



Jude

An OCF Bible Study

Jude

Who is Jude? One of the half-brothers of Jesus: *Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? (Mark 6:3).* Jude is a nickname for Judas—not Judas Iscariot.

How does Jude refer to himself in regard to Jesus (v. 1)? As a servant of Jesus Christ. **How could he have referred to himself?** As a brother of Jesus. **What does that say about Jude and his perspective on his relationship with Jesus?** He saw it as more important to have Jesus as his master instead of his brother. To Jude, the blood of the cross that saved him was more important than the family blood in his veins that related him to Jesus.

How did Jude describe his readers (v. 1)?

1. Called—a person is a Christian because God has called him/her.
2. Beloved—they were loved by God the Father.
3. Kept—for Jesus Christ, our guardian and our protector.

What was Jude's original intent in writing this letter (v. 3)? He wanted to write about their salvation. **But his focus switched. What then became Jude's motivation for writing this letter?** Warning, exhortation, fervent appeal. Believers were under attack.

What is the theme of the letter of Jude? Defending the faith. Jude warns believers about false teachers and their heresy. The signature verse of Jude is verse 3, *contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.*

What does he mean by "the faith?" It is more than our individual, personal salvation faith. It is the body of Christian doctrine found in the Scriptures. It is all that we believe about God, the Bible, sin, Jesus Christ, etc.

What does it mean to "contend for the faith?" We contend for the faith when we give an unflinching witness, are engaged with God's work, are not ashamed of the gospel, share our faith, teach Sunday School, live uncompromising Christian lives, speak out against ungodly and unbiblical gospels, etc. The ancient Greek word for "contend" speaks of hard and diligent work. We must contend without being contentious (2 Timothy 2:24).

...the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. What are the implications of the word once? The faith doesn't need to be delivered again. There is no volume 2, no sequel, no new revelation. **What are the implications of the phrase for all?** *For all* means that this faith is available for everybody. It is not offered to a select group.

What are the implications of the phrase delivered to the saints? Saints is a New Testament word for believers. The faith is given to believers—not to scholars or politicians.

Jude warns that they were under attack from godless men. What was their strategy (v. 4)? "Certain people" had secretly crept into the church unnoticed. They didn't wear a "Danger: False Teacher" name tag. They were perverting the grace of God by claiming that salvation by grace gave them license to sin since their sins would no longer be held against them, and in doing so, denying Christ (Romans 6:1-2).

Who might be today's version of "certain people"? Liberal ministers/seminary professors/leaders/higher education (thinkers) in the church who proclaim a different Christ—one who is stripped of His glory, majesty, dominion authority and deity (Galatians 1:8-9).

What three examples of failure did Jude use to warn these Jewish Christians of the consequences of straying from the truths of God (vv. 5-7).

1. Unbelieving Israelites who died wandering in the wilderness
2. Angels who rebelled/were disobedient
3. Sodom and Gomorrah—punished for their immorality and sexual perversion

What behaviors characterized the false teachers (v. 8)?

How are false teachers compared to animals (v. 10)? Critical, unreasoning; don't use their brains logically; conduct is based on instinct—if it feels good, do it.

What are the three Old Testament examples Jude used to warn his readers (v. 11)?

Which five illustrations from nature does Jude use to emphasize the seriousness of the false teachers' error (vv. 12-13)?

What did Enoch prophecy about these false teachers? Certain judgment

How does Jude describe these "certain men" (v. 16)? Grumblers and fault finders. They follow their own evil desires. They boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage.

Jude initially warned his readers about the opposition they faced. Now he encourages them to endure in spite of the looming conflict. What is the practical response of the people to be in vv. 17-23?

1. *Building yourselves up in your most holy faith* (v. 20). **What does that mean?** It means to keep growing spiritually. We are responsible for our own spiritual growth (Philippians 2:12). We cannot wait for spiritual growth to just happen or expect others to make us grow. **What are some ways we can do this?**
2. *Praying in the Holy Spirit* (v. 20). This means praying in the power and strength of the Holy Spirit—guided by Him and aligned with the will of God as revealed Scripture (Romans 8:26-27).
3. *Keep yourselves in the love of God* (v. 21). **How do we keep ourselves in the love of God (John 15:9-10)?** Obedience is key: living lives of holiness and godliness. Jude does not mean that we should keep ourselves in such a way as to make us more lovable to God. We are not lovable based on our performance.
4. *Reach out to others* (v. 22) Come alongside those doubters who were struggling to discern truth from error as a result of the influence of the false teachers.
5. *Have mercy on those who doubt* (v. 23) This means rescuing those believers who have already fallen under God's discipline as a result of following false teachers before God's judgment falls. We should have pity on them rather than condemning them without compassion.

What does Jude's doxology reveal about our God (vv. 24-25)?

Are his warnings relevant to us today? It is essential that we do not neglect Jude's message. Jude writes of a present, alarming threat. The gospel is under attack by its avowed enemies, but also by many claiming to be friends of the gospel. There is a war going on—a battle for our minds and hearts (Ephesians 6:12). It's largely invisible but nevertheless very real. And our opponent is formidable (1 Peter 5:8).

Jude is a book full of warning, but it closes with supreme confidence in God. Dangerous times should make us trust in a mighty God.

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