

Jude 14-19 "Recognizing Ungodly Influencers"

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 10 March 2024

Preacher: Rev. George Sinclair

[0 : 0 0] 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.

And let's bow our heads in prayer. Father, we like being reminded about the promises in your Word for your people and we like asking you that you would help us to believe the promises. And Father, most of the time we like learning truth from your Word that we might know it.

And Father, we don't always like some of the commands that you give us, but you do give us commands and we ask that you would help us to obey them. But Father, we often really don't like hearing your warnings to us. And so Father, we ask that you would help us to hear your warnings and to heed them, knowing, Father, who you are, that you are our Father in heaven who loves us.

And we ask these things in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. So, this is a sobering sermon today. The book of Jude is a sobering book. And I hope it'll be obvious by the end of the sermon. But I am going to have to refer to such things as same-sex marriage, the pride movement in general, and euthanasia and abortion. And I think you'll see by the end of the sermon why it is that I need to say some things about this. And the things I'm going to say, of course, go against the grain of what Canadian culture says. In fact, at the end of the eight o'clock service, somebody said to me, don't worry, George, we'll bail you out of jail after the sermon.

[3 : 0 8] There's a, you might have noticed it in my prayer, there's a very old-fashioned way to help people with their personal Bible study, or if you're in Bible study groups, it's to ask four questions of every text. One question to ask of the text is, is there a promise in this text that I should believe?

Good question to ask. Look for it, see if there's any promises. A second very good question is to ask, is there some truth that God is revealing here that he wants me to know? That's, once again, a very good question to ask while you're looking at a Bible text, trying to understand it.

A third question to ask is, is there a command in the text that I am to obey? Once again, that's a very good thing to notice. Are there some imperatives, some commands that God is asking you to obey? And the fourth question is the one that we're really looking at today, primarily. Is there a warning in the text that God would want you to pay attention to and to heed? So today there is the end of two sermons, but there's a very profound warning for us. So I invite you to turn with me in your Bibles to the book of Jude. It's the second to last book in the Bible. It's just 25 verses, so it's very short. So if you go to the book of Revelation and just sort of flip towards the other side, you'll come across this, the book of Jude, which often just fits in one page of a Bible like mine. It fits in one page. And we've been going through this. We preach through books of the Bible.

Bible. And the way that the book is sort of structured is there's a very hopeful greeting, which describes the great promise of being a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then there's a very simple thing where he's setting forth why he's writing the letter, which is that ungodly influencers have come into the church, and we need to contend for the faith. And then from verses 5 to 19, what Jude is doing primarily is selling the problem. And I shared two weeks ago when I last preached on the first part of the selling the problem, how occasionally I have to go to the council, back to the council after they've shot down a proposal of mine. And I only go back if I afterwards think that I made a big strategic mistake with them, and I assumed they saw the problem, but they hadn't seen the problem, and I'd failed to sell the problem to them. Sell the problem doesn't mean inventing a problem. It's just helping them to see that there's a problem. And usually, when I've gone back and done that, I haven't done it for quite a few years, after I sell the problem, they go, oh, that's why you made that proposal. They might say, well, it's still a dumb, some way of solving the problem, which is fair enough, because sometimes I'm dumb. But now that they see that there's a problem, then they come up with a way to try to solve the problem. And really, one of the ways to understand then verses 5 to 19 is that Jude is trying to sell the problem to believing Christians about a problem in the church. And the way he does that is by he gives a series primarily of little keywords to point you back to biblical stories. He also uses a couple of things from nature, and he uses a cultural story that was common in their day. And he just gives a little snippet so that you can go back and think about the story and get the shape of the problem, the contour of the problem, the identity of the problem. And these verses today that we're going to look at, 14 to 19, is the second part of trying to understand what the problem is. So that in the next two sermons, we'll look at, in a sense, the shape of how we respond to the problem and the hope we have in responding to the problem. So let's just look. It's verse 14. And well, let's look. It's just verse 14. And what he's doing here is he's quoting in verse 14 from a story common to the Jewish culture at the time.

It would sort of be as if I was to go to a Christian homeschooling convention for kids who were 12 to 14. And I want to discuss Jesus and his death upon the cross. I might refer to the Narnia Chronicles and Aslan dying on behalf of one of the children, right? So I know I might give a Bible passage, tell them about that Narnia story, maybe tell them another Bible passage. And Jude is doing something similar. He's using a story and a part of the story which really captures what's going on.

[7:39] In fact, actually, if one of the commentators gave a whole list of all the little allusions and references to the Old Testament contained within the text. But here's what he says.

It was also about these, that's these ungodly influencers, that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him. Now that's a mouthful.

And if you go back and you look, one of the things, last time I preached on this, I used the NIV because it helped with one of the problem translation bits. But here, the ESV has kept something which is very intentional. Four times he uses the word all, and four times he uses the word ungodly. And if you read other very good translations like the NIV or the NLT, they haven't preserved the four alls and the four ungodlies. But he's trying to communicate something very clearly about what the ungodly are like. And at the heart of it, what he's really trying to say is that what they do is ungodly. Why they do it is ungodly. What they're aiming for is ungodly. And then he ends with this little bit at the end of 15, of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him. In some other translations, trying to capture this harsh is defiant. So harsh, defiant things that ungodly sinners have spoken against God. Now, I mean, that actually sounds to the Canadian ears, that's a very harsh thing to say, isn't it? Actually, sort of ironic. But it's actually, on one level, it's very clear. But on the other hand, it's a bit confusing. Like, who exactly are the ungodly? What are the ungodly? Like, how is it that they're actually saying, like, that sounds really strong, defiant and harsh things against God. And this is things going on in the church.

And that's something I forgot to mention just a bit earlier. This whole letter is addressed an issue in the church. It's not addressing issues in our culture at large. Although when I get to the specifics, you're going to see that it's making a comment about issues in the culture at large.

But it's referring to issues going on in the church. And it's a bit confusing, but I'd like to go through the rest of the text. And then we'll come back to verses 14 and 15. And I'll explain how it is that you can recognize harsh and defiant speech against God and what the word ungodly means.

[10 : 40] Now, this next bit, this next verse is something that the average Canadian would agree with fundamentally most of it. They'd think these are things that we generally don't like. But once again, unless you understand what ungodly is, you might not recognize it when you see it.

You might not actually be catching what Jude is talking about. So in other words, it looks like something you agree with, but you might not agree with it if you understand what he's trying to get at. Let's look at verse 16. It says this. They're talking about the ungodly influencers.

They are grumblers, malcontents. Another word for malcontent is fault finders. And we all know people who find fault, and there's no fault they don't find. And there's no fault they don't ride to death.

And so generally, Canadians don't like being around people like that, fault finders. Just like we don't really like people being around, you know, grumblers. I mean, you know, you have some people over and you make, you go to a lot of bother to give them a really nice meal, and then they grumble about it and say, I don't know, it's a bit too spicy, not spicy enough, too much salt, not enough salt. They don't like the way, you know, you think, really? I put one to all this work to feed you a meal, and you're grumbling about it, right? So, you know, and then that goes on. They're doing this grumbling and malcontents, verse 16, following their own sinful desires. In other words, what's emerging from is a desire which is against God. And then this next bit, they are loudmouth boasters showing favoritism to gain advantage. This would be a whole wonderful sermon. And if you go back and look at some other translations, they translate it as slightly different. But what the fundamental idea is that they're getting at here is that these are people who inflate themselves and others with emptiness and vanity. So whether you're looking at, some of the texts talk about people who flatter a lot. Some of it says this loudmouth boasting. Some of it talks about bombastic speech. Different translations are trying to get at this idea. But the heart of all of it at the end of this is people who inflate themselves and others with emptiness and vanity. Another way to understand it is they have a perception of the sins and the delusions and illusions that a person believes.

And they have a sense of what that, you know, you think of, you know, you look at Bob and you have a sense of the type of delusions and illusions and sin that Bob sort of actually thinks that they're true and you tell them they are true. And that's what it's trying to get at. Things which are ultimately empty and vain means you're not going to accomplish what you want. And it's self-seeking. So once again, these are things that Canadians can say, I can understand that these are problems. But we don't actually get what he's trying to get at as a problem within the church. So the next thing that Jude does is after this cultural story, he brings the selling the problem to an end by giving a short little phrase where he just summarizes in a sense what the New Testament teaches. Look at what he says in verse 17. But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. They said to you, in the last time there will be scoffers following their own ungodly passions. And just pause here for a second. The Bible has an overarching story. And in this overarching story, we right now are living in the last days. God begins when Jesus dies upon the cross and rises from the dead, the last days begin. And those last days will end when Jesus returns.

[14 : 36] As Enoch was talking about, he'll return with tens and tens of thousands of angels. And there will be a judging of the living and the dead. And then there will be the new heaven and the new earth. So we live in that in-between time between these things. And just go back to verse 18 again. They said to you, in the last time there will be scoffers following their own ungodly passion. And just what is a scoffer?

Actually, a lot of discourse on Twitter and a lot of what we call commentary in our newspapers, even elite newspapers, is actually just scoffing. And it's another version of mocking. And the Bible says it's a way that will never lead you to wisdom. It will never lead you to truth. And what scoffing does is scoffing never gives reason and evidence, or rarely gives reason or evidence. What scoffing does is demean, demean, diminish, disdain, and deride. It just basically tries to belittle you. And you use your tongue to intimidate and belittle somebody who holds a different position than you. And you just do it by, whether you're conscious or unconsciously, just calling them names. There's a columnist in The Citizen that I read regularly, because basically I think she's wrong about everything. I actually think that if she said it was going to be a sunny day tomorrow, I would bring an umbrella. Like, she's just so consistently wrong. And one of the things which is just fascinating about reading her is she's just filled constantly with scoffing. She's always calling people names, like constantly, just putting people down and calling them names. And then after she'd been doing that for a month, she wrote a column on how we have to have more civil discourse. And I go, really? That's what I think. But all you do is call people names. I'm not going to tell you the person's name. But the problem is, that's what scoffers do. And obviously, we can be prone to it as well. We can just, you know, use our tongue to diminish people. We don't give actually any evidence or any reason for what we believe. We just try to intimidate people with our tongue. And that's what scoffing is. And so once again,

Canadians might look at that and say, you know, that's actually, we agree with that. But the problem is, do we agree with it in the places where Jude means? That's really the fundamental.

You'll see why I mean it's a bit of a problem in a second. So go back to verse 18. They said to you, this is all of the, basically, the New Testament. In the last time, there will be scoffers following their own ungodly passions. And once again, you get that word ungodly. When Jude gives you this thing, there are ungodly people in the church, you need to contend for the faith.

And now towards the end of his selling the problem, he gives you these four words of ungodly. And then here, just before he finishes selling the problem, he uses ungodly again. And then finally, it is these who cause divisions. And now here it says worldly people devoid of the spirit. Now, if we have anybody online watching who's come from an Islamic background, and not just Islamic backgrounds, maybe Hindu backgrounds or Buddhist backgrounds, one of the things that's very hard for people, especially coming from outside of Canada, is that many people from a Muslim or Hindu or Buddhist background think that Canada is Christian. Now, it is, in fact, case that Canada has a Christendom heritage and was formed by Christendom. But in fact, what this text is saying here is that there's, first of all, as you know, the majority of Christians never go to, the Canadians never go to church at all. They might put on the census that they're Christians. And so they call themselves Christians. But what this text is showing is that there's lots of people, even in churches, that call themselves Christians. But in fact, when it says here that they're worldly people and devoid of the Holy Spirit, it means that what they really are is from the world, not from Christ. And when it says they're devoid of the Spirit, it means they aren't Christians. Because when you give your life to

[19 : 00] Christ, when you call out to him that he will be your Savior and your Lord, the Holy Spirit, not only are your sins forgiven, not only are you made right with God, but the Holy Spirit is given to you and indwells you. And now you're his. Like, if you go back and look at the very, very beginning, and it's not going to be there, you just have to listen. Or if you have your own Bible, the second part of verse 1, to those who are called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ. There's this idea that once you give your life to Christ, you're enwrapped in the love of God, you're kept for Jesus, and implied later on as well, is that the Holy Spirit actually indwells you.

So what's going on here in the text? I have a very good friend who was a minister for a long time, and he was a very, very, very, very fine man. And we used to have coffee together regularly.

And one of the things he would tell me, he was very gentle, and very soft-spoken, and very caring. And sometimes those things got in his way when he had to tell somebody off.

Maybe there was somebody in a small group that were acting rudely, or somebody causing trouble in the church, and it came time for him to tell them off. And because he was so consistently gentle, and caring, and soft-spoken, he would come afterwards to me and say, you know, George, I realized after I was driving home, I don't think they realized I was telling them off.

I think they thought I was talking about somebody else, or maybe even affirming them. And he'd have to talk to them again. Sometimes he'd have to talk to them more than once, for him finally to overcome his natural tendencies to be gentle and soft-spoken, and actually say, actually, you're being a jerk, and you have to stop a little bit with the book of Jude.

[20 : 54] Lots of people could read it. Many people could even think they agree with big parts of it. But we're actually not really getting what's going on. So here's the first problem, why it's hard for Canadians maybe to recognize what Jude is talking about.

If you go back and you look at, earlier on, six of the Old Testament examples that he gave. Well, if you look at them, and you look at them from a Canadian's eyes, so the Bible actually uses all of these six things as a way to understand what the problem is.

But you go back and you look at what happens to the Israelites after they are delivered from Egypt by God and enter into the Promised Land. Well, the problem they have, from God's point of view, is they don't believe what he tells them, and then they worship idols.

Well, just think about it for a second here. How do we as Canadians look at that? What we actually see here is that they're very spiritual. And they're very open-minded.

And they're very diverse. And they're equitable. And they're learning to think for themselves. Well, that's actually not what Jude's trying to communicate.

[22 : 06] And then if you look at the next story about angels who've become demons, well, I mean, the problem is that these angelic beings see God perfectly. And you could say, well, isn't that what you want to have is to see God perfectly?

And isn't it not, like, isn't, for our point of view, from a Canadian point of view, a good thing to sort of ask some questions? Okay, well, that's not what Jude's trying to get at in this story.

And then you look at the next story, which is the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. And for the average Canadian, you'd want to say, well, actually, isn't the goal for people to be able to choose their own sexualities and their own identity and to be sexually liberated and free, to be their authentic sexual self and live that out, not only in private but in public?

Like, isn't that a good thing? Well, okay, that's not exactly the point of the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Or these aren't good examples. They're supposed to be bad examples. And then you go on and you use the example of Cain, which Jude does.

But once again, if you go and look at the story from a Canadian perspective and Canadian eyes, Cain is a person who worships God. He sacrificially gives of the fruit of the earth to worship God.

[23 : 20] But then when God says that that's not the way to worship me, Cain gets mad. But from a Canadian point of view, isn't that like a reasonable thing? Like, here we are. Like, don't you want to be spiritual? Don't you want to worship?

Like, really? You think it's all right just to be narrow-minded and say that your way of worshiping isn't right? Like, we sort of sympathize with Cain. Well, once again, that's not what Jude intended by using the story.

Very, very good example is Balaam. Like, Balaam is like the Canadian. If he was living today, he would have millions and millions and millions of followers.

He is like exactly what Canadians want to be like, many of them. Because Balaam was a non-judgmental expert in many spiritualities. That's what he was.

He was a guy you'd go to because he could navigate. Okay, you have your system of understanding gods and goddesses and everything like that. Like, I'm with you. I'm with you, friend. And you're having a problem. And I can help you navigate what's going on with that system.

[24 : 18] And then he meets another person. And he has a different system of gods and goddesses and spells and spiritualities. He says, I'm with you, friend. And here's how you navigate those things to get what you want. And then he meets another person with different sets of spells and spiritualities and idols and gods and goddesses.

And he says, I'm with you, friend. And this is how you navigate all of these types of things. And it doesn't even hurt that at the end of the day it's a ka-ching, ka-ching, ka-ching, ka-ching. Because what isn't more popular to Canadians than be open-minded, spiritual, and make a whole pile of dough?

We've just described the Canadian spirit. Well, once again, that's not actually why Jude uses it. It's supposed to be a bad example, not a good example. And then you look at the very, very final example.

And the final example he uses from the Old Testament is the example of Korah. Well, okay, George, what's the problem with that? Good grief. He's Jewish. He's a Levite. He's involved with temple worship. Like, aren't those good things from the Old Testament's point of view?

Like being an expert in his own tradition? I don't understand why God got mad at him. Okay, well, one moment. You sort of missed the point. Jude's not trying to make those types of points.

[25 : 26] There's another problem. And I can illustrate this. If I was to hand out, we were all to turn this into a bit of a retreat day, and I was to hand out a piece of paper, and I said, just take 10 minutes, just 10 minutes of quiet, and I want you to write down, don't show anybody else, just show down, write down some of the things that you've done wrong since last Sunday.

Okay. And then maybe, you know, one of the people talks to me, he said, well, actually, George, I couldn't think of anything to put down on the paper. But when we think of that person, we'd say, come on, really?

In fact, I could just imagine if I did that, and Louise said, listen, I can put five things on, write easily without even thinking about it. And any one of your kids or your neighbors could put down a couple of things, right?

We wouldn't believe that, that there's nothing from last week. So here's the other problem. When we hear this word of ungodly, one of the problems is that people who are godly, and I'm going to define what godly means in a moment, every single person who's godly lives an imperfect Christian life.

And if you are that one that you don't think you could put a single thing down that you've done wrong, or a good that you failed to do from last week, in fact, we would probably wonder whether you're in fact a Christian, or if you're just a raging narcissist who likes to use Christian language.

[26 : 57] So the problem is, there's a second problem, is it's hard to look at these examples, and even thinking of what scoffing means, and all of that type of stuff, and how to recognize it. And the worry is that we think it's talking about us in some ways, because, you know, one of the things the Holy Spirit does is not only start to move you to believe the promises of God, and have the gospel become more real to your heart, but also to convict you of sin.

And so you're aware of your imperfections, your lack of following Christ. So, what is he saying about the ungodly?

And what does he mean by talking about, if you go back to verses 14 and 15, 15 in particular, about them talking harshly, or defiantly, and what does scoffing, and all of those things mean?

Well, here's what ungodly means, and I should have put it down as a point, I apologize for not doing that. The ungodly lead you away from the person, presence, power, words, and finished work of Christ.

The ungodly are leading you away, influencing you away from the person of Jesus, Jesus' presence, Jesus' power, Jesus' words, and Jesus' finished work upon the cross.

[28 : 23] That's what the ungodly influencers do. And they can do it with profound mystical experiences, with profound, with what we think of superficially as profound insights from depth psychology, with being able to articulate the wisdom of the world in the Canadian cultural story with great persuasiveness.

But at the end of the day, what's happening is you're less concerned with who Jesus is, you're less concerned with his presence in your life, you're less concerned with his power, his grace, his power in your life, you're less concerned with his actual words that he said, and you're actually less concerned with his finished work upon the cross.

So what is the godly? What's implied then? If that's what the ungodly influences are, then who are the godly? What is the godly? The godly are pressing into and becoming grounded in and being drawn to and being led into the person, presence, power, words, and finished work of Christ.

By Jude's definition, I am godly. And it's not a contradiction for me to say, in Jude's definition here, I am trying to be a godly pastor. And I'm also here to tell you, I'm not going to tell you what they are, but when it comes time in the service to confess my sins, I have things to confess.

That I have to take the top three. The top three that hit my conscience. Right? The godly, contending for the faith, is going to be, in fact, that's what you're going to see when you look at the end when he talks about the shape of responding to the problem and the promise of responding to the problem, is that you understand that you're pressing into and you're becoming grounded in and you're becoming drawn by and you're being led into who Jesus is, his presence, his power, his words, and his finished work.

[30 : 47] So here, friends, are where I have to say some sobering words. Now, just before I read this list of four things, I want to especially assure those who are watching online that my things I'm about to say are not political points.

and they're definitely not an us for them, us versus them points, which I'll explain why in a moment. So here's what I want to tell you. A church which does same-sex marriages or flies pride flags or describes themselves as gay positive or walks in prayer in pride parades are ungodly influencers.

influencers. A church which celebrates trans gender movement and changes are ungodly influencers.

A church which supports abortion on demand are ungodly influencers. A church which supports medically assisted dying or euthanasia.

They are ungodly influencers. That's what Jude is getting at.

[32 : 15] I could give other examples. I'll pick the four biggest ones which are relevant for Ottawa in 2024. Why is this not an us versus them thing?

I'm not saying necessarily every single part, but you think of our church and the people who have been part of our church over the years. There have been people who are same-sex attracted.

There are people who are same-sex attracted. And there are people in our congregation who have had abortions or supported abortions and probably have been supportive of euthanasia.

and our people who struggle with thinking that they are in the wrong body. That's why it's not an us versus them issue.

It's not a political issue. Jude's not talking politics. Why are these ungodly influencers? It's because of the clarity of the Bible.

[33 : 14] the Bible is very clear in its teaching that God is the creator of human beings and he created human beings as biological males and biological females.

And part of our very design and part of the very structure of reality is that some who are biologically male and some who are biologically female would enter into holy matrimony.

and that sexual knowing and sexual stimulation is reserved for a biological male married to a biological female. And we believe as a freeing truth.

I am not embarrassed about this. I'll tell you more about it in a second. But because God has designed us and created us to either be biologically male or biologically female, he's also made biological males to learn to be men and biological females to learn to be women.

And there is no lasting peace for those who have a hard time fitting into the cultural stereotypes of man and woman in Canada. That's not always a bad thing.

[34 : 25] There can be very disordered ways of understanding those things. But there is no peace for any person who doesn't feel at home in their body unless that peace is moving towards being at peace, at peace and at home with the body that you have.

And the Bible is very clear that you do not take innocent human life. And we can't give up on this because, you see, God designed us for this.

It is our destiny. It is all part of us appreciating that we are creatures who are made to know our creator. And the same things which you use to support these teachings are the same basis for human rights and human integrity and human glory.

Science and the world and evolution does not teach you that human beings are equal, does not teach you that human beings have a particular glory.

Those are theological ideas and they're completely interwoven with what I just said. And you cannot give those things up about the sexuality issues and about the protection and the dignity of human life without also undermining human rights and human dignity and the glory of what it can mean to be a human being.

[35 : 50] And so we need to take a stand on these types of things. And for a church, a church to deny these things is a church, they might be way nicer than us.

they might seem to be way more gentle, but they are a church which is defying God and speaking harshly against him.

You see, brothers and sisters, you see my friends, a Christian church cannot bless what God calls sin. A Christian church cannot bless what God calls sin.

you cannot have a blessed euthanasia. We are called to humbly proclaim, you know, Spurgeon wonderfully said about the gospel, but it's true of these truths as well, that all we are is one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread and where to find life.

God is our vocation in Canada. And if you cannot bless what God calls sin, then why is Jude trying to sell the problem to us?

[37 : 15] The problem is for we as Canadians, we want to say, well, you know, just want to get along and shrug our shoulders and you know, to each their own and we don't want to be divisive and we don't want to do all of those types of things.

We don't want to be sort of like St. Albans, I mean, about a church like us that was very, very divisive. You know, you left the Anglican Church of Canada and all of those types of things in George, like, you shouldn't be talking about other people, you should be talking about yourself, you're very, very divisive.

No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. If God pronounces woe, which he does just before this, the part we read today, you cannot shrug your shoulders. If God, just as you can't bless what God calls sin, if God pronounces woe, you cannot shrug your shoulders, you cannot say it's not important, you need to act.

Just to be clear, we are not divisive. Very simple analogy. If you have a close friend and she's married to her husband and she finds out that the husband has been sleeping around with many different women, and if she divorces him, who broke the marriage?

not the woman who called for the divorce, but for the man who had the affairs. And if the Anglican Church of Canada wanted to defy God, bless what he said was sin, they divided the church, but we had to take action.

[38 : 49] But here's the thing which this opens up the door to the godly, about what it means to be godly, and just the wonderful, why why we, the gospel humbles us, doesn't make us proud, and we need to deal with these things, but here's what is so implicit in all of this, and it's going to be made clear when we go to the, how to begin to deal with the problem in the next sermon, and then the hope of dealing with the problem in the final sermon, which I'll have to do after Easter.

Becoming godly is not my accomplishment. Becoming godly is not my accomplishment, and it's not yours. From first to last, it's an accomplishment by God.

God died for the ungodly, that he might godly make us be. Sort of paraphrasing an old hymn.

God himself died for the ungodly, that you and I, that sort of he might godly make us be. The creator died for his fallen creation, that we might be reconciled to our creator, and to begin to be at home in the real creation.

creation. The images of the gospel of Jesus being a ransom for us is an image of Jesus doing something for us and transferring us from slavery to freedom in his kingdom.

[40 : 27] If you go back and you read Ephesians chapter 2, there's the image of you put your faith and trust in Jesus, and he transfers you from the kingdom of darkness, the kingdom of the ungodly, and transfers you into his kingdom of light and of godliness, he does that work.

He does that work, and only he can do it. And every single human being needs to hear this profound, liberating truth.

And we don't, we shouldn't be, the world will want us to be embarrassed and ashamed about it. brothers and sisters, this gospel is the hope of the world.

It is the hope of the world. Christ is your hope for glory. There is no other hope. His finished work is your only hope. If you hope in your own finished work, there is no hope.

In a couple of weeks, we're going to have the seven last words from the cross, and I'll say this in closing. And in John's second to last word, Jesus pronounces, it is finished.

[41 : 39] And as you probably know, that can also be translated as, it is accomplished. And I take hold of that.

I invite you to stand. Victor is going to, in a moment, lead us in intercession.

I think Victor is the one to be doing that. And as he makes his way up here, let's just bow our heads in prayer. Father, it can be hard for us to recognize what the book of Jude is talking about.

We can go to a church and a minister. He doesn't seem like he's a scoffer or a grumbler until we realize that he's scoffing at your word. He's grumbling against your word.

He is to find your word. And it can be hard to see and hard to recognize. And Father, we ask that you help us to take these warnings of Jude to heart.

[42 : 47] And help us to hunger, Father, to hear what he says next, your word says next about the shape of our dealing with those, Father, who are ungodly influencers in the church.

And the hope of dealing with them and the hope of being in your church, Father. Father, just Father, we ask that you would so ground us in who Jesus is and so draw us by who he is and that we would so stand in this and be so open to the Holy Spirit that we might bring you glory.

We might be unashamed of the gospel. We can speak winsomely and clearly and when necessary, take courageous stands. But Father, we ask that you would help these words to deeply form us.

And we ask these things in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen.