

**Jude**  
**“Contending for the faith”**

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**I. Intro**

Last week we started this 25-verse letter an odd way by first going over the 8 verses or 1/3 of the letter’s difficulties with regards to the interpretations. As mentioned all of them are found in the main body of the letter in verses 5-23 and as we approach them we will be taking a look at each of them. I also want to remind you that this problem with interpreting these illustrations is unique to today’s reader and NOT the original readers as Jude would have NOT used illustrations on such an important topic as the “*descriptions and characteristics of false teachers*”. This morning we continue our study through the first 4 verses completing the introduction of the letter through the reason for the letter in verse 4.

**I. Vs. 1-2 From and too**

Vs.1 One of the things that fascinates me about this little letter is how it fits together from the introduction to the closing each aspect of the letter interlocking with the next. Nothing be more connected to the theme of the letter than the identity of the writer. Here at the beginning of the letter the author identifies himself as Jude! For the first time reader of this letter, which is on false teaching and apostasy, **it is interesting that it bares the same name as the greatest deception ever fostered, “Judas”!** Here is a name that for the most part is not a common name today as it clearly once was. People name their sons, Peter, John, and Paul. They may even call their pets Nero or Caesar but like other names like Adolf....Judas as all but disappeared for the registry of names. Yet with that said God choose a man whose name was Jude to write on a letter

on apostasy and treachery. I believe that one of the reasons for this is the correlation with the name Jude with the actions of Judas as both turned away from truth, yet both claim a relationship with truth. Jude's identification is twofold with the greater being displayed first:

- A. **Heavenly identification** "*A bondservant of Jesus Christ*": The Greek word for "*bondservant*" is Doulos and means a servant by choice. The connection of this Greek word with Whom Jude declares as his Master is a great truth; a person will never truly experience the "blessings" of our relationship with Jesus apart from laying our life down to the very Person who laid His life down for us.
- B. **Earthly identification** "*And a brother of James*": In Gal 1:19 James is called the "Lord's brother" and when we look at the fact that in verse 17 Jude refers to the "apostles" instead of identifying himself as one further makes it unlikely that this is the Jude of Luke 6:16 who is called the "son of James". This only leaves us the Jude of Matt. 13:55 where we read at the rejection from his hometown of Nazareth that some said, "*Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?*" This then is the "JUDE" that is mentioned as one of Jesus' 4 ½ brothers who grew up with their older brother in Nazareth. as the Christ based upon John 7:5 and that their faith in Him came after the resurrection. The only other reference to Jude is in the brief passage in 1 Cor. 9:5 where we are told that "*that the brothers of the Lord took their wives with them on missionary journeys*". It is also to note the similarities in their two letters: James writes that "Good works" are evidence of "real faith". Jude writes that "Evil works" are evidence of apostasy and false teaching.

Jude calling himself the "brother of James" places him in the family of Jesus alongside of Mary and Joseph; yet Jude does not chose to allude to his earthly connection to Jesus only his spiritual connection to Jesus. **This clearly indicates humility instead of what Jude will write about in regard to the false teachers who are arrogant. Furthermore, it indicates what Jude valued and identified with more, as he would rather be identified with Jesus spiritually being His servant of choice then being identified with being his earthly 1/2 brother!** It was only in his spiritual connection that he truly entered into an everlasting relationship which was far greater than his time of knowing his brother in unbelief. It is this truth that unlocks the readers understanding of this little letter. **We must put aside our earthly identification if we are going to grow in our relationship with Jesus and we can only do so as we understand that our "heavenly**

**identification” is what is most and important.** As it relates to our identification: It is always better for our life and souls if we see ourselves as Jesus’ servant by choice instead of our connection by works our others connection to.

Vs. 2 “**To those**” is the designation to whom the letter was intended: And Jude identifies that the recipients of this letter have three common qualities; “Called, Sanctified and Preserved”: These qualities are NOT attributes that come from the individual that Jude has in mind in this letter instead they are things bestowed upon people that DID NOT ever deserve such designation.

Also, not that these three qualities that are bestowed upon the reader of this letter cover a person’s **PAST, PRESENT** and **FUTURE**! Also notice the Godhead involved in these qualities that are bestowed as we are **called by the Holy Spirit, Sanctified by God the Father,** and **Preserved in Jesus Christ.**

1. **Called:** That is what happened to us in the **past** as we were called. The word in the Greek is one that is used for an invitation and in our case we were called while sinners to salvation whereby the sinner is called to repentance by the act of faith in the Lord who called him. The amazing truth is that all have been “invited” to become believers. In John’s gospel 1:12-13 we read that “*But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name, who born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God.*” Jesus said in Matt. 22:14 that “Many are called but few are chosen”. The fact that from the beginning we have been called to salvation through sanctification because we trust in His truth. And through this calling we will be showered in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have been called out of darkness and into His light, called out of death and into life! Furthermore, our glorification is as certain as our salvation and sanctification. We have a new identity and security as we are God’s beloved!
2. **Sanctified:** The second quality is that they are “set apart” and Jude describes specifically Who it is that has “**set us apart**” as it is “**by God**”! Security that’s only emphases is in the beginning has no lasting security. What happens if what God called is LOST because of our failure? This answers that objection: We are the objects of the Fathers love and because we have received His only Son we are also the recipients of this love as well. There is no greater experience a human being can ever have then to be “set apart in the love of God”. Chosen out of fallen humanity by His love. This love isn’t based upon our qualities but upon His and they can never be earned or deserved instead they are our simply because we have accepted them. It is for this reason that they have “set us apart” from all that were to all that He has for us!

3. **Preserved:** Here the Greek word means to be *“kept or guarded from loss or injury”*. Again, the key to understanding this word is to be found in Who’s hands we are kept or guarded as we are told that it is “IN JESUS CHRIST”. It is in the very hands of the Person who our sin drove the nails meant for us through! It is in Jude’s closing in verse 24 that he reminds the reader that we are *“invited to be objects of our Father’s love, forever kept by the One in whom love was given through.”* We are under the watchful care of Jesus. I wonder if Jude reflected upon his brother who watched over he and his siblings?

To the person who is “called, sanctified and preserved” by God and in Christ Jesus they can expect the following three things which are the prescription for contending for the faith as well as fruit of the above three qualities.

- A. **Mercy:** Mercy in the Greek is a word that has a view on the misery which is the consequence of sin. Mercy precedes grace as it means not getting what we deserve, and Paul says in Eph. 2:4 that God is rich in mercy.
- B. **Peace:** The word peace here means to join together that which has been separated. Such peace can be ours the moment when we as believers do what D.L. Moody encouraged that we, *“Worry about **NOTHING**, pray about **EVERYTHING**, and thank God for **ANYTHING**.”*
- C. **Love:** The word here is “agape” which is that divine love which is shed abroad in our hearts. This love is so infused with the believer that the believer security and identity becomes impossible to be separated from the love of God.

Jude prays that these three fruits of being a believer will continue to be multiplied as this is the antidote to being persuaded by false teachers to abandon the truth. What a comfort it is in a letter that is full of the future judgment for false teachers that the Holy Spirit affirms through the words he gave Jude of the assurances and blessings of the believer. The Holy Spirit HAS called us, God the Father HAS set us apart and we ARE preserved in Jesus Christ and these FACTS PRODUCE His mercy, peace, and love!

## II. Vs. 3-4 Contending for the faith

Vs. 3 *“Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation.”*

This “common salvation” is NOT common because lacks value as it is the most precious faith.

Instead, it is “common salvation” because it is the property of all who have obtained it by faith.

No person’s salvation is of greater value than another’s, as no person’s salvation came about do

to anything of themselves! Jude's salvation came the same way as did those he was now writing too. It is also important to note that this letter was NOT written for the false teachers to read but for those that shared a common salvation to read so as not to be lead astray. Jude' intentions were interrupted. The word in Greek for "necessary" is a word that means to "***compress or apply pressure***" as one would do if they came upon a person who had a sever wound and was in danger of bleeding to death. These believers had the enjoyed "the blood of Christ" but false teachers had "***cut away at the truth***" and they were in danger of bleeding out the Life of Christ. The word "***exhorting***" is the same word used of the Holy Spirit as it describes **a person coming along side to help**. The God breathed exhortation of this letter to its readers is that they needed to counter these false teachers, it was of necessity that these follow believers go on the offensive and "**contend for the faith**". The Greek word for "***contend***" describes **what an elite athlete does in an athletic contest!** This letter is a direct result of the Holy Spirits constraint placed upon Jude to warn the believers of the false teachers' tactics to get believers to move away from the truth of God's word. In the book of Nehemiah, we have an illustration of what Jude is encouraging from the believers. As Nehemiah was rebuilding the wall in Jerusalem there were those that were actively involved in stopping that work so God spoke to Nehemiah in 4:17-18 that "*Those that built on the wall, and those that carried burdens, load themselves so that with one hand they worked at the construction, and with the other hand they held the weapon. Everyone one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built...*" We Christians have the Sword of the Spirit and need to keep it on us as we build the kingdom. There is no other truth as what we are to contend for is "once for all delivered to the saints". There is "*No other name that can be named that is given save Jesus Christ!*"

Vs. 4 The urgency of the change in the message by Holy Spirit given through Jude to these fellow believers can best be understood when we read the characteristics of these false teachers.

As we see four things about them: “**For certain men**”:

- A. “**Have crept in unnoticed**”: For Jude notes the tactics of these apostates: They HAVE CREPT . That means that the danger was present not future has their penetration into the Church had already begun. The Greek word “crept in” means to “***enter alongside***” as they came in the “side door” and the believers were unaware that they had “apostates” among them. They had slipped in and were now teaching lies from the pulpits. These like their father the devil appear as “angels of light” from the outside but are like their father full of lies! They perhaps used the same words as God’s word but established different means to these words to deceive people from following the truth.
- B. “**Ungodly men**”: Jude uses a play on words as he says these false teachers had a “calling” on their lives, but it wasn’t from God the Father it was from the father of lies as they were “ungodly men”. Here we note that these false teachers had strong convictions but for lies instead of truth. Their piety was away from the things of God, and they didn’t share in the godly characteristics.
- C. “**Who turned the grace of our God into lewdness**”: They twisted truth and started with the grace of God and turned the grace of God into a license to continue in bondage to sin. **They didn’t restrain the flesh instead they indulged the flesh calling in grace!**
- D. “**And deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ**”: Lastly they corrupted the character and nature of the Son of God Jesus! They disowned the Jesus of the Bible and instead created their own Jesus!