

## **Jude: Lesson #94 – Contend For the Faith**

### **Notes for Parents to Study With Their Children**

### **For Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Read Jude 1-21 (a simplified explanation of the text will be supplied at the end of these notes.)

**Memory Verse:** Jude 21 “Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.”

#### **Jude Writes a Letter**

- The man writing this letter is named Jude. That was a common Jewish name, and is the same name in Hebrew as Judas. There are several men named Judas in the New Testament.
  - Of course there was Judas Iscariot that betrayed Jesus, but he killed himself, so it’s obviously not him.
  - There was another apostle named Judas (Lk. 6:16; Acts 1:13). But the Jude that wrote this letter does not call himself an apostle. Instead he talks about how they all should follow the apostles (Jude 17)
  - One of Jesus’ brothers was named Jude (Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3). Jesus also had a brother named James who had been very important in the church (Gal. 1:19). Since Jude calls himself the “brother of James” (v. 1), it is likely that this is Jude writing the letter.
- We know that Jude was writing to Christians, but we don’t know where they lived. Jude doesn’t mention a specific place. Maybe this letter was sent out to many different places.

#### **Contend For the Faith**

- Sometimes the New Testament talks about “the faith”. We all know that “faith” is believing and trusting what God says, but what is “the faith”?
- “The faith” is just a way of describing all of what God has revealed for us to be saved. It would be the whole story of Jesus and the truth that He is the Son of God, and that He died, was buried, resurrected and ascended to reign from heaven. “The faith” would also include what we have to do to be saved: believe in Jesus as God’s Son, repent, confess Jesus, and be baptized for the remission of sins. “The faith” would also be about what God said we must do to live faithfully for Him.
- Several years before Jude wrote, Paul had predicted that “some will depart from the faith” ( I Tim. 4:1). Paul was saying that some people would no longer stay with what God had told them to do. They would claim to be religious, maybe even claim to be Christians, but wouldn’t obey what the apostles had taught them.
- Peter had also written “there will be false teachers among you” (II Pet. 2:1) and that “scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts” (II Pet. 3:3). Jude quotes what these apostles had said. “But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.” (Jude 17-18)

- Jude is encouraging the Christians of His time to contend or fight for the faith. They should not depart from what the apostles had taught them and should stand up and defend that teaching.
- Jude felt that he must urgently write because just as Paul and Peter had said, false teachers had started to come in among Christians teaching things that were not true.

### **What False Ideas Did Jude Warn About**

- These teachers Jude warned about were twisting the truth. We know that when a Christian sins, God is willing to forgive them when they confess their sin and change their sinful ways (repent of their sins). God's willingness to forgive us when we do wrong is called God's grace.
- But these people were twisting the truth about God's grace. They said you could keep on living a sinful life; that when you sinned you didn't have to confess it and repent of it – God's grace would just always take away your sins. So according to these people you could live just as sinfully as you wanted to and still go to heaven. Jude gives some illustrations of how God would judge that kind of conduct.
  - Jude reminds his readers that the Old Testament people of God, the Israelites, had been saved out of Egypt. But some quit believing what God said and acted immorally, and God destroyed them. The same would apply to Christians.
  - Angels had sinned, and God will judge them.
  - Sodom and Gomorrah lived wickedly and God punished them with fire.
- Now these wicked people of Jude's time were claiming to be Christians but sinning in very wicked ways and were influencing other people to sin, too.
- Jude compares them to three Old Testament wicked men: Cain, Balaam, and Korah. Each of those men wanted to do things their way rather than God's way. Each of them worked against those who were truly righteous. Each of them were judged severely by God.
- These false teachers were very secretive. They didn't openly teach their ideas but slipped around try to influence people to do bad things. Christians might get around them thinking they were good, but Jude says these were really like rocks in the sea that could cause a shipwreck.
- A lot of times, people fight against God's ways because they are unhappy people. They complain and talk bad about others because they are not content. They tear others down and act like they are more important than anyone else.
- Jude said that the Lord had been warning since early times that He would one day judge people who did not respect God or His righteous ways.
- Christians are told how they should respond to those being influenced by these false ideas: Mercifully help those who were unsure of what was right and wrong, but try to pull out of the fire those who let their lives become unclean with sin.

### **What Christians Needed to Do to Stay Strong**

- With some people being led astray, what could faithful Christians do to stay strong in the ways of God? Jude says, "build yourselves up in the most holy faith." Just like we can eat right and exercise to build our bodies, there are things we should do to build ourselves up in the faith.

- Pray in the Spirit. We should live our lives the way the Spirit teaches us in God's Word. As we walk by the Spirit, we should also pray the way God's Spirit teaches us to. Praying to God helps us to grow stronger.
- Keep yourself in the love of God. We should keep our love for God strong and we should live in such a way that God can show the blessings of His love to us. When we sin, we cannot have His loving blessings.
- Wait for Christ's coming. We should think often that Jesus Christ is coming back. One day He will return to judge the world and reward His people.
- Keep relying on the Lord's help because He is able to keep you from stumbling.

## **Simplified Explanation of the Text**

### **Jude Writes to Christians**

Jude 1 Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ and the brother of James writing to the called who been set apart by God the Father and kept in Jesus Christ.

2 May mercy, peace and love be increased in your life.

### **Fight For the Faith**

3 Loved ones, while I was making every effort to write to you about our common salvation, it became necessary for me to write urging you to zealously fight for the faith – the faith which has now been delivered to the saints for all time.

4 I am urging you to fight for the faith because some people have come in secretly. These are ungodly people who are teaching that the grace of God allows us to live unrestrained lives of sinful behavior. Their false teaching goes so far that they would even deny the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **The Lord Will Deal With the Ungodly**

5 Though I know you once knew this, I will remind you again how the Lord saved people out of the land of Egypt, only to destroy the unbelievers later on.

6 And remember angels that did not hold to what they were in the beginning, but left their own dwelling place? God has reserved everlasting chains in darkness for the great day when He will judge them.

7 Its very similar to Sodom and Gomorrah, and the other cities around them. They gave themselves over to sexual immorality, and even went after strange flesh. They've been set forth as an example of God justly punishing them with eternal fire.

### **Beware of These False Teachers**

8-9 And so in a similar way we have all these now influencing people to sin – their minds dream of filthy things, staining the flesh.

They reject authority even to the point of speaking against angels in authority. Michael, the angel who is over all other angels, once had a dispute with the Devil over the body of Moses. But Michael would not even speak a harsh judgment against the devil, but instead just said, "The Lord judge you."

10 These people speak evil of things they know nothing about. But the thoughts of their minds are guided by nothing more than nature, just like an animal operates by instincts rather than reason, and in this they end up corrupting themselves.

11 Terrible things are coming on them! For they have gone the way of Cain. They have rushed into the same error that led Balaam astray for he was willing to speak against God's people for money. They will perish because they have rebelled just as Korah did against Moses.

12 When you entertain others in love, these false teachers show up like rocks in the sea to cause shipwrecks. They sit there feeding themselves without any fear that what they are doing is wrong. These kind of people are like clouds that boast of a coming rain, but never bring water – clouds that just blow wherever the wind blows. They are like trees that have died twice: They died first because their fruit withered up or they never even bore fruit at all. Then they died a second time when they were pulled up by the roots because of their worthlessness.

13 They rage like the sea foaming up their on shameful ways. They are like wandering stars (like a comet) reserved for the blackest darkness forever.

14-15 Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, "Look! The Lord comes with thousands of His holy ones to execute judgment on all and to convict all those who do not show reverence for God. They will be convicted of all their irreverent deeds which they have done in an irreverent way, and all the harsh things they have irreverently spoken against God.

16 Because such people are discontent, they murmur and complain as they walk according to their own sinful desires. Yet at times they will just overflow with words of admiration for someone because they see a way to take advantage of them.

### **The Apostles Warned Us About These**

17-18 But, loved ones, you remember the words that the apostles of the Lord Jesus have already taught us: They told you that in the last time scoffers would leave to go after their own sinful, irreverent desires.

19 You'll see these separate themselves as superior to other Christians. They are led by things related to this life and do not have the Spirit.

### **Build Yourselves Up**

20 But, loved ones, you build yourselves up in the most holy faith. Pray in the Holy Spirit.

21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting to receive the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life.

22-23 On those who are questioning, show compassion and try to convince them of the truth, but on others who are polluting themselves save them like you were grabbing hold of them to pull them out of a fire, even while hating their garment that was stained by the flesh.

24-25 Now to Him who has the power to guard you from falling and have you able to stand before the presence of God's glory joyfully without any thing that would disgrace you; to the only wise God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, now and forever. Amen.