

## THE RIGHT KIND OF FAITH (Lordless Apostates)

Jude 4 (NKJV)

4 For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, **ungodly** men, who **turn the grace of our God into lewdness** and **deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Peter, in Second Peter, writes a warning of COMING apostates. Jude writes to CONTEND against those that are already ON THE SCENE. Jude exhorts us to earnestly contend for the faith, but that entails contending against apostasy.

Hardened APOSTATES, as described by Jude, are those who have been “insiders” with God’s people. They know of the gospel. They know of grace. They know the Christian culture. In this sense, they have known great spiritual privilege. They may have professed Christ, but in reality, they have stopped short of true saving faith. They are smooth in that Jude says they “***have crept in unnoticed.***” (Jude 4) This is the Biblical concept of “a creep”!

**1) Ungodly:** Jude’s KEY defining word for these people is UNGODLY! The word UNGODLY is found four times in verse 15 ALONE.

### **Jude 15 (NKJV)**

**15** to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”

Ungodly means to be godless. It means to have no reverence for God. They live with no thought for God. God does not direct their lives and they have no concern for God. We might say they are LORDLESS in orientation which gives us the same idea. They are completely devoid of any restraining reverence toward God. The emphasis in context on being UNGODLY is where it leads in terms of conduct. However, I want to point out that UNGODLY by itself simply means having NO REGARD FOR GOD! It just leaves God out of the equation. Those who are drinking, getting married, buying and selling, planting, building, and just going about life with no thought for God are ALSO UNGODLY. UNGODLINESS defines last

days' society even as it did the days of Noah and Lot (cf. Lk. 17:25-30). The UNGODLY serve only themselves (Jude 12).

2) **Turn the grace of our God into lewdness:** Hardened apostates use GRACE as a license for sin. Lewdness refers to unbridled lust, to unrestrained immorality. Apostates tend to grossly indulge the flesh contrary to the bounds of Scripture. They engage in flagrant sexual deviancy contrary to what God ordained in the context of heterosexual marriage. In effect, these apostates claimed that GRACE gave them an open license to practice immorality within the context of the church family.

3) **Deny the only Master and Lord of us, Jesus Christ:** This is the more literal rendering of the end of Jude 4 as seen in the NASB.

#### **Jude 4 (NASB)**

4 ...deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

To deny is to reject, repudiate, or disown. It is in the present tense indicating this is an ongoing perpetual pattern of life. In short, these people have a problem with THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST. They flat-out reject His Lordship and that is why they live this way. In effect, these apostates are proponents of a LORDLESS GOSPEL. Oh, they supposedly hold to GRACE, but at the same time repudiate Christ's LORDSHIP (cf. 2 Pet. 2:1). The word "Master" is the Greek word *despotes*. It denotes complete authority, absolute domination, or supreme sovereignty. Apostates refuse to recognize Jesus as MASTER. They refuse to recognize Him as absolute Lord! This is in contrast to Jude (and all true believers) who introduces himself as a SLAVE of Jesus Christ (Jude 1).

**Application:** Immorality is really a Lordship issue. Apostates move in the circles of God's people, but they reject Jesus as Lord and Savior as evidenced in their lewd conduct. Truly receiving the grace of God involves receiving Christ for WHO He is as Lord and Savior (cf. 2 Cor. 6:1-2). Grace is a LIFE-CHANGING reality (cf. Titus 2:11-12). For Jude, GRACE was not in conflict with the LORDSHIP of Jesus Christ.

In reality, GRACE truly received (2 Cor. 6:1) results in holy living in keeping with recognition of the LORDSHIP of Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 1 Jn. 2:3-4).

The great issue as presented by Jude is all about who is a person's MASTER. Apostates reject Jesus as their Master while true believers believe on Jesus as Lord (Master) and Savior!