

# A WARNING FOR TODAY FROM THE LETTER OF JUDE

When was the last time you read the Epistle of Jude. For many of us, we may not even be aware that it is in our Bibles. For others, it may be a forgotten letter that we know is in the Bible but we seem to feel that it is not very important because it is a “one chapter” book/letter in our Bibles. However, Jude is a very important book for all believers in Jesus to grasp and truly comprehend. It is for today!!!

First of all, let us see who this “Jude” was. We see in Jude 1:1, that he refers to himself as a “servant” of Jesus Christ (Messiah). However, he was actually the “half-brother” of Jesus. His biological father was Joseph and his biological mother was Mary. We see this in the Gospel accounts in Matthew 13:55. As we know the family included other brothers and sisters. One of his brothers was James. James, was also a half-brother of Jesus.

James became the Chief Elder of the Jerusalem Church as we see in Acts 15. He also wrote the Epistle of James that we have in our Bibles. It is interesting to note that both of these writers of letters within our Bibles, did not believe in Jesus until after Jesus died, rose again and then revealed Himself to the other apostles. We do see them in the Upper Room, 50 days after Jesus died and rose again, in which they both received the Holy Spirit along with all the other believers who were in that room. (Acts 1:14, 2:4) They chose to believe and accept Jesus, not as their brother, but as their Savior and their Lord.

Jude, as mentioned, was the half brother of Jesus and initially did not accept or believe that Jesus was the Messiah. Jude should not be confused with the two disciples of the same name-Judas (Iscariot) who betrayed Jesus and Thaddeus who was also called Jude and who was referred to as “Jude, the Apostle.”

This letter of Jude was written and circulated sometime between 60 and 80 AD. This was a very important time period and gives us, as Jude is about to tell us, why he changed what he originally was going to write about. We see this in Jude 1:3. He originally wanted to write a letter concerning our “*common salvation*.”

What did Jude mean when he wrote that term “*our common salvation*?” Simply put, Jude wanted to originally write the simple message of salvation in and through Jesus. Salvation is believing in Jesus and all that He did on the cross. He took our punishment, He then rose from the dead and is now seated at the right hand of the Father. But... Jesus will come back again.

Something caused Jude to change his purpose for writing to the believers. He states, "...it was *needful for me...to exhort you to earnestly contend for the faith...*" Wow!!! We see that something became so apparent and impressed Jude so much that he felt there was a need to write and tell the believers about. There was such an urgency that something very dangerous was coming into the church, the body of believers, that he felt he had to change what he originally wanted to share.

Jude begins by "exhorting" the believers, which means to strongly encourage or urge (someone) to do something. In other words, there was an urgency in this letter concerning what Jude wanted to warn the other believers to know and to be aware about. He strongly encourages them that they were to "*earnestly contend for the faith.*" This means to "fight strenuously for [the defense of] **the true faith.**" Wow!!!

Jude was telling the believers that they must be aware of those who would be coming into the churches, their churches, with untruths and falsities about Jesus, about who He really was and what He really did. A true "contender" vigorously endeavors to win the competition and to **not holding anything back**. In this case, the struggle was, and still is, for "the faith," the true faith in which we have the saving truth of Jesus Christ and all He did, as well as all His true teachings of the Word of God.

Since this faith was and is "entrusted to all of God's holy people" and not just our leaders, we are all called to know the truth and to defend that truth of who Jesus Christ truly is. Since this faith has been entrusted to the true believers "once for all," Jude intends to stand against those who claim to receive "**new**" revelations of the truth.

We must all know and believe that through Jesus' personal teachings and then by the workings of the Holy Spirit, Jesus has already given us the full message of truth. Period!!! There is nothing to be added. There is nothing new that is not already found within our scriptures. This is not just important but it is vital for all true believers to grasp and understand. So what do we mean by the term "*the faith*" as Jude declares that we must "*earnestly contend*" for?

The term Jude uses, "*the faith,*" is referring to the basic fundamentals or doctrines of what and why we believe what we believe. The early writers called it – "the faith." It was also referred to as "the way." The early believers called themselves "the Way" (see Acts 9:1; 18:25-26; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22). It refers to Jesus' teaching that He is "*the way, the truth, and the life,*" as found in John 14:6. It is declaring that Jesus is the way back into relationship with the Father. He sets us back on the right track concerning the truth of God's Word. Knowing this truth will lead us to eternal life.

It is also declaring and believing that God's Word is the truth. It is acknowledging that everything concerning God as found in and through His Word, is the absolute truth. The truth is only found in the Word of God. The term "truth" literally means that which is absolutely and positively fact and it is absolutely and positively real and we can absolutely and positively depend on those facts.

"The faith" is referring to all the **true** teachings of the scriptures and of Jesus as found in the Word and the Gospels. That was why Jesus came. He came to bring us all back to the truth of what God's Word really was saying and not what men had changed it to mean. The "truth" takes us to the true understanding of the "scriptures" as found in Torah, the Writings, the Prophets.

This ultimately became known as the "Apostle's doctrine." (Acts 2:42). It was what they taught and preached – the absolute truth concerning all the moral aspects of God's Word as it was meant to be as found in the scriptures. However, as Jesus taught, man could never do this on their own. They could never fully live the perfect life that God had intended for them to live because now they all have a fallen nature. Man needed to be "born again." Jesus explains this to Nicodemus, as well as all of us, in John 3:3-21. ***"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."***

What are the basic fundamentals of *"the faith"* that we are to *"earnestly contend for?"*

- Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the Living God." (Matthew 16:16) Jesus said this was the "rock" on which His church is built upon.
- Jesus came and He was crucified (1Corinthians 1:23)
- Jesus took our punishment but three days later He rose from the dead (1Corinthians 15:20)
- Jesus will come again (Acts 1:10-11)

We are to share and tell others this truth. Why? We tell others because we now love God. And, if we truly love our God then we should want what He wants which is for others to come to know Him. We now truly express our love for our God by loving others and wanting them to come to salvation. Jesus showed us this "format." He loved the Father, therefore, He loved each of us and brought us salvation. This type of love encompasses all that the commandments taught.

Jude declares that the very first perversion that would be brought forth is the misunderstanding of what God's grace truly is. Jude declares that these illicit teachers will declare and bring forth an erroneous teaching concerning God's grace. These illicit teachers would turn God's grace into a license for immorality. They would turn it from what it truly is. We must remember that God's grace is a part of God's love for all His creation.

God loved us so much. Instead of rejecting mankind because of their sin and thereby sending themselves to hell, God's love was expressed through His grace, His unearned and unmerited favor to all man. He expressed this grace by then showing and bringing forth His mercy by sending Jesus to die on the cross in our place. This brought the availability of man to have true peace with God, true salvation and true relationship. Man could now truly love God. God would reciprocate and pour out more of His love upon us. The cycle in telling others this truth of God's love would continue.

Jude 1:4 tell us, *"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."* The Amplified version tells it more explicitly as it reads, *"...for they distort the grace of our God into decadence and immoral freedom [viewing it as an opportunity to do whatever they want], and deny and disown our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ."*

In other words they distorted the true meaning of God's grace and they turned it into saying that God's grace "covers us." Therefore, we can continue doing things that are immoral and do decadent things and ultimately do whatever we want to do because God's grace "covers us." In other words, they can do whatever they want to do because God now loves them. What????!!! Jude goes on to write that this way of thinking really is the denial of the true Jesus Christ. Ultimately, that way of thinking causes the individual to actually disown, walk away from and reject their true Savior.

Jude clearly states that this denies the true Word of God, as well as it denies Jesus Christ, Himself. For Jude clearly declares that anyone who teaches this clearly rejects the deity of Jesus. That way of thinking now makes us our own god. In reference to this way of thinking, the apostle Paul encourages all true believers in Timothy 6:12, *"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, where unto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."*

In other words **all believers** should be saying the same thing concerning the basic fundamentals of "the faith." Paul states in Ephesians 4:11-14 that God gave us leadership in the Body so that we can all come to be in unity, oneness, in the truth!!! All of the New Testament writers say the same thing. Why – because there was a unity and oneness in and of the spirit.

Unfortunately, some of the leaders have lost sight of the basic truth of our salvation. **As of 2024 there are over 45,000 different Christian denominations worldwide. Jesus prayed in John 17:11 that we would be "one as He and the Father are one."** Hmmm.....

Anything that is contrary to those basic fundamentals of the faith is referred to as “apostasy.” What is “apostasy? Simply put, it is a defection, a departure, a revolt or rebellion from the original truths of something. It has been described as **"a willful falling away from, or a willful rebellion against, the basic fundamental doctrines of the faith."** We must realize that Jesus continually warned of these types of people entering into His Body of believers with their lies and deceptions. He did this through many of His teachings and parables. We must be on alert.

The New Testament writers were constantly warning of these types of people who would come into the Body as *“roaring lions seeking whom they may devour.”* (1Peter 5:8) These types of people are called “apostates” who teach “apostasy.” In Jude 1:4 we are warned, *“For there are certain men crept in **unawares**...”* They come in very subtly and seem to have great knowledge. They are very sure and are very deceptive of their misguided ways.

These were people who did not, and even today, will not, look like or seem like “enemies” of the faith. They began infiltrating the Body of Christ with false doctrines and teachings. They may or may not have come in maliciously but either way they were tools of the enemy. We must all take heed of Jude’s warning even in, and especially in, our world today.

Jude 1:12-13 is very direct and unapologetic as Jude warns the true believers of who these “apostates,” these perverted people, really are and what they can and will do and teach. In His letter, Jude gives examples of these types of false teachers. They were found throughout the Old Testament scriptures. Then, in Jude 1:14-15, he declares the “judgment” that will come upon these apostates, these “creeps,” that will creep into the Body. It will not be pretty. Wow!!!

In Jude 1:17,18, Jude gives an admonition concerning what would take place in the Body of Christ. This is for both, the Body of Christ back then, as well as for us, today- take heed to what Jude is writing. He writes, *“But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.”* In Jude 1:19 he writes, **“These are they...!!!”** Jude was warning the believers at that time, as well as today, that these people are in the church and we must be mindful of them.

These “apostates,” these false believers, these lying teachers have “separated themselves” unto each other. In other words they are only for themselves and for those who teach and follow these same lies and deceitfulness. Their main purpose is to bring schisms and divisions into the Body of

Christ. They are “sensual.” They teach and are themselves controlled by the carnal mind and the flesh – not the Holy Spirit.

In verses 20-23, Jude teaches the believers how to overcome and how to not be drawn away from the truth of the Word of God. We all must take heed to these warnings. Jude ends his letter with these encouraging words.

1. Build yourself up in the faith (Jude 1:20).
2. Pray in the Holy Spirit (Jude 1:20)
3. Keep yourself in God’s love (Jude 1:21)
4. Wait with hope for Jesus’ soon return (Jude 1:21)

Jude 24-25 ends his letter with a hope and a joy to all true believers as he states, “*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...*” Only in and through Jesus can we be kept from falling away. Only through Jesus are we able to come before and be in the presence of God. It is only through Jesus!!!

Will we hear what Jude is telling the believer today? We see that the devil’s tactics are the same. He may use different vehicles to try to bring his deceptions upon the unbelievers, as well as believers. We must realize that even the believers can be, and they will be, targets of the devil’s strategies. I know that many believers today say and think that it is impossible to be deceived and that they will never be deceived. I pray they are correct. However, if the early believers could possibly be tripped up and deceived, than what makes the believer today that much different? Hmmmm.....

We must all hear what Jude, as well as all the writers of the New Testament at one time or another have written to the believers during their time and for all believers that would come, including us today. The devil is out there like “*a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.*” Yes, that includes each and every true believer in this hour. I pray that we hear what Jude was telling the believers during his time and what he is telling us today in this hour.

*“If any man who has ears to hear, let them hear.”*  
(Mark 4:23, 7:16)