

## Do Not Be a Wanderer

*These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water . . . wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.*  
-- Jude 1:12–13



*And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.* --  
Hebrews 10:24–25 ESV

Coals stay hotter and brighter when clustered together. But separate one from the group, and it quickly grows cold and faint. So it is with Christians. The apostle Peter suggests that God designed us to operate

together as living stones collected to form a spiritual temple (1 Peter 2:5). Similarly, the apostle Paul encourages us to act like the human body: many individual parts, each with their own function, working together to accomplish the dictates and desires of the Head, who is Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12–31). We obviously can't do this alone. We weren't meant to.

Just as obvious, the patterns we call constellations would make no recognizable pattern at all if the stars in them moved about from night to night. The stars of the constellations are not members of a physical cluster, but rather they form an optical grouping along our line of sight—some relatively nearby and others farther away. But they all lie at such immense distances that their motions can be discerned only over hundreds of years. Very slowly and barely noticeable, they change their constellations' shapes. The only “stars” that wander are the planets. In fact, the word *planet* means “wanderer.” Because they are tens of thousands of times closer than the nearest stars, their motions, though slow at times, are generally noticeable against the background stars, even from night to night. The planets, of course, are very different from stars, though they resemble them to the naked eye. Planets shine by reflected light, not light produced within.

Jude warns us against spiritual wanderers—those who drift into church and may look like others but have no real spiritual life inside. They are recognizably selfish. But may it not be so with us! Collected together with others, each on individual paths, may we form a glorious grouping whose selfless love provokes the notice and interest of everyone around us.

Study Much

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