

Background:

- The Letter of Jude, written in the mid-60s AD, is the 3rd smallest “book” in the New Testament
- It’s also one of the most overlooked letters in the New Testament
 - Jude quotes from two non-Biblical sources, though both are accepted in Jewish tradition
 - This caused many to distance themselves from the Letter and its place within the Bible
- The Letter of Jude resembles **2 Peter** in content and reason
 - *Of the twenty-five verses in Jude no less than fifteen appear, in whole or in part, in 2 Peter. – M. Green*
- His audience was Jewish Christians, most likely apart of churches he was shepherding
 - If Jude is using **2 Peter** as his basis for writing, then both letters have the same audience
- As we’ll see, his main purpose for writing was to warn against false teachers in the church, thus encouraging the church to take a firm stand in the truths of the Gospel
- The basic heresy (false teaching) of the false teachers:
 - Denial of Jesus as Lord
 - Justifying a sinful life – because the world is evil, it doesn’t matter how Christian’s live

Meeting Jude (Jude 1a):

- Jude, brother of James
 - There was only one James in the early church who did not need additional information attached to his name when people spoke of him – James, the half-brother of Jesus
 - After the birth of Jesus, Mary and Joseph had other kids, James being the oldest
 - **Matthew 13:55**, “Is not this the carpenter’s (Joseph’s) son? Is not His mother called Mary? And are not His brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And are not all His sisters with us?”
 - James and his siblings did not believe Jesus was the Messiah
 - **John 7:5**, “For not even His brothers believed in Him.”
 - However, after Jesus was killed and rose again to life, He appeared to James, and it was then that James became a follower of Jesus – along with the other siblings
 - **1 Corinthians 15:7**, “Then Jesus appeared to James, then to all the apostles.”
 - **Acts 1:14**, “(Everyone was) devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and His brothers and sisters.”
 - James was the leader of the Jerusalem Church (**Galatians 1:19, 2:9, Acts 15**)
 - James wrote of the New Testament letter, **James**
[Why does this matter?]
- Jude, brother of Jesus
 - If Jude (GK: Judas) is the brother of James, then Jude is also the half-brother of Jesus
 - **Matthew 13:55**

- So why does Jude refer to himself as a “servant” of Jesus Christ?
 - The term “servant” is often used by the apostles to describe their relationship and position with Jesus (**James – James 1:1; Paul – Philippians 1:1, Romans 1:1**)
 - Jude isn’t interested in building a name for himself – people already know him. Rather, James is interested in lifting up the name of Jesus and His gospel message.
 - He puts himself on the same level as others in the church. Just because his brother is Jesus, doesn’t mean he gets special treatment; he needs the power of the gospel just like everyone else.

Our Position of Freedom (Jude 1b-2):

- Jude begins his letter by reminding the church of what Jesus Christ has done for us, and that His actions bring us continual freedom
- It is apparent that those within the church have been bombarded with lies about Jesus, the Gospel message, and one’s new identity as a follower of Jesus
- Jude strikes hard against the lies with truth: we are ones who are called, loved, and kept
 - **Called**
 - This use of **called** in the Greek means, “invited, summoned by God to an office or to salvation.”
 - We have been called – extended an invitation by God, to be recipients of His salvation, to be His sons and daughters, to be His vessels in carrying forth the Gospel everywhere we go
 - We are called not because of our merits or worth, but because of His merits and worth
 - He who called us did so out of a great love for us, and He wills to keep us in this love and calling
 - This calling from God, then, causes us to interact with Jesus in personal experience similar to other relationships. Just as we long for fellowship with others, so we must long for and practice fellowship with Jesus. When He calls, are we ready and willing to listen?
 - Jude is reminding us to listen to the voice of our Savior and Shepherd, high above all other voices that are vying for our attention

The times the twelve apostles spent with Jesus were as important as His teachings. All the words of Jesus recorded in the Gospels can be read in less than an hour, but He spent three years interacting with the apostles. – P. Coleman

- **Loved**
 - Literally, “beloved **IN God the Father**,” an intimate love that draws us into the presence of God
 - There is nothing mundane or static about our relationship with God through Jesus Christ. It is real!
 - This is not emotionalism, but a **reality of the incredible union we have with God because of Jesus**
 - With all the insecurity that surrounds us, **we must rest in this security: we are loved by God**
 - Keeping ourselves aware of this great love – daily, gives us staying power within the Christian life
- **Kept**
 - Means to reserve (to refrain from disposing) and preserve (to keep alive, safe from harm)
 - This word and emphasis bookends Jude’s letter. The same word for kept in **verse 3** is used again in **verse 24**, “**Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling.**”

We have been called, which refers to God's gracious acts in the past; we are loved, which describes His gracious attitude to us in the present; and we are being kept for a wonderful future with Him in endless glory. – C. Green

- Since we are called, loved, kept by Jesus, we receive mercy, peace, and love from Him daily
 - **Mercy**
 - Refers to the mercy which God gives freely to us daily, and also the mercy we are to extend others – especially those who have slipped away into unbelief
 - **Peace**
 - Refers to God's gift of peace in our minds, and also God's ability to sustain us and pull us through the rough areas – trials, persecutions, temptations, etc.
 - **Love**
 - Refers to a love that leads us to our destination, which is God's presence – a radar guides a plane

Our Position of Faith (Jude 3):

- Jude was hoping to send a letter about the commonality the church experiences together – namely our salvation and faith, however he is pressed to send a different letter
- Jude reminds us of a simple, yet sometimes forgettable, truth: the global Church shares one common salvation – meaning it is only through Jesus Christ that we go from death to life, and are given eternal life
 - Salvation is not up for debate or nor does it need to be updated to modern times
- Jude also reminds us of another simple, yet sometimes forgettable, truth: the global Church holds to a common confession of faith (this is what Jude means with the phrase, “*the faith*”)
 - The confession of faith is the Gospel message of Jesus – that which has been passed down and brings about salvation
- This common faith, Jude writes, is under attack and many false teachers are leading Christians away from the truth. The issue back then exists still today. And so how do we respond?
 - **Contend for the faith**
 - Means to oppose whatever is not of God's truth. This Greek phrase exemplifies a wrestling match
 - It is paramount that the church holds firm to the Christian teachings (or doctrines) and to the Person to which they point towards
 - **Delivered**
 - Means to give or hand down something. In this use, God has entrusted us with His truth
 - **Once for all**
 - Means something that is authoritative and complete
 - The faith, which Jude speaks of, is objective – it's not influenced by personal feelings or agendas
 - The false teachers were being subjective with the Gospel in their leadership: denial of the resurrection, denial of Jesus coming back, denial of Jesus being both God and man, denial of grace, and denial of sin

- Today, these teachings still run rampant in society and within the church: denial of accountability, denial of ones need for salvation, denial of grace and mercy, denial of spiritual growth (sanctification), denial of God’s design for sexuality
- We cannot add or subtract from the Bible the parts we do not like or have trouble following! We don’t get to make those decisions. Either we believe all of the Bible to be God’s spoken and revealed word, or we don’t believe any of it is true.
- And if we believe it to be true, then God’s Word becomes **THE** rule for our life: **2 Timothy 3:16-17**, “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

Our Position of Focus (Jude 4):

- Jude is not speaking of some far off event, that may happen; rather, he is speaking of something that is taking place currently within the churches he’s writing to
 - **Crept in unnoticed**
 - Meaning although the people spoke the Christian language, wore a cross around their neck, came to church every Sunday, quoted Bible verses, and knew the secret Christian handshake, Jude is warning the church: do not take these people at face value
 - If a pastor, ministry leader, evangelist, or bible teacher teaches anything that contradicts this book, they are a false teacher – plain and simple! **Be awake!**
 - **Pervert the grace of our God**
 - God’s grace is not a license to keep on sinning and living as if we’re still in charge of things. If we trust Jesus Christ to be our Lord and Savior, then His life becomes ours and our life becomes His – He’s in control.
 - God’s grace liberates us from the bondages of our old life, and teaches us how to walk in step with the Holy Spirit who lives within us. **Walk in the freedom of God’s grace!**
 - **Deny Jesus Christ**
 - End of **verse 4**, “Jude applies to Jesus not only the usual title Lord, but the much stronger term **Sovereign**, a word the New Testament normally reserves for the sovereignty of God the Father.”
 - In the end, the false teachers spoke against and led others to live against the sovereignty of Jesus
 - Jesus Christ has absolute right to our sole obedience and loyalty. He has unrestricted authority over us, because He is our only Sovereign Savior. **Keep your life centered around Him alone!**

We are a people called, loved, and kept by Jesus Christ, and because of Jesus Christ.
 There is no other way to live in such grace.
 There is no other Gospel to proclaim.

Jude continues forward with these foundational truths by taking a look at lessons from the past.

In **verses 1-4** of **Jude**, we are reminded of these truths:

- We are a people called, loved, and kept by our only Sovereign and Lord, Jesus Christ
- We share a common salvation, and a “once for all” and certain faith, which we are to contend for, within an age of uncertainty

Jude now recalls events of the past in order to help believers see two key points:

- **The faithfulness and Sovereignty of God** within present and future events
- To show that **God will judge** those who distort His truth and authority for personal gain

Now to remind you (Jude 5a):

- The examples of events Jude is about to use are not unfamiliar to his audience. The call to remember in the Bible is important – it’s a duty, an act of the will (**Veteran’s Day parade**)
- Remembering isn’t commanded because we’ve simply forgotten about something
Remembering is commanded because it cements us into the Truth that much deeper
- **We are called to remember, because God remembers**; and He’s constantly reminding us that He remembers what He has said and what He has done for us. It’s **His way of underlining the seriousness of His commitment**.
- Remembering brings us to trust that much more who God is, what God has done, and what God will do, because He is our only Sovereign God.

The fallen believers (Jude 5b):

- In the OT book, **Exodus (6:2-7 & 12)**, we read about Moses who led God’s people (Israel) out of imprisonment from Egypt, and into the promised land God was giving them as their own
 - **God desires to call all of His people out of something and into something that is greater than what they are leaving**. Remember, God’s best for you is always Himself.
- However, throughout the journey to the promised land, many of God’s people rebelled against Him, seeking after “greater” things than what God provided. They longed for Egypt because they didn’t like current conditions: **from rebelling against Moses, to bickering about God’s provision of food, to the fear of entering the promised land itself because of “what may happen once in there,” the reality of bondage was safer than the reality of freedom**.
 - **Freedom takes work. It takes commitment. It’s takes a faith bigger than yourself**. Ask any addict about their journey of recovery and they will tell you that the journey is often long, hard, and lonely. However, most will also tell you, the journey is worth every step, because every step forward is a step further into freedom and further from prison.
- Because these unbelievers continued to long for Egypt, **God granted their desire and allowed them to be destroyed by their own doings**. In the end, the people rejected being called by God.
 - About these particular events, Paul says in **1 Corinthians 10:6, 11**, “Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did... they were written down for our instruction.”

- **What is our “Egypt”** – the thing we long for, what we refuse to give up, that ends up being the “god” we trust and worship?
- The One who led God’s people out of Egypt was Jesus Christ (in the form of a cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night – **Exodus 13:21-22**). The One to lead us out of our “egypt” is Jesus Christ.
- Jude says, “**Don’t be like the people who died in the desert because God wasn’t sufficient for them.**”

The fallen angels (Jude 6):

- Next, Jude recalls the fallen angels who rebelled against God and their position of authority He had given them
 - This event happened when **Satan tried to overthrow God**. Because of this, God banished Satan from Heaven, and bound him to earth. When Satan was thrown out, he took with him a third of the angels – those who sided with Satan.
- Jude says that these angels did not “**stay within their own position of authority,**” rather **they chose selfish ambition over submission**. They wanted an authority they were not granted.
- In the end, these angels, who once lived within the presence of God Himself, rejected being kept by God. Therefore, God is “keeping” them bound in darkness until the great day of judgment:

“The rebellious angels, approximately one-third of the entire heavenly host, were banished from their exalted position and condemned to eternal punishment. Yet it is clear that neither Satan nor the fallen horde are currently in hell. That punishment is still future, following the millennial reign of Christ and the devil’s final rebellion. For the present, [Satan] prowls around like a roaring lion, and his rebellious cohorts torment whomever they find vulnerable.” – **Paul Coleman**

The fallen cities (Jude 7):

- Next, Jude recalls the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and surrounding cities (**Genesis 19**)
- These cities, specifically Sodom and Gomorrah, were filled with people who lived against the rule of God. **These cities were given rich blessings** (based upon where they were situated within the land), and **yet they rejected these blessings, and the God of these blessings**, through such things as arrogance, self-centeredness, and a pursuit of unnatural desires.
 - “**Unnatural desires**” simply means that people lusted after each other, regardless of gender and relationship status. They mocked God’s design for sex and relationships.
- Their punishment was total separation from God, **because they failed to repent and acknowledge Him as the one and only true God**.
- In the end, these cities rejected being loved by God and remaining in His presence. **Their self-love was more satisfying than what they believed God could provide**.

Rebellious Authority (Jude 8-10):

- In **verse 8**, Jude connects the past with the present, and states just as the people in these events acted, so the false teachers of today act in great rebellious authority:
 - They proclaim their own version of God's truth (*relying on their dreams*)
 - They indulge in sexual perversion and justify their immoral actions (*defile the flesh*)
 - They reject the lordship of Jesus over their lives (*reject authority – reject lordship*)
 - They treated God with irreverence and called spiritual things evil (*blaspheme glorious ones*)
- To this last point, Jude brings another illustration out, this time from the book of “**Assumption of Moses**.” He illustrates a situation happening between **the Archangel Michael and Satan regarding the dead body of Moses**.
 - The specific meaning of this verse varies and it would surely send us on a rabbit trail
 - The basic reason for Jude to include this story is to illustrate this point:
 - *If God's Archangel found it necessary to not take hold of authority that did not belong to him, and found it necessary to not declare a legal judgment against Moses or Satan, then neither should God's people – especially teachers of God's word*
- Jude continues: *these present false teachers destroy themselves by what they do not understand and by what they do understand yet fail to submit under*.
 - **We are saved by God's grace** – His work alone saves us. Our salvation calls us, then, to **live under the lordship of Jesus Christ** – He alone leads us. If we don't understand how to live under the lordship of Jesus, we seek help from others and the Holy Spirit.

Rebellious Ambitions (Jude 11-13):

- Woe to their rebellious ambitions, Jude says (again highlighting examples of how not to live)
 - **Cain** – killed his brother Abel out of jealousy
 - **Balaam** – was lured by greed to speak falsely against God and His people astray
 - **Korah** – tried to lead a revolt against Moses and God's authority
- Next, Jude uses natural illustrations to again make his point – **driving home the seriousness of false teachers within the local church**
 - **Hidden reefs** can destroy a boat from the bottom up if one is not paying close attention
 - **Shepherds** are supposed to care for their sheep first, not themselves
 - **Waterless clouds** give the appearance of refreshment but always disappoint recipients
 - **Fruit trees** that continually bear no fruit or rotten fruit – no life within their roots
 - **Waves** that are uncontrolled wash up tons of debris and cause damage
 - **Stars** that do not function as they were created to be
- Despite how destructive, immoral, and rebellious the false teachers become and deface the Gospel, Jude speaks forth a prophetic word of authority and certainty: Behold, the Lord comes

Behold, the Lord (Jude 14-16):

- Jude quotes from **1 Enoch**, which was discovered in the second century before Christ, and was an accepted book within Judaism at the time of the New Testament. It was also apart of the normal Jewish Christian's understanding.

- The **book of Enoch** gave further explanation to early events found in Genesis 1-6, and gave prophetic word about the final judgment of God – the second coming of Jesus Christ.
 - Enoch was a man of God
 - **Genesis 5:21-24**, “Enoch pleased God... he walked with God and he was not, for God took him.”
 - **Hebrews 11:5**, “By faith Enoch was taken up so that he should not see death, and he was not found, because God had taken him. Now before he was taken he was commended as having pleased God.”
 - Enoch was a trusted prophet of God (the first prophet to speak about the second coming of Jesus!)
- The word of Enoch was given **against those who rebelled against God and willingly (and convincingly) led others to rebel against God**, too
- Jude’s inclusion of Enoch’s prophecy is to make clear to the church and to any false teacher that **God’s judgment is universal, moral, and final**
 - **Jude** *BST page 209, highlighted area*
- **How then do we respond?**
 - Believe and trust in a God bigger than yourself
 - Believe and trust in a Savior greater than yourself
 - Believe and trust in a Spirit wiser than yourself
 - Remember who God is, what God has done, and what God promises to do
 - Remember who you are: called, loved, and kept by Jesus Christ
 - Remember who leads you forth: the Spirit of God who lives within you
- Behold, the Lord comes. Let us persevere till the end.

In **verses 1-4** of **Jude**, we are reminded of these truths:

- We are a people called, loved, and kept by our only Sovereign and Lord, Jesus Christ
- We share a common salvation and a certain faith, which we are to contend for, within an age of uncertainty

In **verses 5-16** of **Jude**, we are reminded of these truths:

- The faithfulness and Sovereignty of God within past, present, and future events
- The sobering truth that God will severely judge those who distort His truth and authority for personal gain

Theme of Remembrance:

- Throughout Jude, a theme of remembrance keeps appearing:
 - **Jude 1** – remember who you are because of Jesus
 - **Jude 5** – remember the faithfulness and authority of God
 - **Jude 14** – remember the Lord is victorious
 - **Jude 17** – remember how to live
 - **Jude 24** – remember the presence and power of Jesus
- [Is it easier to believe a lie than it is to believe a truth? Why?](#)
- [How do we forget truth? How do we remember truth?](#)
- Jude implores his brothers and sisters in Christ: **YOU MUST REMEMBER BELOVED...**

The Warning (Jude 17-19):

- Jude reminds the church of the apostle's warning:
 - People will mock and reject you for believing in Jesus and for living differently
 - People will promote themselves and justify their sin
 - Simply: [the world is going to get worse before it gets better](#)
 - These scoffers will be both non-Christians and "Christians"
 - "Christians" who once believed truth, but have traded truth for lies
 - Paul gives a similar warning in **2 Timothy 4:3-4** concerning "Christians" in the last days:
 - **For a time is coming when people** (non-Christians and "Christians") **will not endure sound teaching** (healthy: good, useful, correct), **but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.**
 - Basically, these "Christians" will say: I'll take Jesus, but I will take Him only on my terms. I don't want to be held accountable, I don't want to grow in my faith, I don't want to listen to a pastor, I don't want to fellowship with a church family... **I want a silo faith.**
 - [When we disconnect ourselves from one another](#), we disconnect from the gospel (what is truth, what is life, what is good), and we disconnect from Jesus Himself. We move from **"what I know to be true,"** towards **"what I want truth to be"** / from a rock foundation to a sand foundation

- Jude’s reference to “**in the last time**” means the **entire period from when Jesus ascended back into Heaven till His return to earth**.
 - It’s the period of waiting which we currently live, and in which the early church lived
 - In the first coming of Jesus, **He came as the Savior of the world**
 - In the next coming of Jesus, **He comes as the Judge of the world**
- In these last days, these false teachers (false Christians) will be recognized by:
 - **Their pursuit of division**
 - This is a **division within the church**: those who believe the gospel that has been proclaimed, and those who believe a “new gospel” – updated to fit the times
 - A lot of church splits happen because of such divisions; as well as cults form
 - **Their love of self**
 - Since some believed (and taught) that the spiritual was separated from the physical, and neither had influence on the other, **these false teachers believed they could live however they wanted and their actions had no consequences on their salvation or relationship with Jesus**
 - Again, Christians who want to be unaccountable
 - **Their void of the Spirit**
 - There is split understanding of what Jude is saying here: either Jude is saying these false teachers have lost their salvation or he is saying they have lost the influence of the Holy Spirit
 - **Either way, the Spirit is not active in their life**

The Charge (Jude 20-23):

- Jude’s use of “**But**” strikes a firm contrast between what is found within the false teachers and what should be found within followers of Jesus Christ:
 - **Building yourselves up**
 - This compound word speaks of building a large structure on an existing foundation – in this case, **building the church upon the already laid foundation** of Jesus Christ and His message
 - This word is also in the present tense, meaning it’s an **ongoing action**
 - The phrase is plural, meaning it’s a **corporate activity and corporate concern** for one another (one’s faith, one’s health, one’s family, etc.)
 - Additionally, we all play an important role in building up the church.
 - If you rely on me to teach you the Bible and teach you how to be a Christian, and you take no initiative on your own during the week to learn these things, your relationship with Jesus will be unhealthy
 - Likewise, if you refuse to use the gifts and knowledge the Lord has given you to disciple and lead others in their faith as a Christian, your relationship with Jesus is just as unhealthy
 - **Let our lives be shaped by the faith we profess & let the faith we profess be evident in how we live**

- **Praying in the Holy Spirit**
 - Let [the Holy Spirit direct us](#) in what we pray about (words, visions, names, etc)
 - Ask the Holy Spirit fill you each day
 - Every believer receives the Holy Spirit when they confess Jesus as their Savior
 - Every believer needs a continual filling of the Holy Spirit. Why? Because we leak! We leak when we continually go about the day in our own strength; when we continually try to be our own savior. We leak because we're human.
 - This does not mean specifically “praying in tongues,” though this gift definitely still exists. The emphasis Jude is making is this: [pray continually, and when you do listen and obey the Holy Spirit](#)
- **Keep yourselves in the love of God**
 - A command to [plant ourselves like a mountain and don't move](#) from God's love
 - [We echo God's love by our obedience to Him](#)

John 14:14, “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”

John 15:9-10, “As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Abide in My love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.”

 - **LISTEN:** This is not saying, “If you obey Me, *then* I'll love you.” We *cannot* do anything to earn more of God's love or earn a better salvation. Our merits mean nothing. [Rather, our obedience keeps us grounded in God's love.](#) Our obedience is an affirmation of our love for Jesus: [because He loves me, I want to live for Him](#)
- **Waiting for the mercy of Jesus' coming**
 - This simply means we [cling to the promise that Jesus is coming back](#), and those who have trusted Him as Savior and Lord will live with Him forever!
 - This hope and promise is grounded in God's mercy through Jesus Christ
- It is this mercy, Jude calls us to respond with when brothers and sisters in Christ are being carried away by false teaching
- Jude describes three kinds of people being led away from the faith
 - **Those who doubt**
 - We are to have mercy on those who doubt (fearful in putting their full trust in the Christian faith)
 - We are to [provide for them an open space to ask questions](#) and receive answers, bathed in the same mercy God extends to us
 - **Those headed into false belief**
 - In this verse and the next, Jude gives us hope that neither those heading into false belief or those teaching false belief are beyond God's mercy and salvation
 - Those heading in false belief, we are to snatch them back to safety – [reminding them of the gospel](#)

Galatians 6:1, “Brothers and sisters, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.”

○ **Those teaching false belief**

- Again, they are not beyond God's mercy, **IF** they repent and come back to the gospel – Jesus' death brings us new life
 - We are to **show them compassion and speak forth the truth of the gospel without compromise**
 - We do this in fear – **being watchful and cautious, that we do not fall into their deception**
 - **We also do not act like them** in that we do not allow pride to dominate us, nor do we gloat at their demise (if such should happen). **Rather we weep for them and intercede for them all the more**, that they may be restored to the faith and in right fellowship with God and His church.
- The One is who able to keep us built up together upon a solid foundation, to keep us praying in the Holy Spirit, to keep us in the love of God, and who keeps us in His mercy so that it flows through us into the lives of those around us, is our only God and Savior Jesus Christ.