



I feel like the writer who wrote the letter of Jude. Jude wanted to write to the readers about the wonderful things concerning the believers' "common salvation." Undoubtedly, Jude, who was the half brother of Jesus, wanted to write about the joys of being a true believer and of being saved.

Jude originally wanted to write about the joys of being saved and what true salvation through Jesus was all about. We read in verse 3 that Jude writes, "*Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation...*" The term "common salvation" is simply referring to all the believer's salvation in Jesus. However, something else was happening within the Body of believers. Jude felt that he had to write and warn the believers about it.

We must remember that Jude, in the early part of his life grew up with Jesus as his half-brother. He, along with his other brothers, did not truly believe in who Jesus truly was. After all, they were from the same family and sometimes brothers and sisters do not necessarily believe or accept what their brother is and what He is actually doing.

And, after all, Jesus was really their half-brother. They did not realize that this meant that Jesus' real Father was God and that Jesus Himself was God. They thought Jesus' father was just another man and that Jesus was simply born out of wedlock – no matter what their mother or father (Joseph) told them.

Imagine growing up with Jesus. Jesus was the eldest in the family so therefore He did have certain privileges. There is always sibling rivalries in all families. However, this was very, very different. Jesus, could not sin. He could not tell lies. Therefore, when something would happen in the home, the fault or blame would never be put on Jesus.

After all, He was the "Son of God." He could not sin. Being one of two brothers in my family, I know I would not have liked that. However, as the "baby" of the family (the youngest), I never would get blamed for anything. Just ask my older brother who may be reading this so I better stop here.

We see that Jesus complicates the question about his relationship to his brothers and sisters by denouncing any biological claim to his siblings. He identifies His “family members” as being those who “do the will of God.” His mother and brothers tried to come and “take Him home” because they thought that He was going a little too far. He declares in Mark 3:32-35, that whoever does the will of God is truly His brother, sister and mother.

In Mark 6:2-3, we see that Jesus did indeed have brothers and sisters for the people knew of them. We actually have them by name. It tells us, *“What is this wisdom that has been given to him? What deeds of power are being done by his hands! Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?”* We see in John 7:5 that Jesus’ brothers did not believe that Jesus was who He said He was. It tells us this clearly, *“For neither did his brethren believe in him.”*

It was not until after Jesus died and then rose again did they believe. We are not sure if all of His brothers and sisters believed but we do know that His mother (Mary) and at least His “half-brothers,” James and Jude, came to believe in Him. We know that James became the chief elder of the Jerusalem church as we see in Acts 15 and he wrote the Letter of James.

Jude, as we know, also became a believer and was most likely an elder in the early church. He writes his letter in such a way that he is writing with the authority of an elder or one who is thought to be a leader in the Body of Christ. Notice that Jude writes that he is the brother of James but he declares the lordship of Jesus by calling himself a “servant” of Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

As I mentioned in the beginning of this essay, I feel somewhat like Jude. Trust me, I am not comparing myself to Jude or anyone else. I am just saying that what he was writing about, I get. He wanted to write about the believers’ “common salvation” and the joys of being a child of God. However, he knew and recognized that the “winds of problems” were rising and he had to warn the true believers.

I am certainly not comparing myself to Jude but I do believe that all the true believers must be aware of the “winds of problems” and the “winds of false teachings” that are continuing to come against the Body of Christ. They are coming full blast and we must be aware of them.

Before I share some things that I am seeing I would like to present to you, what I think, is the greatest problem within the Body of Christ today. I believe the greatest problem is the same problem that the early church believers had.

We know that the New Testament was not in its fullest form until sometime around 300-400 AD. Only around that time is when the letters and Gospels that we have today, became available and put together. Unfortunately, they were transcribed from their original language such as Greek or Aramaic in to Latin and most of the believers did not know how to read Latin. Therefore, the Bible was truly only available to a "select few." It was only in the 1300's and afterwards that the Bible was made available in the language of the people so that it could be read and be understood by more and more people.

I believe that we have a similar problem today. It is not because we do not have the Word written for us to read but rather it is because the problem that we have today is that most believers do not read, nor do they even take their Bibles to church with them. Many believers do not really study the Word. Most churches have screens so they put just the scripture that is being spoken by the speaker up on that screen for all to see. However, they do not put up the scriptures before or after that one main scripture that is presented. The listeners do not really know in what context that scripture is truly being used within the actual scriptures. It can be used to say anything that is in agreement with what the speaker is saying.

I want to interject here that I am not saying that all the speakers are misleading or misusing the Word of scripture, but..... As a true believer it is imperative that I, myself, read the scriptures in their entirety. It is vital for me, as a believer, to know truly, in what context the scripture that we are given is being used within the entirety of the scriptures and not simply within the message of an individual.

As Jude wrote his letter, he wrote that it was imperative to him that he let the people know and be aware that there were individuals who were coming into the Body of Christ bringing forth untruths and simply incorrect teaching. In verse 3 Jude exhorts the readers that they should, "*earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*"

This means that the true believer must be aware of and know the truth of God's Word so that they can come against these false teachings and false teachers. We all must earnestly "*contend for the faith*" or, in other words, fight for the truth in the correct understanding of our faith in Jesus. Every believer needs to be like a soldier who has been entrusted with the sacred task of guarding a holy treasure – the Word of God, the scriptures.

In Jude 4 and 5, he writes in his letter, "*For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>5</sup> I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this...*"

Notice, Jude writes of the readers who "*once knew this.*" In other words, they were already taught to watch out for people who would come in and try to deceive them from the truth of God's Word. However, for whatever reason, here they were, having itchy ears, listening to incorrect teaching and incorrect doctrine – and believing it.

Jude writes in his letter concerning all the incorrect teaching that these false teachers were bringing into the Body of Christ. These false teachers were pretending to be true teachers of God's Word. Yet they were leading people astray. These "false teachers," who on the surface looked like the real thing but whose intentions were to lead God's people astray, need to be exposed so that they do not take people away from the truth of Jesus and the Word.

In Jude 5, he gives a very big warning to all believers, including us today, to stay on track and don't just get saved but **stay saved** until the day when you meet Jesus face to face. We must remember the "parable of the sower." Without going into it we must remember that there was one group that totally denied the truth and there were three groups that did accept the truth.

However, with two of those that did initially accept the truth, the cares and concerns of this world and the deceitfulness of riches were allowed to come in and "choke" the truth of God's Word. With these first two, the "**plant died.**" This tell us that these people, in the end, went back to their sinful ways and they died in their sin.

Yes, they accepted Jesus but we must remember that it is not just a “one time thing” – it is a lifestyle and it is a lifelong commitment. It does not mean that we are perfect but it does mean that we want to please and bless God **all the days of our life**. In the “parable of the sower,” we must remember, there was only one out of the four seeds planted that truly grew, lived and continued on to come to its full completion. Hmm... Let’s think on that for a moment.

As we continue on in Jude 5-16, we are given a number of examples from the Old Testament and the Jewish writings of how people swayed away from the truth of God’s Word. They were lied to and deceived by the devil and they went their own way – away from the one true God. To name a few that Jude refers to as examples for us, we read of:

- The Israelis that were freed from Egypt but rebelled against God in the wilderness
- The example of Sodom and Gomorrah and their destruction because of their sin
- The example of “filthy dreamers” who defiled the flesh and spoke evil against the messengers (the true ambassadors) of the Lord
- Michael contending with the devil and his lies over Moses’ body
- Those that went by the way of Cain – lied and refused to repent of their sin
- Balaam who perished in His the gainsaying on behalf of Core (Korah) against God’s people.
- Murmurers, complainers who walked after their own lusts and seeking the admiration of men for their own advantage

In Jude 12 and 13, Jude tells the true believer to be watchful for those who would “creep” into the Body ever so quietly and craftily for the purpose of perverting the Word of God. Jude refers to them as being “spots” (forces of darkness) in their weekly gatherings and love feasts. They simply want to “feed themselves.” In other words they only want to make themselves look good and be puffed up. We must be careful of who and what we are listening to.

Jude calls them “*clouds without water*” that are carried by the “winds” or whims of incorrect doctrines. In other words they say a lot but really they are saying nothing. It is an “oxymoron.” It is interesting to note that there is a book of poetry by Aleister Crowley, the founder of the “Church of satan” that is entitled, “Clouds Without Water.” It tells his followers (members of the “Church of satan”) how to be and act “religious” with the intent of tearing down and mocking the true Body of Christ.

Jude goes on to call these false teachers, “...*trees whose fruit is withered and without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots.*” In other words they may look like they should have fruit but they do not have good fruit. Jesus gave this exact example when He “cursed the fig tree” because it was supposed to have fruit but it did not.

Jude tells us that these “false teachers” were once dead without Christ as we all were. They then did accept Him...but then they withered away (like the fruit in the parable of the sower). They were now dead again (unsaved) because they had walked away from Christ. Their “roots are dried up and dead.” Is this saying that it is possible to lose or give up your salvation? Hmmm.....

Hebrews 6:4-6 tells us and verifies this truth concerning these people as it reads, “*For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.*”

Jude continues on with teaching us about these “false teachers.” He refers to them as “*raging waves.*” They are dangerous and you can “drown and die” in their teachings. They “*foam out their shame.*” They do shameful things openly (licentiousness, lasciviousness). Jude calls them “*wandering stars*” (shooting stars). They show up and then disappear. The end result is that those who teach such falsities and those who believe them will be lost in darkness, forever.

Notice in Jude 15, he uses the word “*ungodly*” **four times in one verse**. Do you think he is trying to get a point across? The word “ungodly” means to be destitute of and to not have any reverential fear or awe of the living God. It means to totally disrespect God and to condemn God as being the “bad guy.” Wow!!!

In verses 16-21, Jude continually encourages and exhorts the true believer to keep themselves in the love of their God. We are to continually build ourselves up in the Holy Spirit. This is vital. It is only in the power of the Holy Spirit can we now fight this “good fight of faith” as it tells us in 1Timothy 6:12.

It is only in the power of the Holy Spirit that we can overcome the enemy. (Romans 12:21)  
The Holy Spirit still works today, in and through believers to accomplish God's purposes and His will. It is the power we have in the Holy Spirit that leads us, convicts us, teaches us, and equips us, to do His work and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

As mentioned in the beginning of this essay, I had desired to write about our "common salvation" and the joys of being a child of God. However, one cannot help but recognize the "winds of problems" that are rising up round about us. We cannot help but recognize the problems that are arising in this world – internationally, nationally, politically, socially, economically, etc.

All these things, we must understand, are telling us that Jesus is coming soon. Yes, I am looking forward to Jesus' return. Yet, I must admit, I have some trepidation to what must first take place before His return. We will only be able to get through all of it in and with the power of His Holy Spirit.

We know, until Jesus does come, it will only get worse. The Bible tells us that. Therefore my faith must get stronger. The Book of Revelation is very clear on this. If we look closely at the Book of Revelation and other scriptures throughout the Bible, we can tell that the 7-year tribulation is not that far off. What that means is that we need to "get on the ball" and be ready.

We need to be ready by continually sharing the Good News of salvation through Jesus to as many people as we can – family, loved ones, friends, acquaintances...everyone. We need to be continually praying for these end times and for God's will and Kingdom to come forth. Remember, we must be praying for **HIS WILL** to be done, not what we want or think needs to happen or take place.

Jude ends his letter with verses 24, 25 as he encourages all believers. *"Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,"<sup>25</sup> To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."*

Yes, it is only our God and the decisions we choose to make that will keep us from falling away from Him. Yes, He will have His “under shepherds” (pastors and leaders) to help us. Yes, He will have His angels to keep His charge over each of us and protect us.

It is only God, through the Holy Spirit, who is the only one who can try to keep each of us from falling back into turmoil and from utter destruction. It is only God, the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit who can and will save anyone who believes in and accepts Jesus as their personal Savior and Lord. It is only God who can and will save His people. It is only God!!!!

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