. Truth becomes subjective. Morality becomes fluid

Danger in Churches: Replacing expository preaching with motivational talks. Avoiding hard topics like sin, hell, and repentance.

Protection: Ground your life in the unchanging Word (2 Timothy 3:16). Teach children biblical absolutes. Boldly speak truth in love (Ephesians 4:15)...

6. Silencing the Fear of God “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom.” — Proverbs 9:10 (KJV)

The modern church often teaches a “God of love” without justice.

Results of No Fear of God: Casual approach to sin. Lack of reverence in worship. No urgency to evangelize

Examples: “God understands” is used to justify willful sin. Preachers avoid warning about judgment.

Protection: Meditate on God’s holiness and power. Preach the full character of God: loving AND just
Walk in holy fear (Hebrews 12:28-29)

7. Exalting Self Over Christ “Men shall be lovers of their own selves...” — 2 Timothy 3:2 (KJV)

We live in the age of self-worship: Self-care replaces self-denial. Self-esteem over Christ-esteem. Identity rooted in feelings, not God’s design

Social Media Influence: Promotes comparison, envy, pride. Platforms narcissism and rebellion.

Protection: Deny self and take up your cross (Luke 9:23) Serve others with humility (Philippians 2:3-5) Find identity in Christ, not culture

8. Counterfeit Signs, Wonders, and Prophet “For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders.” — Mark 13:22 (KJV)

Satan can mimic spiritual gifts to mislead.

Examples of Deception: False healings and emotional hype. Prophecies focused on money and fame. Leaders who abuse gifts for control

Warnings in Scripture: Simon the sorcerer tried to buy the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:18-20)

Paul warned of “another spirit” (2 Corinthians 11:4)

Protection: Test all things (1 Thessalonians 5:21) Submit to godly leadership and accountability. Study the fruit, not just the gift (Matthew 7:15-20)

9. Delaying Conviction and Urgency of Salvation

“Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.” — Hebrews 3:15 (KJV)

Satan convinces many to delay: Delay prayer, Delay repentance, Delay surrender

Result: Hearts grow cold. Conviction fades. Time runs out.” gracetogospel.com