**The Book of Jude Introduction**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Jude 1-4**

**Wednesday Evening**

**April 13, 2022**

**The Purpose**

To remind the church of the need for constant vigilance-to keep strong in the faith and to oppose heresy.

**The Author**

Jude, Brother of Jesus and James

**The Audience**

Jewish Christians and all believers everywhere

**The Date Written**

Approximately A.D. 65

**The Setting**

From the first century on, the church has been threatened by heresy and false teachings: we must always be on guard

**Key Verse**

**Jude 3**

“Dearly loved friends, I had been planning to write you some thoughts about the salvation God has given us, but now I find I must write of something else instead, urging you to stoutly defend the truth that God gave once for all to his people to keep without change through the years”

**The Key People**

Jude, James and Jesus

Saints, to protect from harm, to guard from attack, to repulse enemies—for centuries rugged defenders have built walls, launched missiles, and waged wars, expending material and human resources in the battle to save nations and cities.

And with total commitment and courageous abandon, individuals have fought for their families. It is a rule of life that we fight for survival, defending with all our strength what is most precious to us, from every real or imagined attack.

God’s Word and the gift of eternal life have infinite value and have been entrusted to Christ’s faithful followers. There are many people who live in opposition to God and his followers. They twist God’s truth, seeking to deceive and destroy the unwary.

But God’s truth must go forth, carried and defended by those who have committed their lives to God’s Son. It is an important task, an awesome responsibility, and a profound privilege to have this commission.

This was Jude’s message to Christians everywhere. Opposition would come and godless teachers would arise, but Christians should “defend the truth of the Good News” by rejecting all falsehood and immorality, remembering God’s mighty acts of rescue and punishment and the warnings of the apostles.

His readers are to build up their own faith through prayer, keeping close to Christ, helping others, and hating sin. Then Jude concludes with a glorious benediction of praise to God.

How much do you value God’s Word, the fellowship of the church, and obedience to Jesus Christ? There are many false teachers waiting to destroy your Christ-centered life, the credibility of God’s Word, and the unity of the body of Christ. Read Jude and determine to stand firm in your faith and defend God’s truth at all costs. Nothing is more valuable.

**Jude 1-4**

1 Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ: 2 Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you. 3 Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

4 For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

**1 Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ:**

Saints, Jude was a common Jewish name. Scholars have various opinions about Jude’s identity. The overwhelming majority consider him to be a half brother of Jesus (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3).

**Matthew 13:55**

“Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?

**Mark 6:3**

“Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" And they were offended at Him”

Saints, in his introduction, Jude identified himself as a brother of James. This James was not one of the apostles named James, but another of Jesus’ half brothers (he is referred to in Galatians 1:19).

**Galatians 1:19**

“But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother”

Saints, apparently, Jude held some authority (as revealed in this letter). He most likely traveled as a missionary (see 1 Corinthians 9:5) and naturally would have wanted to write a letter to his converts whose faith was being threatened by false teaching.

**1 Corinthians 9:5**

“Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas”?

Saints, oddly enough, Jude did not refer to himself as a brother of Jesus Christ. It would seem that this would have carried even more authority. Like James, Jude simply identified himself as a slave of Jesus Christ. As believers, they focused on their spiritual relationship with their Lord and considered themselves privileged to be called his slaves.

Jude did not specify any destination for his letter. Instead, he addressed it to all who are called to live in the love of God the Father and the care of Jesus Christ. Being “called” also is referred to as “elected,” “chosen,” or “predestined.”

God’s Spirit calls people out of darkness into the light of Christ, convinces them of their sinfulness, shows them what Christ can do for them, and then helps them to accept Christ. God’s love prompted his call; his love will continue now and forever. God’s love never changes.

The believers across the ancient world, often facing persecution, could count on the fact that they were and always would be enfolded by God’s love. In addition, believers are kept in Jesus care and will receive the certain rewards of Christ’s promised blessing. At Christ’s second coming, believers will be ready to receive their full salvation and to live eternally with him.

**2 Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.**

Saints, Mercy carries with it the Old Testament picture of God’s loving-kindness or compassion. God’s mercy helps believers day by day. Jude knew that the believers were facing difficult situations in the world—a society focused on selfish pleasure, ready to persecute believers at any provocation, with false teachers looking to tear the churches apart. Mercy helps believers in their times of need.

**Hebrews 4:16**

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need”

Saints, peace refers to the peace that Christ made between us and God through his death on the cross. Only God can give true and lasting peace (John 14:27).

**John 14:27**

“Peace, I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid”

Saints, the believers needed an abundance of inner peace and quiet confidence as they faced the turmoil in their world and as they stood up to the false teachers.

Love comes from God, for God himself is love (1 John 4:7-8). Believers who are grounded in God’s love can resist the lies of the false teachers and remain solid in their stand against persecution and temptation. God will generously grant their requests and meet their needs.

**1 John 4:7-8**

7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

**3 Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.**

Saints, Although Jude’s brief letter does not mention his intended readers, it addresses specific concerns about false teaching that was threatening the churches. Yet that was not Jude’s original intention, as stated in verse 3, planning to write about the salvation we all share.

However, an urgent concern caused him to write about something else—namely, false teaching. In this letter he wanted to urge the believers to defend the truth of the Good News. Jude probably intended that this letter to be circulated. Thus, he specified no particular church or area.

The Greek word translated defend occurs only here in the New Testament. Often it is used in secular literature to describe the intense struggle in an athletic contest. The truth refers to the entire body of beliefs taught by the apostles and held by the Christians.

**Acts 2:42**

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers”

Saints, this truth is unchanging, once for all time given to God’s holy people. All Christians had been entrusted with the faith—to keep it pure and to teach it to others. Therefore, all Christians should stand ready to defend the faith as they would defend any prized possession.

**4 For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Saints, Jude’s compulsion to write this letter came because of some godless people (false teachers) who had wormed their way in among the believers; that is, they had entered the church. These may have been traveling teachers who had come and had established themselves in communities and churches with the sole aim of perverting the Christian gospel.

(For example, in Galatians 2:4, Paul talked about the Judaizers who had infiltrated Christian groups.) These false teachers did not belong in the church and were no better than intruders among the believers.

**Galatians 2:4**

“And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage)”

Saints, their teaching was dangerous because they were saying that God’s forgiveness allows us to live immoral lives. The true gospel teaches that people are freed from sin by believing in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. This happens by God’s forgiveness alone.

Saints, however, the purpose of this forgiveness is to move people to holy living and service to God. The false teachers twisted God’s grace, saying that forgiveness from sin means that people can live any way they please, fulfilling their sinful pleasures without inhibition. In their arrogance, these false teachers claimed that their privileged status within God’s grace put them above moral law.

Even today, some Christians minimize sin, believing that how they live has little to do with their faith. But what a person truly believes will be revealed by how he or she acts. Those who truly have faith will show it by their deep respect for God and their sincere desire to live according to the principles in his Word.

Twisting God’s grace to allow for flagrant sexual sin is a horrible perversion of the gospel. For doing this, the false teachers and their followers would pay dearly. In fact, their fate was determined long ago.

This refers to previously written condemnation of anyone who is a false teacher or false prophet. God’s true prophets had warned against false prophets.

**Isaiah 44:25**

“Who frustrates the signs of the babblers, And drives diviners mad; Who turns wise men backward, And makes their knowledge foolishness”

**Jeremiah 50:36**

“A sword is against the soothsayers, and they will be fools. A sword is against her mighty men, and they will be dismayed”

Saints, Jesus had warned his disciples that false teachers would come (Matthew 7:15; 24:11, 24; Luke 6:26).

**Matthew 7:15**

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.

**Matthew 24:11**

“Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many”

**Luke 6:26**

“Woe to you when all men speak well of you, For so did their fathers to the false prophets”

Saints, the apostles often denounced false teachers in their letters.

**Galatians 1:6-9**

6 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.

8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.

**Philippians 3:2**

“Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation”

**Colossians 2:8**

Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

Saints, these false teachers would eventually receive their just reward.

There could be no other fate except condemnation, for these teachers had turned against the only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

With their flagrant sexual sinning in the name of God’s grace, these false teachers were denying Christ as their Master and Lord, replacing him with themselves and their appetites.

While claiming to know God, their actions denied him. They taught lies, and in so doing they denied the basics of the Christian faith. Such a denial also ends in judgment and destruction.

So how are believers today to discern false teaching?

Heresies can be discovered through asking probing questions. We can guard against heresies by asking these questions about any religious group:

1. Does it stress man-made rules and taboos rather than God’s grace?

2. Does it foster a critical spirit toward others, or does it exercise discipline discreetly and lovingly?

3. Does it stress formulas, secret knowledge, or special visions more than the Word of God?

4. Does it elevate self-righteousness, honoring those who keep the rules, rather than elevating Christ?

5. Does it neglect Christ’s universal church, claiming to be an elite group?

6. Does it teach humiliation of the body as a means to spiritual growth rather than focusing on the growth of the whole person?

7. Does it disregard the family rather than holding it in high regard as the Bible does?

Saints, Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.” In Jesus Name!**