

“Book of Jude – Contend for the Faith!”

Dr. Geoffrey Plummer
Calvary Baptist Church

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Scripture

Jude 1-4

“Jude, a **servant** of Jesus Christ and **brother** of James, to those who are **called, beloved** in God the Father and **kept** for Jesus Christ:

May **mercy, peace, and love** be multiplied to you.

Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it **necessary** to write appealing to you to **contend for the faith** that was **once for all delivered to the saints**.

For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.”

Who is Jude?

Jude (Greek is Judas), the half-brother of the Lord Jesus Christ

Catholics hold that Mary was a perpetual virgin and therefore translate “brother” as “cousin”

Jude 1

“Jude, a **servant** of Jesus Christ and **brother** of James”

He calls himself a servant -> NASB uses the word “bond-servant” which means “a dedicated slave”

Jude (Greek is Judas) identifies himself as a servant or more specifically a “bond-servant” of Jesus Christ. This identification is someone who willingly identifies himself as a slave to serve a master.

Commonly, this meant that **he was a free man** who gave himself to his master for a life of service with the understanding that he would be a slave yet taken care of by the master as one of his own household.

Isn't Jude the Lord's brother?

Mark 6:3

“Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not His sisters here with us?”

We are unclear if Mary and His brothers are in the synagogue that day, but Mark says His sisters are there.

This would make Jesus the eldest of, **at least, 7 children** from Mary.

Matthew's account adds a little more context:

Matthew 13:53-58

"When Jesus had finished these parables, He departed from there. He came to His hometown and began teaching them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "**Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?**"

55"**Is not this the carpenter's son?** Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? "And His sisters, are they not all with us? **Where then did this man get all these things?"**

57**And they took offense at Him.** But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household." And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief."

They took offense to Jesus

Servant and Brother

Jude says he is the brother of James.

Josephus also refers to James as "brother of Jesus, who was called Christ".

By the time Jude writes his book in ~A.D. 68, James has already been martyred via stoning by the decision of the Sadducean Jewish priest Ananus ben Ananus in A.D. 62 so that he was one of the earliest Christian martyrs.

The Greek word for brother is Adelphos, the back half of the compound title for the city of Philadelphia in Revelation 3, the city of brotherly love.

Adelphos actually means "coming from the same womb".

His brothers did not believe in Him!

John 7:1-5

"After these things Jesus was walking in Galilee, for He was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him. Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Booths, was near. Therefore, **His brothers said to Him, "Leave here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may see Your works which You are doing. "For no one does anything in secret when he himself seeks to be known publicly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world." For not even His brothers were believing in Him."**

Go to the big city and show yourself!

They were mocking Him, thinking Himself to be looking for publicity as the new Superstar of the planet

Yet, by the time that Jude writes his letter, he notes that **he is a bond-servant of Jesus**

Salvation had come to Jude's life and he went from unbelief to belief to dedicated servant of the Lord.

Called, Beloved, and Kept

Jude 1 (continued)

“to those who are **called, beloved** in God the Father and **kept** for Jesus Christ.”

Called: Usually, this is a **general call** to a large group of people, not a specific, individual call. This is not the chosen few but the large many.

Matthew 22:14 "For many are called, but few are chosen."

Many are *kletos*, few are *elektos*.

Beloved: Is *Agapao*, which means the preferring love.

The believer is someone preferred by God signifying that **unconditional, unending love of God is resident on them** and within them through the gift of the Holy Spirit. They are the ones set apart.

And yet, Jesus said:

Matthew 5:44

“But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you so that you may be sons of your Father who is in Heaven.”

Believers are **Beloved in God the Father** noting that the orchestration of their lives is managed by God.

God has shown them covenant love, setting them apart as a gift for Jesus.

John 6:37 “All that the Father gives Me **will come to Me**, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.”

The word “Beloved” here is in the perfect tense in Greek, which means that this love designation began at a point in history with continuing effect to today.

Kept: Is *Tereo* meaning “to watch over” or “to observe” or to “keep intact”.

The general idea is preservation or, in this case, preserved FOR Jesus’s coming kingdom.

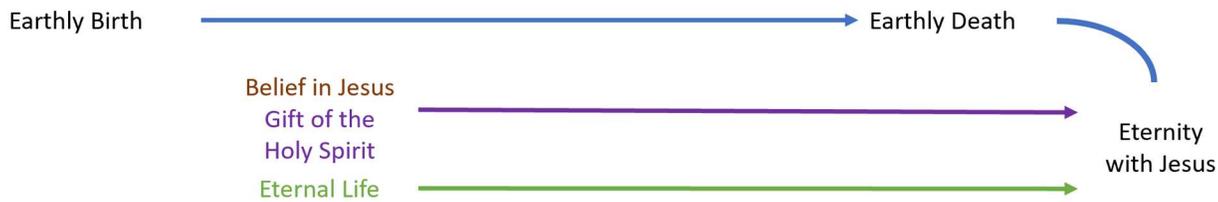
God is preserving and keeping the believer secure in Christ until that day when the Lord returns.

The best translation of this phrase is that believers are kept secure BY Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 2:19 “The Lord knows who are His!”

The Called and the Beloved and the Beloved are the Kept with the Holy Spirit being the active Trinitarian in the life of the believer to set apart and keep secure.

It is important to note that believers do not receive eternal life at some future moment in time. It's not something that is waiting for us later. It is with us NOW.



We have eternal life here and now on Earth!

John 10:27-28 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand."

John 17:3 "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."

Mercy, Peace, and Love

Jude 2

"May **mercy, peace, and love** be multiplied to you."

Mercy and Peace (*Chanan* and *Shalom* in Hebrew) were common Jewish phrases of greeting.

In the Greek, Paul often used Grace (*Chara*) and Peace (*Eirene*).

It is the use of Mercy (*eleos*) that identifies Jude's audience as having a major Jewish contingent.

His use of love (*agape*) signifies that Jude has a deep care in mind for them, the highest of what God can offer.

Jude hopes that his audience is secure in their faith in Jesus

A Change of Plans

Jude 3

"Beloved, although I was **very eager to write** to you about our common salvation, I found it **necessary** to write appealing to you"

It is obvious from the text that Jude was going to **write a more general letter** to strengthen the believers' faith in Jesus and that **he was earnestly desiring to do it**.

Most likely, **extreme persecution was hitting the church in Jerusalem**

Jude wanted to encourage faithfulness.

In addition, there is something afoot with the phrase "common salvation" -> **minor difference of opinions?**

It was supposed to be a letter of encouragement, but **events occurred that changed Jude's mind.**

He found it necessary to write an appeal, instead.

The Holy Spirit impressed on Jude that the letter needed to be **more of a call to arms.**

Contend for the Faith

Jude 3 (continued)

“to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints”

What does it mean to contend for the faith?

“contend for the Faith” (epagónizomai) which is only used here in the Bible.

Epi is an intensiveness, an earnestness. Agon is a stressful contest or competition and where we get the word “agony”.

Literally, the phrase means to struggle earnestly for or against something to the point of exhaustion.

Jude was saying to **strenuously** undertake the battle.

Paul told a young Timothy the same thing in **1 Timothy 6:12** -> “Fight the good fight of faith!”

What does Jude want these believers to struggle earnestly for?

He simply says, “the faith”.

What is “The Faith” in this context?

Jude wrote that it was **“once for all delivered to the saints”**.

What would have been delivered “once for all”?

It has to be the Bible, the recorded words of God

False teachers were either:

- 1) interpreting what was written incorrectly.
- 2) adding to or taking away from the content

2 Peter 1:19-21

“We have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention **as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. But know this first of all, that **no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation**, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but **men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.**”**

There is a single interpretation of each verse in the Bible -> our challenge is finding that one interpretation

Revelation 22:18-19

“I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: **if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book**; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, **God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.**”

The Bible warns against mishandling the Word of God.

So, we should **earnestly struggle** against those who teach error and false doctrine.

If we're **Contending for the Faith**, we should:

- 1) be prepared to question what false teachers say,
- 2) to contradict what they say with the truth of Scripture,
- 3) pursue them so they will not get away with teaching error, and
- 4) support and encourage faithful pastors who teach the truth

Therefore, to be able to contend **we need to know the Bible** ourselves!

This is the essence of contending for the faith.

Enemies Among Us

Jude 4

“For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who **pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ**”

The Apostates have shown up in the church!

The alarm has gone off-> **Warning, Warning Will Robinson.**

Jude started to listen to what some of the people teaching in the church were saying and he didn't like what he heard.

It could have been a long-time teacher whose doctrine suddenly changed, or it could have been a new arrival.

“crept in unnoticed” -> would seem to show that these individuals have been around a while.

How does someone creep in unnoticed?

New false teachers showing up in the church would have been more easily recognized.

The nature of apostasy is that someone has head knowledge of the data, accepting the facts intellectually, but have no heart knowledge of actually apply it.

There is a coldness to them, teaching without true passion for application. Apostates are pretenders.

They pretend to know Jesus but do not follow what Jesus said.

“pervert the grace of our God into sensuality” -> we discussed this on our first Sunday evening service

Jude uses the phrase “pervert the grace of our God into sensuality” to describe what these apostates were doing.

“Sensuality,” in this case, or “licentiousness” means “outrageous conduct”

Something that would be “shocking to public decency.”

Jude calls them “ungodly people” which literally means impious or “without worship”.

Can you imagine someone serving in a church who is not a worshipper of God?

Jesus said, “You will know them by their fruits” (Matthew 7:16). Their lifestyle will give them away

Licentiousness and sensuality shows up when someone does not care if anyone sees their sin.

It could be patently obvious, and they could care less.

That’s what these false prophets were doing in Jude’s day.

They pursue the lusts of the flesh:

1 John 2:15-17

“Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. **For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life,** is not from the Father but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.”

Lust of the Flesh: Loving sin, rebellious, and in opposition to God’s commands for their life

Lust of the Eyes: Focusing on sensuality, sexual pleasures, beauty, what they could get for themselves
→ Eve saw the tree as a “delight to the eyes”

Boastful Pride: Haughtiness, always seeking to impress other people, arrogance

“deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ” -> we discussed this on our first Sunday evening service

The Greek word “master” is *despotes* -> “properly, an authority figure who exercises complete jurisdiction”

False teachers **pervert the Person and Work of Jesus Christ.**

How?

They talk at great length about His work as Savior but deny His Lordship

They personally deny the Lord in their own life and then lead those who follow them to do the same

They say “**you do not have to repent** because Jesus did all the work for us”

Repent literally means “to change your mind” -> you do not “control” your own life, the Lord owns us

John the Baptist, Jesus, and Peter all said “Repent”

Matthew 3:1-2

“John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, “**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**”

Matthew 4:17

“From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “**Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**”

Salvation needs to bring evidence of a changed life

Acts 2:37-38

“Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?” Peter said to them, “**Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**”

Paul talked about true belief in the Lord:

Romans 10:9

“**If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved**”

If your belief does not include Jesus being Lord of your life having authority over your life, it is a heresy -> a lie.

They teach a weak Jesus, a human only Jesus, and one with little authority or power.

“deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ”

They deny His deity and communicate that He was only in it for social change.

Master speaks to His authority and sovereignty

Lord speaks to His honor and unique distinction in our lives.

To deny Christ is to live in view of Hell alone.

Apostates do that because they are blinded by Satan and their own sin.

They teach that it's OK to willfully sin because grace covers you.

2 Peter 2:1

“...who will **secretly introduce destructive heresies**, even denying the Master who bought them”

Heresy: “belief or opinion contrary to orthodox religious especially Christian doctrine”

An opinion profoundly at odds with what is generally accepted...such as some liberal biblical teaching.

Have you listened to a sermon or bible study and thought to yourself, “that doesn’t quite sound right?”

“destructive heresies” -> “a self-designed teaching that leads to divisions and factions”

They **secretly** introduce these teachings -> “introduce by stealth”

These are slight twists to the truth -> it sounds good, but it contains hidden poison

A false teacher might say:

“See, you can do <whatever it is> because I do it -> and I’m a pastor/teacher!”

False teachers had infiltrated Corinth and were attacking Paul personally.

1 Corinthians 4:2-6

“It is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy. But to me it is a very small thing that I may be examined by you, or by any human court; in fact, I do not even examine myself. **For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord.** Therefore, do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and **then each man's praise will come to him from God.** Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, **so that in us you may learn not to exceed what is written, so that no one of you will become arrogant**”

He said his conscience is clear – the Lord is the one who examines him

Eventually, everyone will face judgment and men’s motives will be shown

But you, stick to what is written -> the Bible and biblical principles – not what you hear from false teachers!

We need to Fight the Good Fight of Faith!

Prayer

Benediction