

Earnestly Contend for the Faith A Description of False Teachers

Jude 12-16

1. **Three Threes of the Dangers of Rebelling Against God** (vs.5-11)¹

- A. Three Cases of Apostates being Judged (vs. 5-7)
Israel, Angels, and Gentiles.
- B. Three Characteristics of the Nature of False Teachers (vs.8-10)
Immorality, Insubordination, Irreverence.
- C. Three Examples of False Teachers (v.11)
Cain, Balaam, Korah.

2. **One Description and Four Illustrations of the False Teachers** (vs.12-13)

- A. Hidden Reefs in your Love Feasts (v.12)
These submerged rocks are particularly dangerous because they are not able to be clearly seen on the surface of the water. Similarly, the false teachers blend into the crowd of the faithful but are the instruments of disaster for unwary members of the community (cf. 1 Tim. 1:19).
- B. Clouds without Water (v.12)
In an arid climate, it is hard to understate the crushing nature of clouds that promise needed rain but pass by without any rain (cf. Prov. 25:14; 2 Pet. 2:17). These false teachers make amazing promises, but are unable to deliver them and leave their followers utterly desolate.
- C. Autumn Trees Without Fruit (v.12)
Similar to the previous example, this points to a long awaited harvest that never comes. The final verdict, though too late, is that the tree has been dead all along, and in fact it has been uprooted so that there was absolutely no possibility of a harvest of fruit.
- D. Wild Waves of the Sea (v.13)
The sea waves are unpredictable and dangerous to the experienced mariner, but deadly to others (cf. Isa. 57:20). The product of their activity is shame which is readily apparent for all to see.
- E. Wandering Stars (v.13)
These teachers are like shooting stars in that they are not conformed to the natural and normal course of the heavens, but they are flashy and easily able to grab the attention of the unwary member of the community (cf. Eph. 4:14).

3. **A Prophecy of Judgment** (vs.14-15)

Though there is no canonical “book of Enoch”, Enoch was a true prophet and his prophecy is recorded here. Any biblical writers reference to a non-biblical source does not elevate that source to an equal standing with the rest of the Scriptures (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

4. **Activities of False Teachers** (v.16)

- A. Grumblers
The only time this word is used in the Scriptures, but it is a common activity of those who sow discord among God’s people (Ex. 15:24; Num. 14:2; 16:11; John 6:41).
- B. Finding Fault
This should be understood not merely as fault-finding, but an attitude of malcontent directed toward the Lord. They are perpetually able to find problems with the way God has ordained things.
- C. Driven by Lust
The driving force of these teachers’ activities is not the glory of God and the proclamation of the gospel (cf. v.3), but it is the satisfying of their insatiable lusts (cf. 2 Pet. 2:13b-14).
- D. Distinctive Speech
The speech of these false teachers is a clever mix of arrogance and flattery in order to achieve their desired ends (cf. 2 Pet. 2:18).

¹ Point 1 is only mildly adapted from John MacArthur’s outline of these verses.