

Jude 5-13: Sodom, Judgment, Grace, and the Church

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[0 : 00] Hi, my name is George Sinclair. I'm the lead pastor of Church of the Messiah. It is wonderful that you would like to check out some of the sermons done by Church of the Messiah, either by myself or some of the others. Listen, just a couple of things. First of all, would you pray for us that we will open God's Word well to His glory and for the good of people like yourself?

The second thing is, if you aren't connected to a church and if you are a Christian, we really, I would really like to encourage you to find a good local church where they believe the Bible, they preach the gospel, and if you have some trouble finding that, send us an email. We will do what we can to help connect you with a good local church wherever you are. And if you're a non-Christian checking us out, we're really, really, really glad you're doing that. Don't hesitate to send us questions. It helps me actually to know, as I'm preaching, how to deal with the types of things that you're really struggling with. So God bless.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. Father, your Word this morning is very un-Canadian, at least un-Canadian Christian, and it can be a bit hard for us to hear it. But Father, we know that every word that you have spoken to us through your Word written is meant for our good, for our blessing and our thriving, and to love Jesus more and to honour you more. And so we ask, Father, that not that you silence our questions, Father, but that as we bring our questions to your Word, that your Word will satisfy our mind and heart and soul. That these will be words that we take to heart, that we honour and believe and act on. And I ask all of these things, Father, in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Saviour.

Amen. Please be seated. So, maybe, I'm not sure, people online, I don't think you get to hear the Gospel text or the Epistle before I start speaking. So just so you know, the text that we're looking at today is going to talk about Sodom and Gomorrah, the origin of demons, and God's fiery and eternal judgment, as you can well gather, very easy topics to talk about in Canada in 2024. So, I don't know where everybody is who's here, and especially those who are online, either live or downstream.

But, and I hope that there are some here, or online, who are, consider themselves outside the Christian faith. Maybe you're a seeker. Maybe you're just curious. Maybe you're a skeptic.

[3 : 04] Maybe you're going through a period of deconstruction. Maybe you're looking for evidence as to why you shouldn't be a Christian. Really, really glad that you're listening in or here. And one of the things about us is that we preach through books of the Bible, and that means that we don't avoid topics which are awkward or difficult. One of the things I want to say, if you consider yourself to be outside of the Christian faith, or maybe on the way out, or whatever is going on, or if you're here online, I want you to know that the text today that we're looking at is not about those outside of the Christian faith. The text that we're looking at today is for those who are part of the visible church, those who would claim that they are Christian. And that's what the text is, that's who the text is addressing. In a sense, then, what I'm going to be looking at today, and what Ross just read earlier, is an in-house discussion. And if you're outside of the Christian faith, you get to listen in on an in-house discussion. But it's really talking about those who profess Christian faith.

It's not making any particular appeal to those who would say they're very clearly outside of the Christian faith and believe something different. But one of the things you're going to notice is that, well, actually, some of the things that it's the Bible's talking about does, in fact, for Christians, or those who claim to be Christians, is it is very directly talking about things that many people in Canada outside of the Christian faith believe. And so you might say, okay, well, George, it's all right for you to say that it's in-house, but, I mean, good grief. They're good grief. The Bible's dissing us.

It's saying things against the views that we hold dearly.

And, you know, just to put it sort of, you know, very clearly, I mean, here's the thing. For those who are outside of the Christian faith, well, you're not a Christian. You think that things that Christians believe cannot possibly be true. And yet, I mean, that's what you think, right? And, you know, frankly, for a committed Christian, there's things, you know, that for Muslim, or a Buddhist, or a Hindu, or, you know, many just garden-variety Canadians, that we don't agree with things that you say. I mean, so at one level, that shouldn't be a bit of a shock to you, that, in fact, we don't agree on things. And, in fact, you know, I read lots of non-Christian books, and I read the paper, and on lots of media, and I have constant sources of, there's constant people speaking into my life trying to say, George, you're wrong. You're wrong, and you should think like me. So, it shouldn't be a bit of a shock to you on one level. You're just actually hearing that, oh, okay, these, in fact, are things that, if you are a Christian, you're supposed to believe.

And it shouldn't, in a sense, be a big surprise to you that it's, we're going to disagree on some things. But in an odd way, I think when you hear this text, you'll understand something that I think real, true Christians believe. Very early on in my ordained ministry, there was a man, the denomination that I used to be part of, the Diocese of Ottawa, the Anglican Church of Canada. I'm not going to, I'm going to out it, not outing it. He came, and in his talk at a big gathering of the whole diocese, he very persuasively and passionately and emotionally let us all know that Jesus didn't rise from the grave, that miracles don't happen, that the basic Christian moral teachings are outmoded, they're for an agrarian age that don't apply to modern people.

[6 : 41] And he got a standing ovation. In fact, I can tell you right now, every single person in the room, over 300, except one person stood. I sat there on the seat, not clapping, with a very, very, very red face. And afterwards, when I came back to the church that I served at, I said, listen, you know, people can believe those things, that's fine, it's Canada, it's everybody should believe what they're going to, you know, what they think is true. But if I ever came to believe that, I would resign as a Christian minister, and I would stop being a Christian. And I definitely, the absolute last thing in the world I would do on a Sunday morning is go to church.

Like, good grief, if you believe those things, why bother? There's way better things to do with your time. Like, if you're here outside the faith, don't you agree? There's way better things to do with your time than come to church, if you don't actually believe anything in the Christian faith that's at all important. And so on one level, I mean, this is just to frame it, you get to hear how Christians think, and this is a warning to people who claim to be Christians. This man who I'm referring to, he's now passed away, but it's referring to people like that, that exist within the Christian church, and cause a lot of damage. So let's look. And we're going to begin just by looking at the first four verses. If you're, I'm not going to say anything other than to point one thing out. And if you're curious about what it means, you can look at my sermon online from last week. And so if you turn in your Bibles to the book of Jude, it's, we're going to look today at verses 5 to 13, but we'll first read verses 1 to 4 just for the context. And if it's hard to find the book of Jude, you go right to the back of your Bible, the book of Revelation, and then you go move this way, so to speak, towards the beginning. Jude's the short little book just before

Revelation. And here's how it begins. Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, to those who have been called, who are loved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ, mercy, peace, and love be yours in abundance. 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. And contend here means to fight for it, to compete for it, to want to win, to have the Christian faith, in a sense, win and be believed by many. But especially to have it believed by those who claim to be Christians. That's what it says right next, verse 4. For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly weaseled their way in among you or 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 Savior and Lord. So this letter, once again, it's not referring to Supreme Court justices, the Globe and Mail. It's not talking about, you know, Jordan Peterson or LGBTQ plus advocates. It's not referring to that. It's referring to people who claim to be Christians and that there's an issue. And then Jude gives sort of like two 5,000 feet in the air descriptions that are going to categorize them, that they're going to pervert grace so that it ends up, in fact, not stopping certain types of sins but encouraging them. And it's going to completely deny that Jesus is the Lord, the Messiah, the Savior. Those are

sort of the 5,000 feet in the air or 10,000 feet in the air understandings of it.

And now the rest of the book is going to go on with verse 5. Now, when you're hearing verse 5 and following, here's how you need to understand what's happening. Now, this church has been blessed for quite a few years with a very, very, very good church council. I probably don't sing their praises enough. And for those who have been on council and those currently are, I apologize that I haven't sung your praises. And one of the reasons it's a very good church council is that they don't always agree with me. If a church has a council that always agrees with the pastor, it has a crappy council because I'm not always right. And I need council members who occasionally say, George, that's, love your heart, dumb idea. Maybe you say it a bit kinder than that to me so I don't have to go to therapy for months afterwards. But just a bad idea. And it's very rare. I can't think of very many. I can think of times in other organizations where I've had to do this. But I've made a suggestion. And it's gotten voted down. And as I'm driving home, I realize I made a big mistake. I saw a problem which was just like a mountain. I just, to me, the problem was so obvious that when I came to council or came to another group that I was leading, I skipped five steps and went right to solving the problem.

[12:02] But nobody in the council had recognized that there was a problem. So all of it, they're just going like, what? Like, where's this coming from? Like, why do you want to do that? Like, that's a, that's not a good idea, George. We're not going to do it. And so as I'm driving home or maybe the next, you know, that night or the next morning, I realized that that was the mistake I made.

So I'll say at the next meeting, you'll see that this agenda item is back on the agenda. And you'd know me that I don't revisit issues. I don't say, I'm going to keep pushing this issue and pushing this issue until I get my way. That, if that, you know, obviously, I think I'm right all the time. But I also know that I'm not right all the time. And I, it's really good to have limits on, on me and on everybody needs limits, right? But I will sometimes go and say, here's the reason we're revisiting the issue is I realized I did not serve you well. I didn't describe the problem.

And make the case for the problem. So in today, we're going to look at it. I'm not going to give you any suggestions about what to do. I just want to make you understand that there's this problem. And the few times that I've had to do that, by the end of it, they go, oh, yes, that's a problem. And we need to deal with it. Now, sometimes they might take my idea. Usually, they'd come up with a better solution than I did. But you see, so what Jude is doing here from verses nine, sorry, verse five to verse 19, is he's selling the problem. That's what he's doing. He's selling the problem. And we're going to look today at five to 13. And next week, we'll look at 14 to 19.

And and but he's selling the problem. So that in mind, here's how it goes. Verse five, though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord at one time delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. I'm going to read the next two. One of the things about Jude is he writes in triplets. He does example, example, example, all the way through the book, triplets, always three examples. So I'll read the three. That's the first one. The second one is verse six. And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority, but abandoned their proper dwelling. These he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting change for judgment on the great day.

[14:28] And in a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.

Now, these are very sobering words. And if you are outside the Christian faith here or watching, I want you to know that these for Canadian Christians, by and large, this doesn't make them want to jump up and dance and shout hallelujah. It's words that they struggle with.

Because Canadian Christians are often very Canadian. And these are very, very hard words. So one of the things which is very brilliant about the book of Jude is the book of Jude is almost like a very tightly worded creed where every word matters.

And what Jude has done, which is so brilliant, is he's made something which is very, very tight. But to make it cross-cultural and cross-linguistic and cross-temporal, like for all people groups over all times, rather than giving a long list of abstract words, he gives you a constant list of Bible images, of Bible stories. And in that way, he can not only sell the problem, but he can begin, especially for those who have good imaginations, and they go back and they read the story about what happened in the Exodus and people's rebellion against God, and then God's judgment on them, or they go back and they read the passages in Isaiah and Ezekiel and in Genesis, and get an understanding of

people, of angels being angels, but rebelling against God. And in the process, they become demons and God's judgment on them. And the story in the book of Genesis, Genesis of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah completely and utterly given themselves over to sexual immorality and perversion. And that includes an understanding of gay and lesbian sexual relations and God's judgment on them. And they can go and they can read these stories.

[16 : 53] And he just does it, and you're going to see it all the way through later on with Balaam, with Korah. He does these very, just little one or two word or short little phrases, always referring back to some image or something in the Bible, and it's very, very tightly woven.

And especially for those with really good imaginations, if you go back and you read them and you meditate upon them, you'll, you'll, you get not only the selling of the problem, but the shape and the contour of the problem. And what, what you see in each of these instances is this, whether it's the people who got out, in every case you see this, people knew and had a sense, either had a very, very clear sense of what was right and wrong, or what God demanded or did not demand, or very clear hearing of what he had said was, was, was, was, was right and wrong, or a very, very clear understanding of who God is.

And in every particular case, even knowing that, they decided that they would disregard who he is, and they would believe that their own way was better, and that no judgment would fall on them. And that's what they all believed, but the reality is that God judged them. He judged those who came out of slavery in Egypt and rebelled, and they died under God's judgment.

The angels aren't dead yet. That will not happen, in a sense, to the, the lake of fire at the end of all things, and the beginning of the new things.

[18 : 40] But he has severely limited them, and they know that they're under God's judgment, and it causes torment. And in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah, there's a real judgment by fire.

You see, one of the things that Paul, that Jude wants to say, last week I tried to say that part, one of the big messages of the book of Jude, is that Jude, if you look at the very beginning, two verses, and at the very end, I think about five verses or four verses, Jude wants Christians to be so enchanted and treasured and in love with Christ and God's word, that we will fight for the Christian faith within the visible church, and that we will come to understand that these are serious issues that are going on in the church, and it is unloving not to confront him.

Now, I am not trying to sing my praises. I really am not. You know, one of the things I write at the bottom of my notes of every sermon I work on, you'll see a group of letters, and it says, all things come of you, and of your own have I given you.

Like, I really believe that. There's nothing that comes from me. I am no different than any other Christian. I don't have any light within me, so to speak. I am a mirror.

Every Christian is a mirror. And in fact, my mirror is cracked and has some warps in it. And all I can do is turn who I am, the mirror of who I am, to the light of Christ in such a way that the light of Christ will hit me, who is a mirror, and shine into this room.

[20 : 28] That's all I am. I did confront that speaker in the early days of my ordination. I'd only been ordained eight days.

And I was the only one who got up and confronted him. And let me tell you, I wasn't brave. Rivers of sweat were flowing from my armpits.

And I was shaking all over, and I was so red, probably people outside the building could see me. But I confronted him about it. And the result was I was never put on a single diocesan committee because I outed myself after eight days.

Now, the point is not that you should be like George. I hope you're way better than me. I preach in the hope that you'll be vastly more godly, vastly more prayerful, vastly better Christians than I am. And that would just please my heart as that becomes more and more the case. But that we need to hear Jude. We need to hear Jude and realize this is not just something we can shrug our shoulders and say we go along to get along.

[21 : 39] We get along to go along. Like, no, this is a very serious issue. Now, some might say, George, those are very judgmental texts, and it's just your opinion. Well, actually, Jude is very clever.

Look at what he says in verse 8. It's as if he anticipates in verse 8 and a few verses afterwards that we think it's just our opinion and judgmental.

First of all, it's not my opinion. I just read the text. It's not my opinion. It's what the text says. But look at verse 8. In the very same way, so in other words, what's going on with them, whether it's the people of Israel who've been delivered from slavery but end up rebelling against God, whether it's the angels, whether it's the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the very same way, verse 8, on the strength of their dreams, on the strength of their dreams, these ungodly people, and then this is very clever, it goes backwards as a summary from the three examples he just gave.

Pollute their own bodies, referring to Sodom and Gomorrah, reject authority, and actually literally it says reject lordship. Actually even more straightforward, reject lordship, godhood, referring to the angels that have become demons, and heap abuse on celestial beings.

And that goes back to how God has used angels to communicate his law to his people. But notice that on the very same way, on the strength of their dreams. Now one of the things that you might find maybe tiresome in my sermons is that when we go through the book of Acts, I'm very regularly making an apologetic as to why we should believe the miracles in the book of Acts, the miracles in the gospels actually happened, why Jesus' moral teaching is actually true.

[23 : 25] But I keep belaboring that. And the reason I keep belaboring it is that Christians are very different than the average Canadian. We believe that what we're talking about here is real. There really is a triune God.

Like, Hindus do not describe the real God. Buddhists do not describe the real God. Muslims, our Muslim friends do not describe the real God. That Jesus and God's words describe the way God really is.

He really is triune. And that there really are demons. And Jesus really is the way to be made right with God. That these things are real. And so one of the things then about this dream thing is that first of all, this does not apply to Christians.

First of all, what's the problem? Just here's the problem. If you're dealing with real things. If you were to, if I was to discover, if one of you said, I've programmed a self-driving car, you just sit in the car and press this button.

You know, and as an experiment, it's going to take you to, I don't know, the Glebe Center or something from here. And just before I get in, you know, he or she who's designed it says, oh, by the way, I just want you to know, I'm like pretty weird.

[24 : 34] I sort of dream in binary. And I keep a little book beside my bed. And every night, like lately for the last like four months, like every night I have five or six dreams. And when I wake up, I write down the binary code.

And that's the code that's directing the car. Just so you know. What would you get in the car? Absolutely not. You say, what? You just dreamed these things and made it in the code?

And you want me to get in the car? No. Well, you know, and here's the thing. And I, you know, we could go into a whole other thing, you know, in terms of, but how can you defend, whether it's Muslim or Buddhist or Hindu, whether it's boutique spirituality, all of these things, how do you defend, how do you ground those beliefs of yours?

Like, is it in fact just coming from some human being's mind? But it's not what Christianity is all about. Christianity is rooted in, like, there really is compelling historical evidence that Jesus existed, that he died on a cross in the spring of 30 or the spring of 33, there's compelling historical evidence that he was buried in a grave, that on the third day the grave was empty, and that he appeared alive.

There's very compelling historical evidence. And that evidence doesn't just come there, because that would just be sort of weird, but it comes in the context of an overarching and beautiful story.

[25 : 54] It comes in the context of an overarching worldview. It comes in the context of many beliefs from just natural observation as to why a God like the God of the Bible has to be the God that exists, that that's a reasonable conclusion.

It comes in the context of a series of literature that is unbelievably wise, that if you read somebody like Jordan Peterson, and I disagree with him, I think that when he reads Genesis and Exodus, it's actually things that happen, but he can show you how it opens up depth psychology to understand human consciousness and what goes on in life.

And it comes in the context of the literature, which gives us human rights, the dignity of the human being, the reason that women cannot be treated like property, science.

It all comes in that context, that Jesus lives and dies and rises from the dead, and it's historic evidence, and we don't base our beliefs on dreams.

I leave it up to our friends who have other views to show me how your belief doesn't just come out of dreams.

[27 : 08] Because the cry of my heart is for those who are here, those who are listening or outside of the Christian faith, that you will hear Jesus knocking at the door of your heart, and that you will say, Jesus, please come into my heart, and that you will find rest for your soul, and you will come into truth and be a lover of the truth.

Okay, well, George, it's still a little bit judgmental. Well, actually, here's where this very next text is actually dealing with the judgmental thing. I have to watch my time. It's verse 9. This is a weird text. Actually, before I read the text, so many of you have heard the story. I've had about, I don't know, a few times in my life, five or six or eight or whatever, where I've spoken at an audience where I don't speak their language, and I've had to have a translator.

And when I did that, and every time I have to do it again, I go back and I do a bit of reading on it, and I understand that if I'm going to do that very well, I have to have very short little sentences. So I actually work on my sermon so that every one of the sentences is sort of like, ta-da, ta-da, ta-da, ta-da.

And so I can get up and I can go, ta-da, ta-da, ta-da, ta-da. And I sort of look to them. And they go, sometimes they go, ta-da, ta-da, ta-da, ta-da, ta-da. Sometimes they go, ta-da, ta-da. You know, sometimes they go, ta-da, ta-da, ta-da, ta-da, ta-da, ta-da, ta-da, ta-da, ta-da, ta-da.

[28 : 32] right it's it's uh sometimes you can translate it quite shorter sometimes a bit longer and as i was sharing with you've all heard it before but i don't know i think it's a great story i had this great privilege to speak uh in angola on the uh on the edge of the kalahari desert and uh in the in the church uh uh the majority of the people in the room were from a semi-nomadic people's group and uh they didn't speak portuguese and definitely didn't speak english and i get to preach so i have two translators so i go ta-da ta-da ta-da ta-da you know and then the portuguese person goes ta-da ta-da ta-da ta-da and then you know whatever i can't remember the name language ta-da ta-da ta-da maybe there's different lengths but early on i said something ta-da ta-da ta-da ta-da portuguese ta-da ta-da ta-da ta-da and the native speaker goes um and then they had a five minute four minute conversation amongst people who spoke either portuguese english or that native language about what on earth to say and the reason was is that to introduce myself i had said that i come from a place which is very different than where you are angola is you know close to the equator i said where i live it's not unusual to have three meters of snow in the winter fall on us so the portuguese person just said ta-da ta-da ta-da ta-da there's no word for snow in the language of this kalahari semi-nomadic people group they have no word so there's this conversation about what on earth they're going to say they finally come up with the word ice and they say that where i live three meters of ice falls on us every winter which just made all the i didn't find this out until afterwards everybody in the room looked unbelievably puzzled about how you could live somewhere and have nine feet a ten feet of ice fall on you every winter and how you can still be alive anyway the point is verse nine is very verse nine is one of those things that if somebody was here with the greek ta-da ta-da ta-da ta-da and then they came to the english person they'd have to go ta-da but you can't do that in the bible translation but here's here i'll read it to you and then i'll explain it actually has a very simple idea and has to do with being judgmental look at verse nine it goes like this but even the archangel michael and by the way what he's doing here is he's referring to a non-biblical story that his hearers back then would have been aware of it would be like me making a reference you know i go to over to the morides and i i would never attempt this by the way because they know way way more about this than i do and i try to make a marvel movie analogy or a star trek analogy to andrew and he would just say okay george you got that wrong and that wrong and that wrong and and there you go but so it's like something or you know people know the story he's using a story that's non-biblical and it goes like this so verse nine but even the archangel michael when he was disputing with the devil about the body of moses did not himself dare to condemn him for slander now the him is referring to moses not the devil to condemn him for slander but said to the devil the lord rebuke you and so what's going on in the text is this that in the story the devil says to michael look at all these things that moses has done wrong he's done this wrong he's done this wrong he's done this wrong he's done this wrong he's not a good guy he should definitely go to hell and michael says in a sense in the story listen making that final judgment is god's alone rebuke you you don't get to make that discussion that decision see it's a very

opposite so what judah's telling us is the very opposite of being judgmental here'd be another type of illustration if it turned out if one of us was brought in to help another church and there were allegations of a person being a pedophile within the church that's a very very very very very serious thing and you have

to deal with it you have to take it very seriously you have to deal with it and you have to make they're not hard to say you know that they're not hard decisions that but they're very cut and dry decisions that you're going to have to make and you have to say to everybody in the church especially those making excuses for them that what this person did to sexually abuse a young boy or a young girl that's very very very wrong you add more varies okay now obviously there's you know legal things that are the legal things now what you have to say to that person is and here's the christian response to that person you have to say to that person what you're doing saying and what you're doing and what you're arguing for if you're trying to argue for a while it was all right for you to do it it's all wrong but i can't make the judgment about that person whether they will go to heaven or hell only god makes that decision and in fact what should be my heart my heart should be that they come to faith in christ and that they amend their lives now we're never going to allow them to look after children again and they might very well have to go to jail and they should go to jail but the heart of every christian is that they come to faith in christ and they acknowledge that the thing they've done is very wrong and you take appropriate action so judah saying you take action against these ungodly influencers you take them from positions of authority you definitely don't get them to invite them to a to speak to your synod and you definitely don't give them standing ovations somebody has to get up there and say first of all you know in a sense the bishop should have been fired for having that guy right if i brought somebody like that to this church i would hope that you're the council is on the phone with the bishop that george needs to be fired right that's the right way to handle it but at the same time you want that guy to come to a saving faith in christ that's you see this is what this is what the story says the opposite opposite opposite of being judgmental now i'm just going to read um the the rest of the text um very very quickly and i i see i'm already almost out of the time but i want to bring three big ideas to you just very very briefly that should be there from all of this and so verse 10 yet these people slander whatever they do not understand and the very things they do understand by instinct as irrational irrational animals do they will just will destroy them just let you know if you've ever had any dealings like if i use that example of that fellow who spoke at that synod all those years ago he might not know certain christian ideas but if i was to share with him a christian idea his instinct would be to not like it this is just empirically true and then verse 11 very hard word woe to them it's god's eternal woe they have taken the way of cain cain knew what god wanted cain knew that god offered him repentance and cain chose chose murder rather than that they have rushed for profit into balaam's error in that particular case balaam knew what god wanted but once the the presence of god wasn't there he'd rather have money and he figured out a way to to get what the the pagans wanted even though he knew that god was opposed to it they have been destroyed in cora's rebellion it's another story from the old testament but once again cora knew what god wanted and he chose his own way and in all of these cases cain and balaam and air and and cora they did not think that god's judgment would happen to them and verses 12 to 13 these people are blemishes another translation is they're the hidden reefs at your love feast eating with you without the slightest qualm they are shepherds who feed only themselves they are clouds without rain they blown along by the wind they are autumn trees without fruit and uprooted twice dead they are wild waves of the sea foaming up their shame wandering stars for whom

blackest darkness has been reserved forever in other words the ungodly influencers within churches are completely fruitless and will not give you good direction in life the stars were used for direction in the night so here's just to bring it to a close you put up the first point claire that would be very helpful the grace what's the message which is going on here the grace of our lord jesus christ forms the christian's heart to want to hear god's word written and understand believe trust and obey it that's how god's grace forms you do you understand all these things no is this a bit shocking if you're a brand new christian to hear this yes but at the end of the day within your heart you have a desire to know it and to understand it and to believe it and trust it even if it's it's it's really quite shocking to you but that's god's grace forms you to want to know and understand it the next point the ungodly influencer teaches you to stand in judgment on god's word reject it and delight in your own way that's what that early speaker was teaching everybody in the room listen don't believe

these old-fashioned moral commandments don't think there's going to be anything like miracles don't believe there's anything like demons don't think that Jesus really rose from the dead you need to walk your own way that's how you're going to experience blessing get in charge of your own destiny be the captain of your own soul and get a standing ovation the next point the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ forms the Christian heart the Christian's heart to humbly remember that the triune God's judgment of the living and the dead is unavoidably real by the way that's one of the motives for evangelism that's why you need to pray for those who are outside of the Christian's heart outside of the Christian the grace of God our Lord Jesus Christ forms the Christian's heart to humbly remember that the triune God's judgment of the living and the dead is unavoidably real if you could put up the next point the ungodly the ungodly the ungodly influencer teaches you to believe that your that your will that you sorry you will be blessed and you will never fall under if you do your way you i can't read my writing the ungodly influencer teaches you to believe that your will your way will be blessed and you will never fall under God's judgment there's lots of churches that tell you that there is no hell that everybody goes to heaven those are ungodly influencers brothers and sisters now why on earth some of you might say okay George there's no gospel in this actually this all helps us to understand the gospel this all helps us to understand just how great the gospel is and why it is that the gospel of grace should form your hearts and that you should give your life to Christ because this book is the opposite of triumphalistic it's the opposite of pride it's profoundly humbling if you could put up the next point Claire you and i deserve God's judgment but in the mercy of God the judgment that you deserve the judgment that i deserve fell on the Lord Jesus Messiah you can never be too hard on yourself on one level God knows your sin way better than you do he knows my sin way better than i do

but on the other hand you can never fully understand the extravagance of God's love for you and the depth of God's love for you that God the Son of God out of love for you and a desire for you to spend eternity with the triune God in the new heaven and the new earth that he bore the judgment that you and i properly deserve and he took it for you out of love for you no motivational speaker who wants to pump you up with how great you are can top that that they offer thin gruel at best so the why if you could put up the final point the wise biblical question is not will God judge me the wise biblical question is will the judgment that you deserve fall on you or fall on the Lord Jesus Christ that is the wise and this is real there is no greater news if the church no longer believes that the Lord Jesus Christ took on human flesh and walked amongst us and suffered trials and temptations and died for us and rose for us that we might there if we're the only ones in the world that can tell every people group on the planet who can go to semi-nomadic tribal groups you want to know what that missionary group did in Angola to reach that semi-nomadic tribal group nobody could reach them so they provided a place for them to get water and then they met them and they said we like cattle and you like cattle let's work together to teach each other how to look after cattle and then while they were doing it they learned their language and shared the gospel with them you go to the ends of the earth with this news you go to the end of the earth with this news and you go to the people groups in Ottawa with this news please stand just before i pray that you know as they started as these missionaries began to befriend this semi-nomadic people group they they also made a school for them so their kids could learn and they created language classes so their they could their kids could learn Portuguese and they wouldn't be so isolated and they uh they had veterinarians to help them to keep their cattle healthy and they had a medical clinic to help them and they preached the gospel to them that's the gospel let's pray a father i i just we i've mentioned the SIM in Angola and this missionary that amongst many many things that those missionaries do there and Norm and Audrey are part of that group that we support and father ask your great blessing on them and their church planting their cares for the poor their care for the sick their their heart for semi-nomadic people group father we are so grateful that we can be part of that by prayer and by our financial gifts and we ask your great blessing on them and we ask father that you would grip us with the glory of the gospel and who Jesus is and father make us so treasure Christ and treasure grace that we will understand that it is unloving to allow churches and Christian influencers who deny the gospel and deny God's word that is in fact unloving to not confront to not confront them and father we ask that you uh just fill our hearts anew with love of what Jesus did to make us right with you you did not weigh my merits you pardoned my offenses

grant us grant me grant all of us very grateful humble prayerful hearts we ask all these things in the name of Jesus your son and our savior and all God's people said amen witnesses Oh you you