

EXEGETICAL STUDY OF

JUDE

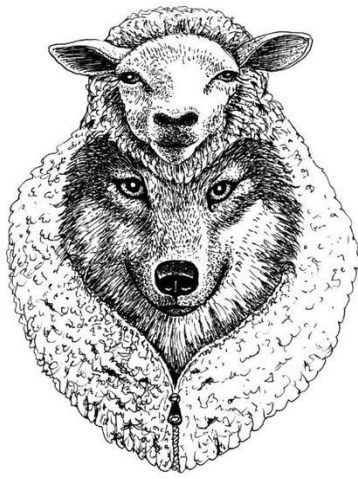


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Introduction to Jude

The book of Jude is a short, one chapter general epistle found at the end of the New Testament. In its single chapter consisting of twenty-five verses, the epistle of Jude addresses a number of different questions and topics surrounding the issue of false teachers. In an attempt to encourage the church and bolster its doctrinal foundation, Jude addresses the identity of the church, the importance of identifying false teachers, the characteristics of false teachers, and the believers responsibility in contending for the faith. All of this proves to be a beautiful picture for modern readers to both understand the dangers of false teachers and our own proclivity towards them.

The Author

As the title of this epistle suggests the opening verse informs us that this letter was written by or at least dictated by “Jude.” In the early first century, the name Jude (also Judas) was a common name, but only a handful of known individuals were prominent enough that their works would have been circulated and held to as doctrine. Judas Iscariot, Jude Thaddeus, Jude Bar Sabbas, and Judas son of Joseph, half brother of Jesus. We know from the continued statement that it could not have been the first three options because this Jude was a servant of Jesus and the brother of James. This means the Jude referenced here had to be the half brother of Jesus.

Some will argue that this book was not written by Jude but instead an anonymous author some time later. However, there is far too much internal evidence to lend any credibility to its authenticity and doctrinal clarity. Also, if one wanted to write under an influential name in order to gain credence they would unlikely choose such an insignificant figure in the first century church to impersonate. So all accounts lead us to hold with confidence that this was written by Jude, the son of Joseph and half brother of Jesus.

Audience

Jude has a unique relationship to 2 Peter in that both address the same issues and use a notable amount of the same content to address them. Some would argue that Jude used 2 Peter to influence his text and others that Peter must have read Jude prior to his, but the two may have used an unnamed document that we no longer have to pull from since the two reference similar content but expound and emphasize different aspects. Either way, we can assume the two were writing to the same issues and general audience. With sparse external evidence for a date the book is normally dated by traditional theologians around 60AD to the Jewish converts living in dispersion. The heavy references to Jewish literature and assumed understanding of Old testament characters and narratives lets us know Jude expected his audience to be well informed on Jewish culture and writings

Occasion

We learn in the first few verses that Jude had intended to write to his audience already when he heard troubling news about false teachers in their midst. Jude warns against those who have surreptitiously gained entry to the church and explains how they have perverted the one true faith with their own teaching and sinful lives. These teachers were clearly libertine (morally unrestrained) and proposed through dreams that God had given them new insight and revelation towards such activities.

Jude addresses the church about these teachers by using old testament and apocrypha examples to warn his readers and the impending judgment on those who perpetrate such teaching and the toxic influence these teachers can have when they are permitted to continue. He also addressed the congregations and their responsibilities to not only defend their own hearts from allowing false teaching the creep in, but also to contend for the truth and be willing to, in love and grace, speak up for what is right.

While the introduction and conclusion to this epistle are loose in the conformity to others of their type, the body of this epistle (5-16) is clearly a judgment oracle. This literary type was extremely common in Old Testament prophecy concerning God's coming wrath and is instituted here as a warning against those who would attempt to sway the church with a perverse gospel and towards those who would walk away from the "faith that was once delivered" to the church at large. The imagery included of judgment and imagery, and allusions to OT characters points towards the bulk of this letter towards the consequences for the path this early church has started down.

Textual Use of Triads

Through this small letter, Jude uses a triad form of example and judgment throughout. By listing his examples in threes, his descriptions in threes, and his analogies the same way the book itself has become known not only for its content but for its extremely poetic structure.

- Jude's recipients v. 1
- Judes prayer v 2.
- Examples of God's judgment v.5-7
- Accusations against the false teachers v. 8
- Examples of false teachers influence v.11
- Character of the false teachers v. 16
- Continued character of false teachers v.19
- Means to stay in God's love v.20-21
- Actions of the faithful v. 22-23
- God's eternal nature v. 25



Week One

Who is the church and its teachers?

Sermon Notes Jude 1-2

Introduction:

Before we can identify and deal with false teachers we have to understand who we are as the church and who God intended for us to be. Without understanding the importance and role of the believers in the church you cannot understand the significance and tragedy of false teachers infiltrating and corrupting it. This week we'll look at the opening introductions of the epistle of Jude in hopes that we can better grasp who we are in Christ, the character our teachers are called to have, and the ambitions every leader should have when it comes to the way they lead their congregations.

They Lead in Humility

"Jude a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James"

Two examples of Humility

Servant of Jesus Christ - He understood his place before Jesus.

Doulos greek word for slave.

Mark 9:35 "He must be last of all and servant of all."

Mark 10:45 "Son of man came not to be served but to serve."

Brother of James - He didnt want to come across arrogant as "Brother of Jesus"

James 1:1 - Avoiding the appearance of arrogance and nepotism.

He surrendered any title he might have as Jesus' brother.

Are our leaders humble? Are they servants?

Ridiculous salary requirements?

Prideful actions towards staff and other leaders?

Leaders eat last by Simon Sinek

"The true price of leadership is the willingness to place the needs of others over your own"

They cherish those they lead.

"To those who are called, beloved by God the father, and kept for Jesus Christ"

We are extremely valuable to Christ.

Called - God calls us, from the cross.

2 Peter 3:9 "not wishing any should perish, but all should repent"

Beloved - no buyers removers, we are incredibly loved by God.

1 John 3:1 "See what kind of love the father has given to us."

Kept - Cared for, protected, looked after, cherished.

Grandma Chambers' Bible - cherished.

Are your leaders cherishing the people God brought to them?

Not your best friend, reverence the calling/office?

See the value in those he loves?

They desire Godly things for us.

“May Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.”

They want to see good multiplied in us.

Mercy - Luke 6:36 - “Be merciful even as your father is merciful.”

Showing compassion or forgiveness

Peace - John 16:33 “In me you may have peace.”

Freedom from disturbance, tranquility.

Love - 1 John 4:11 “If God loved us, we ought also love one another.”

Patient, kind, long suffering, compassionate towards others.

Conclusion:

We know what Godly leaders look like. We extend grace because no one is perfect, but we hold a standard for those who lead us and teach us.

“The useful worker for Christ is a man of tenderness, not a Stoic; not one who does not care whether souls are saved or not; not one so wrapped up in the thought of divine sovereignty as to be absolutely petrified; but one who feels as if he died in the death of sinners and perished in their ruin, as though he could only be made happy in their happiness, or find a paradise in their being caught up to heaven.”

Charles Spurgeon

Community Group Questions

1. Why do you think it's so important for a teacher to lead from a place of humility?
2. When have you heard of or experienced a teacher who did not lead this way?
3. In what ways should a teacher cherish those who they are teaching? Does this change when a church is larger versus when it is smaller?
4. How can it be comforting to know that we are called, beloved, and kept by God? Is there one of those three that has a special meaning to you?
5. What do you think it practically looks like when a leader desires Godly things for his followers? What might happen when those desires are not godly?
6. Why do you think it's so important for us to examine our teachers and leaders against the scripture in both their teaching and conduct?

Related Texts

“To those who are called”

Romans 1:7 “ To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our father and Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Corinthians 1:24 “ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.”

It would be impossible for us to know God without Jesus' interaction and interceding on our behalf. His selfless act of being born, living a sinless life, dying a sinner death under God's judgement on the cross, and rising from the grave three days later is the invitation to mankind that God has called sinners home. “While we were yet sinners” Christ has called us back to himself through his work on the cross.

“Beloved in God the Father”

1 Thessalonians 1:4 “For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you.”

2 Thessalonians 2:13 “But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by God.”

We are beloved by God. The beauty of that statement. God was not obligated to save us, he was not forced by any attribute or consideration to save us against His will or wishes. Instead, God chose us. He, in his goodness, chose us. He chose us because, as we see in both letters to the Thessalonians and in our text from Just that we are beloved by God. Not just important, not just saved, not just part of his plan for himself, but we are beloved by God.

“Kept for Jesus Christ”

John 17:11 “ And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one.”

John 17:15 “I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.”

1 Thessalonians 5:23 Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have been kept for Christ in two ways. The first is that we are kept blameless by the blood of Christ. No one is perfect and we all sin. Paul went to far as to say none are righteous, not one, no one does good and no one seeks after God. We've all sinned and fallen short but Jesus' death, resurrection, and restoration keep us even when we fail in sin. This is not a license to sin, but a promise that even in our shortcomings we are kept. As we grow to be more like him a failure is not a disqualification from God love but an opportunity to hand over more of our hearts in repentance and growth. Second we are kept in his provision and sanctification. Jesus is working in our lives and through our lives for his will to reach the lost. He has promised us that all things work together for our good and so we have confidence that even in the worst of circumstances we are kept in him and his plan.

Exercise: Beloved by God

Religion can sometimes be a very mechanical thing. Without knowing it, what was once a beautiful moment of restoration and freedom can turn into an emotionless repetition towards habit and status quo. Where once was a deep desire to change, to strive, to be something new is now a mere shell of ritual. Our relationship with God, brought about by a spiritual awakening that scriptures call going from death to life is replaced by a religious cage of obligation and guilt. Religion can be mechanical. Jesus is personal.

This passage is intentional to tell its audience that God not only called his people, but they are beloved by him. Beloved. Not just adored. Not just loved. Beloved. We are beloved by God. That's a deeper, more intimate word that shows with it a longing, an appreciation, and an acceptance that sometimes our religion pushes to the background.

What would it look like set as many reminders for ourselves that we are beloved by God as we do that we should watch our language. Imagine what your life would be like if you spent just as much time letting your mind wander on the fact that you are beloved by God as you do on the ways you need to improve yourself. Think of the confidence, encouragement, and joy that would be in your life if the quotient of guilt, shame, and inadequacy went down and the level of "beloved" went up in your life.

Let not just imagine it. Let's see.

This week, take some time every day, every morning, every cigarette break, before every meal or whenever you have set a routine, to also make sure you're basking and rejoicing in the truth that all of you, as you are, is beloved by God.

At the end of this week come back to this page. Write down some of the good thoughts you've had about it. Record the wow moments that came from being constantly reminded that even in your worst, you are beloved by God.



Week 2

Why Address these things?

Sermon Notes Jude 3-4

Introduction:

Dave Ramsey, in his podcast discussing a security fund, said that a thousand dollar cushion doesn't seem like a necessary thing until something goes wrong and you need a thousand dollars. In that case you will either be extremely thankful you do have it or genuinely regret you did not. As we talk about false teachers for four weeks, one might wonder why we need to talk about this so in depth. Could not the whole conversation be summed up quicker? In today's lesson we'll look at why this conversation is so important and why we need to be on guard in our faith.

Some things can not be ignored

"Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you."

We are called to address false teaching, in a Biblical way.

Galatians 6:1 - confront sin, but with gentleness.

Galatians 2:11-14 - Paul confronts Peter in his sin towards Gentiles

False teaching is in our actions as much as our words.

2 Timothy 4:2-5 "Reprove, rebuke, and exhort."

Everyone may not have the office of pastor, but all are called to this.

Aren't we called to unity?

Yes, but not supremely.

Unity at the cost of the gospel is not unity.

We must contend for our faith.

"To contend for the faith that was once for all, delivered to the saints."

This is not argumentative or confrontational.

Street preaching and going to hell signs are not the answer

This is being a testimony and example of our faith.

1 Peter 3:15 "Always be prepared to make a defense"

2 Thessalonians 2:15 "stand firm and hold to the traditions you were taught."

You are the voice of God and his truth to some people.

Assert the truth of God's word.

False Teaching creeps its way in.

"For certain people have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our master and Lord Jesus Christ."

False teachers creep their way in

They don't just announce they're false teachers .

It's a slow creep into the conversation, usually gradually attempting to change.

False Teachers are out there and we must watch for them.

1 John 4:1 False Teachers ARE out there

Matthew 16:5-12 Jesus warns of the leaven of the Pharisees

Matthew 7:15 Wolves in sheep's clothing

False Teachers pervert the truth.

It's usually small lies attached to truth

Mormon use of the KJV.

2 Peter 2:2 - "Secretly introduce destructive heresy."

Conclusion:

It is extremely easy to fall into lies and false teaching. This is why it's so important for us to not only know what we believe but also why we believe it. A stronger foundation in my own faith protects me from easily falling into the lies and the heresy that so easily tuck their way into the christian life.

May you guard your heart from the lies that creep in..

Community Group Questions

1. Why do you think it is important we be aware, educated, and talk about false teaching?
2. In the example where Paul confronts Peter about what his actions were teaching the church, do you think he handled this right? What might be hard about having conversations like these when we see someone whose teaching is contrary to scripture?
3. What do you think it means when Jude says that false teachers hae crept their way into the church?
4. How are we supposed to "contend" for the faith? Are there more than one way that we need to be mindful of doing this?
5. In what ways do you think false teachings can pervert the truth of the gospel?

Related Texts

“Common salvation”

Titus 1:4 “To Titus, my true child in a common faith”

Those who shared in the faith of Jesus and his resurrection often referred to each other in the first century as being part of a common “faith” or “salvation.” This was not common as it happened regularly but instead that it was something common between the two of them that they could share in.

“To contend for the faith”

1 Timothy 6:12 - Fight the good fight of faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

2 Timothy 4:7 - I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Philippians 1:27 - Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.”

The work of faith is not always an easy one. We are called to contend and fight for our faith. This is not a physical fight as we have been told by the apostle Paul that our struggle is not with flesh and bone with a spiritual one. In this manner we need to be sure we are ready to fight for our faith. We fight temptation, we fight jealousy and comparison. We fight complacency and legalism. In the instance of this text we fight for truth by defending false teaching.

“For certain people have crept in unnoticed”

2 Peter 2:1 “But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you who will secretly bring in destructive heresies.”

Galatians 2:4 - “Yet because of false brothers secretly brought in - who slipped in to spy out our freedom that we have in Christ Jesus so that they might bring us into slavery. “

As stated this week in our message, false teachers don't announce that they are false teachers. So in the church we find that there is a risk and a caution against those who creep in with false doctrine. This doctrine is divisive, it created problem for the church, and ultimately works to bring us back under the slavery that Christ had freed us from. In Paul's letter the issue was more than likely the Jewish Christians who still wanted people in the church to adhere to Old Testament standards. In Peter's case and also in Jude's the false teachers were those who did not hold to the moral standards

Essay: Contend for the Faith in Confused Culture. Justin Dillehay

We live in a time of great theological confusion. According to Ligonier Ministry's latest [State of Theology](#) survey, 30 percent of professing evangelicals reject the deity of Christ, 46 percent believe people are good by nature, and 22 percent think gender identity is "a matter of personal choice."

Perhaps if surveys could've been taken in centuries past, we would find it has always been so. But our culture has definitely injected a strong dose of relativism and individualism that makes it hard for people to recognize any authority above themselves. As a result, people prefer a faith that resists clear definition and a Christianity empty of specific content.

All of which makes it a good time to reflect on [Jude 3](#), in which Jesus's half-brother urges us to "contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints." I want to look at this verse from three angles, which will clarify what it means to contend for the faith in an age of moral and theological confusion.

Faith with Definite Boundaries and Content

This word "faith" usually refers to that act of the heart by which we put our trust in Jesus Christ as our only hope in life and death. But "*the* faith" refers not to the *act* of believing, but rather to *what* is believed.

This suggests that even in the first century, there was already a recognized body of teaching that all Christians were expected to embrace. Jude can urge Christians in AD 65 to contend for "the faith" and assume they know what he's talking about. Unlike some modern skeptics, Jude doesn't speak of multiple "Christianities." Like Paul, he believes that there is "one faith" ([Eph. 4:5](#)), and that those who taught contrary to it were not simply offering valid alternatives, but were preaching false gospels ([Gal. 1:6–9](#)). Christians don't have to agree on everything (see [Rom. 14](#)), but they do have to agree on some things ([1 Cor. 15:3](#); [Gal. 1](#)).

It also suggests that though the Bible is a big book, its teaching can be accurately summarized. This is what a good creed or confession does. If a church's website doesn't contain a section telling me "What We Believe," I'm reluctant to point people to that church. You can't contend for something you can't define. The faith wasn't an empty bucket for Jude—it had content. Which raises the question, what was in that bucket?

Faith Filled with Moral and Doctrinal Truth

For Jude and the early church, the faith would have included both fundamental *moral* and *doctrinal* truths.

Moral Truth

First, the faith includes fundamental moral truths about sin and righteousness. Indeed, Jude was making this appeal precisely because "certain people [had] crept in unnoticed . . . *ungodly*

people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ” (v. 4).

Living in sensuality and then creating theological rationalizations for it is a denial of the faith—and of Christ. In a stroke that makes this passage extremely relevant for our culture, in which some churches are flying the rainbow flag in the name of Christian love, Jude cites as a warning the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, which “indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire,” and thus “serve as an example of undergoing a punishment of eternal fire”

Make no mistake: our apostolic faith states that “we believe in the forgiveness of sins” ([1 Cor. 6:9–11](#); [Col. 1:13–14](#)). But that also assumes we know what sin is. If “Christ died for our sins” is a matter “of first importance,” then a right understanding of sin must also be of first importance.

Jesus didn’t come to relax the commandments, and he didn’t die to change the moral grain of the universe ([Matt. 5:19](#)). He died so we could be forgiven and released from sin’s bondage; he was raised so we could walk in newness of life. That’s the faith. And that’s what these false teachers were denying—both in Jude’s day and in ours.

And lest I seem one-sided, let me add that we can deny the faith not only by affirming sexual immorality, but also by refusing to care for our aged parents: “If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, *he has denied the faith* and is worse than an unbeliever” ([1 Tim. 5:8](#)). The same faith that teaches us to flee fornication also teaches us to honor Mom and Dad.

Any attempt to reduce the faith to the doctrinal truths contained in the early creeds (usually in an effort to avoid conflict with the sexual revolution) is a pipe dream that puts people’s souls at risk.

Doctrinal Truth

If one ditch sees Christianity as simply affirming a set of doctrinal teachings (regardless of how you live), the other ditch sees Christianity as simply being a good person (regardless of what you believe). After all, surely one can be a good neighbor without believing in the Trinity!

Of course, no one should deny that atheists and Hindus can be good neighbors, or that loving neighbor is the heart of the faith. But it’s not the whole heart. Don’t forget the first great commandment, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart.” According to Jesus, “this is eternal life”—to know “the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom [he has] sent” ([John 17:3](#)).

A Christian is not simply someone who lives a certain way. A Christian is someone who believes certain things. The faith affirms that certain events really happened—like the creation of the universe *ex nihilo* and the resurrection of Jesus ([Heb. 11:3](#); [1 Cor. 15](#)). It affirms that certain statements are really true, such as “Jesus is Lord,” “the LORD is one,” and “all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols” ([Rom. 10:9](#); [1 Cor. 12:3](#); [Deut. 6:4](#); [1 Cor. 8:6](#); [Ps. 96:5](#)). And it affirms that certain events really will take place, like the judgment of the wicked and the resurrection of the body ([Jude 6, 14](#); [1 Cor. 15](#); [2 Tim. 2:18](#)).

Beliefs without behavior may be dead, but behavior without beliefs is deadly, too. The faith isn't simply about being a good person—it's about recognizing that you haven't been a good person. Claiming that "good" people can be saved regardless of what they believe about Jesus is moralism, pure and simple. It's a denial of the faith.

3. Faith That Outlasts the *Zeitgeist*

Orthodox Christians have repeatedly been told "Christianity must change or die, since modern man simply cannot be expected to believe in _____." Here's what's interesting: [Trevin Wax](#) points out that 100 years ago the things that "modern man" couldn't be expected to believe were usually the *doctrinal* truths—teachings like the virgin birth or the resurrection. Modern man in 1920 was fine with the Bible's morality, he just couldn't be expected to believe in miracles.

But today it's almost the reverse. It's the Bible's *moral* teachings that our culture finds offensive—especially on sexuality. And once again, we're told that we must evolve or die. Yet if you look back over the 20th century, you see the exact opposite. The churches that evolved were the churches that died. It's the churches who were willing to lose their lives who saved them.

Jude could've told us. The faith isn't something we can tweak to fit the *zeitgeist*, because the faith isn't something we invented—it's something that was "delivered once for all to the saints." And it's still the same today.

And though human cultures may alternate on which aspects of the faith they find most offensive, the same basic stumbling blocks remain. People still want a God who allows them to indulge their sensual appetites and who accepts them based on their good deeds. The Christian faith offers neither. Instead, it offers something better.

We do indeed live in a time of great theological confusion, and the temptation to give people what they *want* instead of what they *need* remains as strong as ever. But fallen people have never been good judges of what they need. So the most unloving thing we could do is tweak the faith in order to give people what they want. And the most loving thing we can do is exactly what Jude said: contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints.