



VERSE BY VERSE MINISTRY
INTERNATIONAL

TEACHING THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD

Jude - Lesson 1

Jude 1-3

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- The book of Jude is a small book with a power-packed message.
 - It is small in the sense that it is 25 verses long.
 - Yet it is power-packed in the sense that the writer leaves no table unturned regarding remaining faithful in the faith amongst false teachers.
 - This book contains both immense love and affection for God’s people while giving much-needed caution and warning.
 - Immense love and affection in the sense that the writer uses the word beloved 4 times which is representative of God’s abounding love.
 - It is a word of warning and caution to warrant the believer against the schemes and tricks of false teaching and false teachers.
 - This caution is so necessary that the writer of Jude barely completes his salutation to address the elephant in the room.
 - Check out what he says in verse 3 of Jude.

Jude 3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all time handed down to the saints.

- Jude’s urgency in writing this letter to primarily Jewish Christians in the Diaspora is that they remain faithful in the faith, or they will give way to apostasy.
 - This departure from the faith can begin very subtly until, soon, one finds themselves in full denial of what it is they once knew.
 - This is ultimately a result of letting their proverbial doctrinal and theological walls down.
 - In an effort to guard these precious believers in the faith, Jude, through his passionate yet convicting tone, urges them to stand firm and fight the good fight.
- The structure of this letter is based upon poetic groupings of threes, known as triads – this Jewish epistle alone totals 14 triads.
 - We will see throughout this book that Jude makes many connections to Old Testament references and history.
 - What stands out in this book that has raised concerns to some is the extra-biblical material used in this letter.
 - These extra-biblical materials are what’s known as apocryphal literature and are used as elements from this literature that contain truth.
 - The two books Jude references are the Assumption of Moses and the Book of Enoch.
 - Because of the use of these references, there are many scholars who have even questioned the canonical authenticity of this book.
 - However, Jude is a part of the 66 books and according to 2 Timothy 3:16, All scripture is inspired by God.
 - So what does this mean for you and me today, reading this letter?

- It means that we can trust the legitimacy of this book in the bible regardless of the extra-biblical material.
 - We must understand, the use of these extra-biblical materials is what is inspired and NOT the source itself.
- Lastly, this book is estimated to have been written between AD 67-68. We are able to gather this because of its similar content found in 2 Peter.
 - It is estimated that Jude may have written this letter of warning after 2 Peter being that Second Peter was written between AD 65-67.
 - Peter, in his second letter, was warning the churches that false teachers would be coming in to corrupt and unravel the faith.
 - Whereas, Jude’s letter alludes to the fact that these men have already arrived.
 - We will see how Jude will take examples from the old testament references and the use of extra-biblical material to make a clear and concise point.
 - That if we remain firmly in the faith that we have been called to and live it out, we will not be uprooted or moved.
 - If I were to put a tag on this text, it would be “Contend for the faith”.
- And with all that being said, let’s dive into the book of Jude.
 - Pick me up at verse 1 and we will read verses one through three this morning together.

Jude 1 Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ:

Jude 2 May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.

Jude 3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all *time* handed down to the saints.

- It’s recommended that about every 5,000 miles or so, you should have the oil changed in your vehicle.
 - If you’re like me, you may depend a bit more heavily on the sticker they give you at the end of your oil change.
 - It’s on that sticker that they provide you the date you should return for a routine oil change.
 - And just in case that isn’t good enough, they even indicate the mileage you should be at to return for your next oil change.
 - Unfortunately, the problem with that sticker in the very top left corner of my windshield, is that I don’t pay much attention to it.
 - However, the moment that the oil light pops on in my car I become extremely shocked because I have forgotten the reminder in the corner.
 - That sticker that was handed down to me through the window has now become less and less prominent.

- You see that sticker carries much importance. It was handed down with good measure with the intent to prevent damage to my vehicle.
 - However, if I am not diligent in being reminded of what needs to be known to provide safety to my car, I jeopardize the very health of my vehicle.
- In this same way, these majority Jewish Christians have been handed down an important message.
 - That message of warning was indicated in 2 Peter 2:1-2. Here is the message:

2 Peter 2:1 But false prophets also appeared among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

2 Peter 2:2 Many will follow their indecent behavior, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned;

- ◦ But like that oil sticker, they don't take the time to remind themselves of this warning to guard their churches and their hearts.
- As we open up the book of Jude, we will see how Jude unfolds this letter to draw us to a point of focus.
 - Pick me up in verse 1.

Jude 1 Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ:

- With any typical epistle, the writer of the letter, typically an Apostle, begins with their name.
 - However, the author of this particular epistle is not an apostle.
 - As a matter of fact Jude is not the author's true name.
 - His actual name is Judah or Judas based upon the Greek text.
 - You may recognize the Greek translation of the name, Judas, based upon the one who betrayed our Lord, Jesus Christ; Judas Iscariot.
 - It could be assumed that the name Judas tends to carry about a negative association.
 - It could be reasoned that this is why the translators chose to change the name from Judas to Jude.
 - I personally find it interesting that the purpose of this letter and the naming of this letter are rooted in the same intent of the letter.
 - To distance the believers, the writer of this letter, and the truth of the scriptures, from the false teachers and their treacherous teaching.
 - So for the purpose of this letter moving forward, we will identify the author as Jude.
- Jude starts the introduction of his letter by mentioning he is a bond-servant of Jesus

and then follows up by saying “and brother of James”.

- To a typical reader, one may rush past this detail but it is key to hone into what may seem as a minor detail.
 - Jude mentions that he is the brother of James which begs the question why mention this relationship at all.
 - I believe the mentioning of this detail is two-fold, but let’s address the history here.
- Jude is the brother of James and the half-brother of Jesus.
 - Jude’s familial connection to Jesus, doesn’t take precedence over his spiritual relation to Jesus.
 - Recognize that Jude isn’t name-dropping here. Rather his approach is that of humility and subjugation.
 - What is significant about this detail is that both Jude and James prior to the resurrection and ascension of Jesus did not believe he was Messiah.
- The knowledge of their brother being Messiah came after the fact.
 - One could assume observing the ministry of their brother prior to the cross could have served as an indication of him being Messiah.
 - However, Jude’s heart is not illumined to the truth until after the fact.
- Why do I mention this?
 - The scriptures make it clear that association and revelation are two completely different things.
 - You can know about Jesus and maybe even associate where he may be but you can only know him if you are called by Him.
- This is why I love the language that is used in v.1 where the author mentions that Jude is a bond servant.
 - The word for bondservant, as you have heard many times, in Greek is *duolos*. It simply means “one made a slave”
- Remember, Jude didn’t make himself a slave. He had no conception of his brother being the Messiah and denied it as did James, prior to the resurrection.
 - James 7:5 says this:

James 7:5 For not even His brothers believed in Him.

- ○ Let’s be honest, if you are hearing your brother doing all of these amazing miracles, raising people from the dead.
 - Opening blind eyes, and walking on water. You would think they would believe Jesus was who He said He was.
- This simply goes to show you that no one can come to the knowledge of God unless God makes Himself known to them.
 - John 6:65 says it this way:

John 6:65 And He was saying, “For this reason, I have told you that no one can

come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.”

- ◦ Jude continues in the same verse.
- “To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ:”
 - It is here that we see this trinitarian statement of truth in our first triad from Jude.
 - Jude mentions the following words: Called, Beloved, and Kept. Do you see it there in the text?
 - Those who are made slaves of Christ are those who are made slaves by God.
 - The calling comes from God, the love is initiated by God, and the keeping is accomplished in God.
 - 2 Peter 1:3 says it this way:

2 Peter 1:3 for His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

- The calling of men and women to faith is based upon the illumination of the Holy Spirit.
 - What a gift of grace that is!
 - Why? Because you have nothing to do with this regenerative process.
 - 1 Corinthians 12:3 says:

1 Corinthians 12:3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus is accursed”; and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.

- We then see that we were called because of the Father’s love for us.
 - It was the Father’s love that qualified you and me to be called.
 - When you think on the reality that being a believer wasn’t based upon a tryout or trial run but Divine election, it changes things.
 - Family, this is something to give God praise for.
 - Jude is pointing to the fact of identity and fellowship here. We are intimately known and loved by the Father.
 - And lastly, Jude mentions the fact that we are kept for Jesus Christ.
 - Notice that word for – we are kept FOR Jesus.
 - Simply put, you and I are not the center of God’s world. Jesus is!
 - You are not the prize friends, Christ is the prize and Christ gets the Glory.
 - And we should recognize that Jesus MUST be the object of our affections.
 - The faster we realize that we are eternally kept and forever slaves to Christ, the more clearly we can see the love of God all the more.
 - We must recognize that our calling into the faith is not something that we can

initiate.

- Our calling into this faith is not something that we can experience on an intellectual capacity or even geographical proximity.
- This saving relationship of divine intervention is accomplished because of the divine work of a loving savior!
 - Jude clearly is speaking to a particular audience and with a particular kind of love and concern.
- We will see later on in the text why Jude uses this collective and affectionate language to this group of primarily Jewish Christians.
 - Jude continues on in verse 2

Jude 2 May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.

- We arrive to our second triad in this letter from Jude. He mentions Mercy, peace, and love.
 - His prayer is simple, “may these things (mercy, peace, and love) be multiplied to each of the Christian believers.”
 - It is mercy that has been extended to the believer by way of God’s love that we escape the penalty of sin and the wrath of God.
 - This mercy that has been demonstrated prevents us from eternal separation from God and an eternity in hell.
 - This mercy is a sign of relief knowing that what we rightfully deserved has been satisfied in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - Before we move on too quickly from mercy, we cannot ignore the second way that mercy impacts us.
 - Mercy will also be needed to combat these false teachers and teachings, especially in these trying times.
 - Remember, that these Jewish Christians have been dispersed and are experiencing the uprising of false teachers within the churches.
 - They are living amongst wicked and perverse teaching and teachers within the church.
 - And they are surrounded by the constant pull of men endorsing sin, perversion, and evil all in the name of “grace”.
 - For those who may not have been strong in the faith or rooted in sound teaching, this environment would have been enticing to give into.
 - But for others, they would manage to remain faithful in the hope that is within them and faithful to the Gospel that took hold of them.
 - If we were to be honest with where our world is today, even within the Big C church, we aren’t too removed from Jude’s warning against false teachers.
 - Within churches today, there is a lack of sound teaching, to the point that grace is used as a pass to sin, and folks think it’s okay.
 - This is why Jude mentions mercy, peace, and love being multiplied to each of

them.

- The cultural and environmental situation will not get any better.
 - The circumstances facing these believers will not change.
 - And friends may I say, the world we live in is not going to get any better until Jesus comes back.
- But in the meantime, while we wait to be with Christ, Jude prays that mercy is multiplied. Why, because it's desperately needed.
- Mercy to sustain the difficulties and distractions of this life, especially the very present struggles of sin around us.
 - God will provide the means to keep us and sustain us in our most urgent time of need.
 - Hebrews 4:16 says this:

Hebrews 4:16 Therefore let's approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace for help at the time of *our* need.

- Our confidence as believers can only found in the person and work of Christ.
 - We can be and should be most satisfied in Him, even when things around us look bleak and hopeless.
 - Jude continues by saying “ may peace be multiplied.”
 - The word peace here in the Greek is *eirēnē*. It means freedom from worry.
 - This is a peace that is not moved by what is around.
 - It would require you to be steadfast and confident with who you are in Christ, with your eyes fixed on the Hope of eternal life.
 - This is a peace that surpasses all understanding.
 - This peace reminds me of the hymn written by Horatio Spafford after the tragic death of his four children while sailing on vacation.
 - The only survivor in his family on that ship was his wife.
 - After having received a telegram from his wife stating the tragic accident that had occurred, he immediately set sail for England.
 - It is documented that the captain of the ship, aware of Mr. Spafford's loss, enlightens him that the area they were sailing through was where his daughters drowned.
 - It was there where Spafford penned the words we all now know and love.

**When peace like a river, attendeth my way
 When sorrows like sea billows roll
 Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say
 It is well, it is well, with my soul**

- Friends it is this peace that Jude reminds these Jewish believers of during the uprising

of false teachers within their congregation.

- And may I say this, that it will be and must be the peace of God that guards your hearts during difficult seasons of life.
 - As Paul told the church at Philippi in Chapter 4 verse 7:

Philippians 4:7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

- The last of the triad is love. Jude prays that love be multiplied to the believers.
 - This love is a specific love. This love that Jude mentions is Agape love.
 - Jude’s prayer in his opening salutation centers on the believer’s spiritual well-being and affections for Christ.
 - His prayer is that mercy, peace, and love be given to them abundantly because they will need them as they combat the false teachers of their day.
 - They will also need this multiplied to remain focused, unmoved, and faithful during these difficult days ahead.
 - It is after this greeting and heartfelt prayer, that Jude moves to the purpose of his letter.
 - Check out verse 3.

Jude 3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all *time* handed down to the saints.

- Here again, Jude uses this heartfelt language, clearly addressing those who are beloved by the Father, called by the Spirit, and kept by the Son.
 - I want you to lean into the language here.
 - There has been a directional change in the focus of the message.
 - Jude’s original focus on one particular topic has moved to something that he deems as a much more pressing matter.
 - The first thing we can observe from the text is Jude’s original intent was to “write about a common salvation”.
 - We see a similar use of the phrase “common faith” from Paul in his letter to Titus.
 - Titus 1:4, where Paul says these words,

Titus 1:4 To Titus, my true son in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

- This word “common” comes from the Greek word *koinos* which means shared in common or jointly shared.

- Notice though Jude uses the word “our” before common salvation, meaning that this faith is communally shared because we are in fellowship
- This faith that Jude is speaking about is in regards to the teachings that have been passed down by the Apostles.
 - This faith is the Gospel message that has been preached into the hearing of these Jewish Christians.
- The message of the Gospel is what the audience of this letter and Jude share together.
 - We will never know what that original message from Jude would have fully entailed.
 - However, it is evident that what the Holy Spirit directly inspired Jude to write was placed in the scriptures for such a time and at the right time.
 - Check out the next part of the verse.
- Jude says he felt the “necessity” to write about something entirely different.
- It’s like that dreaded call you receive when you have made plans with friends or relatives and they say “Hey, about those plans we talked about...I have a last-minute change”
 - In some instances, it’s disappointing, but for most cases, the change in plans requires immediate attention due to the present circumstance.
 - Recognize what’s happening here.
 - There was an original intent in writing this letter, however, that due to the circumstances observed, things needed to change.
 - One thing is clear: It is evident that when the Holy Spirit speaks we must yield and be sensitive to the direction by which He is leading us.
- For me, entering into full-time ministry in the time that I did, was not something I had anticipated so soon.
 - However, making room for the Holy Spirit to order my steps, shifted my direction and my life’s focus.
 - I went from teaching high school students to where I am now, because I yielded to God’s plans for my life.
 - The question that we must ask ourselves this morning is, are we making room for God to bring about divine detours?
 - Detours that are sovereignly orchestrated to get our attention and bring God glory in our active participation.
 - We see further along in the verse why Jude is compelled to abruptly change the focus and direction of the letter’s intent.
 - He is appealing to the believers whose faith is in the Lord Jesus Christ, to contend earnestly for the faith.
 - The word “contend earnestly” here in the text is the Greek word *epagōnizomai*. It means to struggle for or fight for the faith.
 - Jude’s tone here is unrelenting to the point of pleading.
 - Stand firm in this truth and be confident of who you are in the Lord and what

you have been taught. Don't forget!

- As a parent, we labor, work, train, and disciple our children to be honorable and respectful in public spaces because we have put in the work at home.
 - It is our hope that when our children are not in our presence that they behave and act the way we have taught them.
 - As a child, before my sister and I would leave the house, my mother would have “The Talk”
 - That talk would go a little something like this...
 - “Don't you act a fool out here in public, you are a Livingston. You represent me, you represent your father, you represent me, and most importantly you represent God.”
 - The focus was to know how to behave because of who we represent and who we were.
 - And in this same way, Jude is earnestly reminding these believers of who they are and that they have been bought with a price.
 - Jude then moves to a key phrase that I don't want us to rush over. This point is key to the entire pivot of the letter and message to these believers.
 - The struggle or the fight for the faith is to maintain what the apostles have taught and have handed down to the believers, to the called.
 - Jude mentions that this faith “was once for all *time* handed down to the saints.”
- Jude is writing this letter to this group of believers that somewhere down the line between Peter's warning and now have become, in a way, lackadaisical in their faith.
 - These men and women have apparently not been guarding the gate of their pulpits.
 - Somehow these Christian believers have allowed false teaching to creep inside of their doors to the point that it is unnoticeable.
 - We will get to that point in the next part of our study in Jude.
 - Jude states that this faith has once for all been handed down.
 - This handing down of the faith refers to the finished work of Christ that brought about salvation to those in whom the Father chose.
 - And it is this message that was passed down by the apostles to the churches and church leaders to preserve.
 - Hebrews 1:1-2 says it this way:

Hebrews 1:1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,
Hebrews 1:2 in these last days has spoken to us in *His* Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom He also made the world.

- The message of God's redemptive work in human history through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus is a message that has always been at work.

- And friends this message of reconciliation is contained within these 66 books of the bible.
- This message has been beautifully preserved, passed down, and taught generation after generation.
- And what we see from it even today is that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is still moving people from spiritual death to spiritual life.
 - This is the message that Jude is persistent and committed to keeping tried and true.
- Growing up, my grandmother's sister-in-law, we called Aunt Agnes, used to make this amazing dessert for thanksgiving.
 - It was called a Coca-Cola Cake. It was the best chocolate cake you will ever taste in your life.
 - We knew that eventually, Aunt Agnes would no longer be with us on this side of glory, so we decided to sit down with her to write down the recipe.
 - We took the time to listen to her and were careful to write down word for word, how she baked this cake.
 - You see, in essence, we wanted to preserve the goodness that we had the privilege of tasting for so many years.
 - And in this same way friends, God, in His goodness, wrote down through the inspiration of the third person of the Trinity into human minds these 66 books.
 - And it is in these 66 books that reveal the redemptive work of God that when those in whom have been called by the Father hear it, they will be drawn to Him.
 - So anyone that preaches or teaches a message that does not line up with what has been passed down, preaches a false Gospel.
 - Any message that adds to or subtracts from this book, is a sign to stand clear and away.
 - Why? Because the truth is not in them. There is no fellowship with them in the common faith.
 - There are no more special revelations or inspirations of the text.
 - What has been settled and sealed in the canons of scripture are done.
 - This message was delivered only "once".
 - Friends hear me when I say this, other teachings will masquerade their faith and belief in love, charity, kindness, and compassion.
 - Some religions will even utilize Jesus in their teachings as a "good teacher".
 - However, deviation from the truth is always deceitful and therefore wicked and demonic and should not be tolerated.
 - This message, Jude says, was delivered to the saints, and may I say is still being delivered.
 - We must be adamant about preaching the whole counsel of God.
 - We must be committed to teaching people the word of God and not just sound bites of what makes them happy.

- It is clear that somewhere along the road in these churches from the diaspora that the ball was dropped in maintaining their love for the word.
 - A study from the Barna group in 2019 reported that approximately 48% of American Christians are disengaged from their bibles.
 - Meaning that these men and women interact with the bible infrequently if at all and say that the word has minimal impact on their lives.
- You see, the less we engage the scriptures the less we can contend for what we believe.
 - What we see clearly from this text that we can draw out application-ally, is that we must be devoted followers of Jesus in orthodoxy and orthopraxy.
 - Acts 2:42 provides the perfect example of how seriously believers should take their study of the word of God.

Acts 2:42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

- The moment we let up on being committed to sound teaching is the moment we give way to hearing anything that “sounds right...possibly”
 - As Dr. Steve Lawson mentions, “I am so committed to expository preaching that I would be willing to say any teaching outside of expository is no teaching at all.”
 - Family, this commitment is not just for the pastor/teacher or elder, this work also is expected from you.
 - You and I must be like the Bereans in Acts 17:11
 - Check out what Luke documents:

Acts 17:11 Now these people were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily *to see whether these things were so.*

- Jude is bringing these believers into a sense of committed courage to stand firmly on the unchanging word of God.
 - As we continue through the book of Jude over time, we will see how these false teachers act, what their end will be, and how we are to respond and contend for the faith.
 - As we dive further through this book, it is my prayer that we will learn how to contend well.