

**“Our Greatest Influence”**  
**Jude 12-13**

**Introduction:**

1. Lets Head Back In Our Bibles To The Book Of Jude!
  - Where Jude Has Been Describing For Us In Detail:
    - What False Teachers & False Members In The Church Look Like!
      - To Warn Us Of Their Existence & Of Their Potential Impact On True Christians!
  - Last Week - We Saw What Their Paths Are Like:
    - In Verse 11 - “They Have Gone In The Way Of Cain, And Ran Greedily After The Error Of Balaam For Reward, And Perished In The Gainsaying Of Core / Korah!”
      - And Each Of Those Paths Will Lead To The Same Place:
        - The Place Of “Woe!”
    - What Path / Whose Path Have We Been Following:
      - In Our Lives This Week?
  - This Morning - We Will Look At What Their Influence Is Like:
    - In Verse 12-13!
      - **IE:** Young People – Those Who Are In Their Teenage Years Especially – Often Experience The Influence Of “Peer Pressure!” Unfortunately, This Kind Of Influence Never Does Lose Its Power Completely! But Sometimes It Is Hard For A Young Person To Do What Is Right When Everyone Else Is Doing What Is Wrong – And Trying To Get Them To Do The Same! Influence Is A Powerful Thing! And We Need To Be Careful About What We Let Influence Our Lives As Christians & As A Church!
2. What Kind Of Influence:
  - Can False Teachers & False Members Have Within The Church:
    - And Upon Christians?
      - A Great Influence! This Kind Of Influence:
        - Jude 12-13 - “These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; / Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever!”
          - Jude Uses 5 Powerful Illustrations To Warn Us About The Kind Of Influence:
            - False Teachers & False Members Can Have Within Our Churches!
              - And We Need To Be Careful & Cautious About Who & What We Let Influence Our Christian Lives!
      - Who / What Is The Greatest Influence In Your Life?
        - Make Sure It Is Not Who / What We Find In These Verses:

\* The First Illustration About These False Members Is This:

1. ***They Are Spots!***
  - Verse 12 - “These Are Spots In Your Feasts Of Charity, When They Feast With You, Feeding Themselves Without Fear!”
    - **IE:** Have You Ever Been Influenced By A Spot Or A Stain On Your Clothes? I’m Pretty Sure We All Have! When You Put On One Of Your Favorite Shirts, Only To Discover A Big Spot That You Cannot Hide Or Tuck Away! That Spot Influences You To Change Your Shirt! Usually!
      - False Teachers & False Members Within The Church Can Be Described As “Spots!”
        - Even As Peter Describes Them In 2 Peter 2:13 - “Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you!”
    - However, The Word Used Here For “Spots” Can Also Be Translated “Rocks”:
      - Which Can Also Be Very Influential – Especially To Boats & Ships!
        - **IE:** If You’ve Been Along The Coasts Of Michigan, You Will Find Many Lighthouses! And The Further You Go North, You Will Find That Those Lighthouses Are Used Not Just To Help Boats Find The Harbor, But To Warn Their Captains Of Dangerous Rocks & Reefs! Because If A Boat Meets Up With A Rock, Only One Of Them Can Change Course!
      - Sometimes These Rocks Are Hidden Under The Water!
        - Other Times These Rocks Are Right Along The Surface!
          - But Either Way - They Are Dangerous!

- And The Same Thing Is True When It Comes To:
  - False Teachers & False Members Within The Church!
    - They Are Spots! They Are Rocks! And They Can Cause A Great Shipwreck! So, We Need To Spot These Rocks In Time!
    - And Jude Explains How!
- Look Out For Their Indulgence!
  - “These Are Spots In Your Feasts Of Charity, When They Feast With You, Feeding Themselves!”
    - In Some Of The Earliest Churches, They Would Have Fellowship Meals Together:
      - Like We Do!
      - And They Were Called “Love Feasts” Or “Feasts Of Charity!”
    - However - These Meals Were Often Used:
      - For A More Spiritual Purpose Than Just Getting Together To Eat After A Church Service!
      - They Were Used To Help The Poor Within Their Church!
      - They Were Used To Foster Greater Unity And Fellowship And Love!
      - And They Would Often End With The Lord’s Supper!
  - The Corinthian Church Also Had A Similar Tradition, Which Revealed Similar Problems, Which The Apostle Paul Had To Address In:
    - 1 Corinthians 11:20-21 - “When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord’s supper. / For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. / What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not!”
  - The Problem In Both Churches:
    - Is That Some Of The People Attending These Meals Came Just For The Food:
      - And Not For The Fellowship With Christians Around The Lord’s Table!
  - Instead - They Came To Feed Their Flesh!
    - And Instead Of Using This “Feast Of Charity” To Serve & Encourage Others:
      - They Gorged Themselves Selfishly!
      - And In Doing So, They Were Influencing Others In The Church!
    - Eventually - Churches Separated Their Fellowship Meals From Their Services & From The Lord’s Supper:
      - In Order To Avoid These Kinds Of Pitfalls!
      - But Selfish Indulgence Is Still A Sign Of False Teachers & Members!
  - And We Must Be Alert To Those Who:
    - Are Always Attending Church Functions Just For Themselves – And Not For The Lord & For Others!
      - But We Need To Also:
- Look Out For Their Irreverence!
  - Because, Just Like Those At The “Love Feasts”:
    - They Are “Feeding Themselves Without Fear!”
      - They Approach The Lord’s Table & Other Times Of Worship:
        - Without The Proper Fear & Reverence Of God!
    - They Do Not “Examine” Themselves:
      - Nor Do They Let The Lord Examine Them:
        - Through His Word & Through His Holy Spirit!
  - We Need To Look Out For These:
    - “Spots” & “Rocks” In Our Churches:
      - And In Our Services!
        - Lest We Are Influenced To Become The Same!
    - And Instead - We Must Focus On Having True Fellowship!
      - As John Describes In 1 John 1:3 - “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ!” - Our Fellowship Must Be First & Foremost:
        - With The Lord Jesus Christ:
          - Who Is The One Who Invited Us To His “Feast Of Charity” To Begin With!
        - And Then With One Another:
          - With True, Selfless, Serving Love!

\* But Jude Describes These False Teachers Even Further:

2. ***They Are Clouds!***

- Verse 12 - But They Are - "Clouds Without Water, Carried About Of Winds!"
  - **IE:** We Have Not Had This Problem For Several Years, Because The Clouds We Have Are Full Of Water! But Remember Those Times Of Drought? When Everything Is Brown & Dry & Dusty? And A Cloud Flies Overhead - And With It The Hope Of Just A Little Bit Of Rain! But It Continues On Its Pathway In The Sky With No Rain & No Relief! This Is The Second Description / Illustration Jude Gives Of These False Teachers! And We Need To:
- Look Out For Their Deception!
  - They Are "Clouds Without Water!"
    - They Make Great Promises Of Things That Will Refresh Us & Nourish Us!
      - Yet, What They Bring Is More Spiritual Drought Into Our Lives!
    - One Writer Calls These Men:
      - "Men Of Promise But No Performance!"
  - Paul Warned The Ephesian Church Of These Kind Of People:
    - In Ephesians 4:14 - "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive!"
      - Are You Able To Discern Deception? How Can We? Be Full Of The Word Of God!
        - But We Also Need To:
- Look Out For Their Dryness!
  - Again - They Are "Clouds Without Water!"
    - Water Is Used To Refresh & Nourish!
      - And Around Here, We Have Had Plenty Of It!
  - But How Many Preachers & Teachers Of Our Day:
    - Bring Nothing That Will Truly Refresh & Nourish:
      - The Souls Of Those Who Come To Them!
  - This Does Not Mean:
    - That They Are Not Interesting!
      - No - Because They Are Usually Very Interesting & Entertaining!
  - But This Is Speaking Of The:
    - "Dryness" Of Their Content!
      - It Is Not Filled With The Soul-Refreshing, Thirst-Quenching Word Of God!
        - Which Is What The Lord Jesus Uses To Nourish His Church!
      - Ephesians 5:25-27 - "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; / That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, / That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish!"
        - Our Messages Need To Be Full Of The Word Of God! Written! And Living! Full Of The Lord Jesus Christ! But We Also Need To:
- Look Out For Their Direction!
  - They Are "Clouds Without Water, Carried About Of Winds!"
    - That Is, They Go With The Current, Popular Flow!
      - That Which Gives Them The Easiest Path, As Well As The One That Enriches Them The Most!
  - And Unfortunately, There Are Many Who Are Willing To Follow!
    - Again - Paul Exhorts Us - Ephesians 4:14 - "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive!"
- We Need To Look Out For These:
  - "Clouds Without Water" In Our Churches:
    - And In Our Services!
      - Lest We Are Influenced By Their Doctrine & Their Direction!
  - And Instead - We Must Focus On Having A True Foundation!
    - Remember That We Are: "Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone!" (Ephesians 2:20)

\* Another Way Jude Describes These False Teachers Is This:

### 3. *They Are Trees!*

- But What Kind Of Trees Are They? Verse 12 - They Are “Trees Whose Fruit Withereth, Without Fruit, Twice Dead, Plucked Up By the Roots!”
  - **IE:** Driving On 200, There Is An Apple Tree Along The Road - Very Tempting To Stop And Pick One Of Those Apples! May Be A Crab-Apple - I Don't Know - But They Look Really Good! When You Have A Fruit Tree, You Expect It To Grow Delicious Fruit! And You Look Forward To It! And Isn't This What We Want In Our Christian Lives & In Our Churches? Growth & Fruit! Spiritual Growth & Spiritual Fruit! The Fruit Of The Spirit Is Found In Galatians 5:22-23 - “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law!”
  - But When You See A False Teacher Or A False Member Within The Church, This Is Not The Kind Of Tree You Will Find! What Kind Of Trees Are They?
- Leafless Trees!
  - “Trees Whose Fruit Withereth!”
    - Like A Tree In The Fall, When The Colored Leaves Have Already Fallen:
      - **IE:** Even Celebrated - Festival Of The Turning Leaves / Dropping Leaves - Thorntown!
      - And Now All You See Is The Brown, Barren Branches!
    - Yet These Trees:
      - Never Had The Buds / Blossoms / Leaves / Fruit To Begin With! Something Is Seriously Wrong With These Trees!
  - Their Character Is The Very Opposite Of What We Find In:
    - Psalm 1:1-4 - “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. / But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. / And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. / The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away!” They Are:
- Fruitless Trees!
  - “Without Fruit!”
    - The Tree Did Not Produce What It Was Intended To Produce!
  - What Do You Do With A Tree Like This?
    - You Cut It Down & Use It For Fire-Wood!
  - When It Comes To Leaders & Teachers In The Church:
    - We Need To Look For The Right Kind:
      - Of Spiritual Fruit In Their Lives!
        - To Know Whether Or Not It Is Alive & Is Using Its Life To Influence Others For Christ!
  - But The Reason These Are Fruitless Trees:
    - Is Because They Are:
- Lifeless Trees!
  - “Twice Dead!”
    - Perhaps Someone Left The Tree Standing For Another Year - Just To Make Sure There Was No Life Left In It!
      - And Sure Enough - The Reason There Is No Fruit, Is Because There Was & Is No Life!
  - They Are Dead – Dead!
    - Could Even Refer To Their:
      - Current State - Of Spiritual Death!
      - And Their Future State - Of Eternal Death!
  - Whatever The Case:
    - A Tree That Is Dead Will Be:
      - Fruitless & Leafless!
        - And Eventually Will Become:
- Rootless Trees!
  - “Plucked Up By The Roots!”
    - God Himself Will Eventually Remove These Dead Trees From His Verdant Forest!
      - And They Will Forever Lose Any Influence They Ever Had!
- We Need To Look Out For These:
  - “Withered Trees” In Our Churches:

- And In Our Services!
  - Lest We Are Influenced By Their Definition Of Fruit!
  - Remember - Matthew 7:20 - "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them!"
- And Instead - We Must Ourselves Be Fruitful - By Clinging To The Lord Jesus - John 15:4-5 - "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. / I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing!"

\* The Fourth Way Jude Describes These False Teachers Is This:

#### 4. ***They Are Waves!***

- Verse 13 - "Raging Waves Of The Sea, Foaming Out Their Own Shame!"
  - **IE:** Many People, When They Go On Vacation, Want To Go To The Sea! I Enjoy That Too! I Love To Hear The Sound Of The Waves Crashing Onto The Seashore! I Love The Salty Smell! And Sometimes, I Like To Wade In The Cool, Frothy Water! But, When A Storm Comes, The Enjoyment Of The Seashore Can Quickly Go Away! And The Sounds & The Surges Of The Waves Become Terrifying Instead Of Peaceful!
    - We Need To Be Alert To Who These False Teachers & False Members Are! And:
- Listen To Their Sounds:
  - They Are "Raging Waves Of The Sea!"
    - And Their Words Will Betray Them!
  - The Content Of Their Sounds:
    - Will Be Contrary To The Sound Doctrine Of Jesus Christ & The Clear Teaching Of His Word!
  - The Character Of Their Sounds:
    - Will Be Sounds Of Rage & Anger!
  - Instead - Listen To How Our Words Ought To Be:
    - Ephesians 4:29 - "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers!"
    - Colossians 4:6 - "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man!"
- Learn From Their Shame:
  - "Foaming Out Their Own Shame!"
    - It Is Like The Froth & Foam Of The Ocean!
      - It Will Eventually Reveal Itself!
  - Look At What Comes Along With Them:
    - Like The Debris That Is Washed Up Along The Shore!
      - **IE:** New Jersey Shore After A Storm!
- We Need To Look Out For These:
  - "Raging Waves" In Our Churches:
    - Lest We Are Influenced By Their Shameless Conduct!
  - These False Teachers Claim To Be Wise:
    - And Often Demand Us To Follow Their Teaching!
      - But Instead, We Must Remember The Words Of James:
  - James 3:13-18 - "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. / But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. / This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. / For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. / But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. / And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace!"
    - And This Calm, Peaceful Heart Can Only Come From A Growing Relationship With Christ!
      - Do Not Be Influenced By The "Raging Waves" Of False Teachers, No Matter How Loud Their Voices Get!

\* The Fifth & Final Way Jude Describes The Nature Of These False Teachers Is This:

#### 5. ***They Are Stars!***

- Verse 13 - "Wandering Stars, To Whom Is Reserved The Blackness Of Darkness Forever!"
  - **IE:** I Love To Look Into A Clear Night Sky And Look At The Stars, And Even Try To Identify Some Planets! Before Telescopes Were Invented, Planets Were Known As "Wandering Stars" - Because They

- Were Not Apparently Fixed In Their Positions In The Sky, Like The Stars Were! And Although Planets Do Have A Normal Course Through The Sky, There Are Other Objects That Can Be So Influenced By The Gravity Of A Planet & Star, That It Crashes Into It & Is Destroyed! Jude Describes These False Teachers As “Wandering Stars” That Seem To Have No Fixed Course In Their Teaching Or In Their Lives!  
 - And We Need To Be Alert To Their Nature As Well!
- Look Out For Their Confusion:
    - For They Are “Wandering Stars!”
    - No Fixed Position!
    - And No Apparent, Biblical Direction!
  - This Is Why Jude Tells Us:
    - To “Earnestly Contend For The Faith Which Was Once Delivered Unto The Saints!”
    - There Are Fixed Truths That Must Never Be Forgotten & Never Be Compromised!
  - Colossians 2:6-8 - “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: / Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. / Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ!”
  - Look At Their Condemnation:
    - “To Whom Is Reserved The Blackness Of Darkness Forever!”
    - **IE:** Just Like The Planet Pluto - New Horizons - Exploration - Yet It Is Still Flying Through The Darkness Of Space! And Will Continue To Until God Destroys It All, And Creates New Heavens & A New Earth!
    - God Will Judge These False Teachers:
      - For All The Confusion They Have Brought Into His Church!
  - We Need To Look Out For These:
    - “Wandering Stars” In Our Churches!
    - Lest We Are Influenced By Their Confusion!

### **Conclusion:**

1. It Is Easy To Be Influenced By False Teachers & By False Teaching!
  - But Jude Describes Their True Nature:
    - With These 5 Illustrations!
    - And Whether We Watch Them Or Listen To Them Or Read Them:
  - We Must Be Wary Of Them!
    - Because They Are:
      - Spots & Hidden Rocks!
      - Waterless Clouds!
      - Fruitless Trees!
      - Raging Waves!
      - Wandering Stars!
2. Who Is Your Greatest Influence?
  - Let It Be The Lord Jesus Christ:
    - And His Precious Word!
  - For The Lord Is:
    - A Great Rock
      - Upon Whom You Can Build A Firm Foundation!
    - A Refreshing Cloud:
      - Full Of Living Water!
    - The True & Fruitful Vine:
      - That Will Produce His Fruit In Those Who Abide In Him!
      - Isaiah 44:3-4 - “For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: / And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses!”
    - A Calm & Peaceful Sea:
      - Who Will Give Rest To Those Who Come To Him When They Labor & Are Heavy Laden!
    - The Fixed Sun Of Righteousness:
      - “With Healing In His Wings!”
      - Around Whom Our Lives Can & Must Revolve!