



Opposites.

People who have not been identified by name are considered anonymous. For almost every word in the English language there seems to be a way of expressing an opposite idea, these words or ideas are usually called antonyms. So, what is the antonym or opposite of anonymous? “Onymous”, this uncommonly used word means “bearing a name”. Seems obvious once you see them together yet not many people make the connection.

Jude boldly lays out for us a definition for those he describes as “ungodly”. They are people “who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.” (Jude 4) The Greek word “asebēs” translated as ungodly in verse four describes someone who is impious (not showing respect or reverence, especially in context here to God), wicked, or ungodly. “Asebēs” underlines the idea of living without regard for religious belief or practice in one’s life.

Remembering that Jude is writing this letter to the church, to his dear friends in Christ, we should take these words as a sort of warning. For Jude to use such powerful words there must have been visible signs of trouble within the church. He does not name names, but these people are not anonymous. As he explains, “they have slipped in among you”, they have inserted themselves into the life of the church, into the lives of the people who share in the gift of Christ, salvation.

These onymous people in this verse do bear a name and it is “ungodly”. They are individuals whose hearts, minds and motives work against the will of the Lord, against the work of the Holy Spirit to further grow the kingdom of God.

If we know from scripture what it means to be ungodly, we can then determine by opposite expressions what it means to be godly. Scripture is full instruction on how to live a life following God will, if we look at it in contrast to what Jude says in his letter, we have a sort of measure to compare.

The ungodly pervert the grace of God in this case by “accepting” this gift of grace with grave misunderstanding. In their own minds, no matter how they live, the fulness of grace gives them even greater opportunity to participate in immoral activity. Jude describes their lives in verse 12. “These people are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm – shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown about by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and are unrooted – twice dead. They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever.”

In contrast to or opposite to this life, we as redeemed sons and daughters of God, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ on the cross become loving participants in the family of God. We have reserved for us a place in heaven with our Heavenly Father. We are stars that shine brightly to others so they may see the father of lights through us. Like the waves of the ocean, we share in the rhythms of life that bring praise, honor, and glory to God. Our attitudes and actions bear the fruits of the spirit that are firmly rooted and grounded in the love of our Father.

We may wish to be anonymous in life, but as followers of Jesus we are all onymous. Our lives bear his name. It is my prayer that you and I live our lives people see the complete opposite of what it means to be ungodly.