



Scripture Based Bible Study

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Short Study: "THE TRUTH - Book of Jude"

INTRODUCTION:

Are we, "You have your truth, and I have mine?" This quote reflects a world view that seems to dominate much of the debate in today's postmodern society. And yet an honest grasp of reality reassures us that truth, in fact, is not relative:

- If you jump off of a building, gravity will have its way with you.
- If you sow only corn, you will only reap corn.
- Two plus two always adds up to four.

Attempts to repackage or redefine truth, however, isn't just a twenty-first century phenomenon... such efforts have been ongoing since the beginning of time. And that in a nutshell is the underlying reason for the New Testament Book of Jude. The underlying theme of Jude is the danger posed by false teaching. While wanting to write a letter of encouragement to the early Christian church, Jude finds himself instead having to broadcast a warning about the dangers posed by false teachers; those who have abandoned the truth as it is laid out in God's Word.

Eugene Peterson points out, *"Our spiritual communities are as susceptible to disease as our physical bodies. But it is easier to detect whatever is wrong in our stomachs and lungs than in our worship and witness. As much as we need physicians for our bodies, we have even greater need for diagnosticians and healers of the spirit. Jude's letter to an early community of Christians is just such a diagnosis."*

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Most people embrace TRUTH as being a key resource in helping them make decisions and chart direction in life. What have been some key sources to which people have looked for TRUTH?

2. How well have people been served by different sources of TRUTH which they have turned?

SCRIPTURE: Read Jude 1 - 25

¹ *Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James,*

To those who have been called, who are loved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ:

² *Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance.*

THE SIN AND DOOM OF UNGODLY PEOPLE

³ *Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt compelled to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to God's holy people. ⁴ For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.*

⁵ *Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord at one time delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. ⁶ And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their proper dwelling—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. ⁷ In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.*

⁸ *In the very same way, on the strength of their dreams these ungodly people pollute their own bodies, reject authority and heap abuse on celestial beings. ⁹ But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not himself dare to condemn him for slander but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" ¹⁰ Yet these people slander whatever they do not understand, and the very things they do understand by instinct—as irrational animals do—will destroy them.*

¹¹ *Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam's error; they have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion.*

¹² *These people are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm—shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted—twice dead. ¹³ They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever.*

¹⁴ *Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones ¹⁵ to judge everyone, and to convict all of them of all the ungodly acts they have committed in their ungodliness, and of all the defiant words ungodly sinners have spoken against him." ¹⁶ These people are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage.*

A CALL TO PERSEVERE

¹⁷ *But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. ¹⁸ They said to you, "In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires." ¹⁹ These are the people who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit.*

²⁰ *But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.*

²² *Be merciful to those who doubt; ²³ save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.*

DOXOLOGY

²⁴ *To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— ²⁵ to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.*

Questions

1. What is the first reason Jude gives in **vs. 4** for standing up to false teachers?

2. In **vs. 5 – 7**, Jude refers to three groups who were unfaithful: 1.) the Israelites who failed to believe after they were delivered from Egypt, 2.) the angels who rebelled against God’s authority, and 3.) the residents of Sodom and Gomorrah who gave themselves over to sexual immorality. What three judgments did these groups receive?

In **vs. 8 – 10**, Jude gives a second reason for resisting false teachers: they speak with cynicism about all that Christians hold dear. And in **vs. 11**, he associates false teachers with three Old Testament characters:

- “the way of Cain” – the way of pride
- “Balaam’s error” – the error of greed
- “Korah’s rebellion – the rebellion against authority

3. In **vs. 12 – 13**, he gives a third reason to battle apostasy.* What do the several word pictures in **vs. 12** and **13** say about the substance or value provided by these teachers?

In **Vs. 14 – 16**, Jude places great emphasis on the ungodliness of the false teachers, with some form of the Greek word for “ungodly” appearing four times in **vs. 15**. He then directs his readers in the remaining verses to three important tasks:

- **Know where you stand as a Christian** – As the old hymn says, “How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!” We must study scripture to discern between truth and falsity.
- **Know where the enemy stands** – Know his methods and tactics. Know that he prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. But above all, know that he is a defeated foe.
- **Be prepared to stand alone** – Jude was written in the late 60’s AD, when the church faced great persecution under Roman Emperor Nero.... a time when many Christians stood alone or apostatized.*

4. What three expressions of encouragement does Jude give the Christian church in **vs. 17, 20, & 21**?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

5. In **vs. 22**, what attitude does Jude tell Believers they should have for those who have fallen into apostasy?*

Jude concludes his letter with a well-known benediction/blessing in the New Testament. Having told Christ followers in **vs. 20** that *“building ourselves up in our most holy faith, and praying in the Holy Spirit”* is the way to keep our feet on solid ground, spiritually, he closes by assuring us in **vs. 24** that God *“is able to keep us from falling, and to present us before His glorious presence without fault.”*

APPLICATION

Since language is the basis for all that we understand, words play a powerful role in determining context and meaning. And every language is in a constant state of evolution as words are added or replaced in the lexicon, and also as the definition and meaning of words get altered.

In recent years, there has been a subtle but profound shift in the meaning of many words that have historically defined our view of “sin:”

- “**morals**” have been softened to mean “**values**”
- “**character**” has been softened to mean “**lifestyle**”
- “**principles**” have simply become “**preferences**”
- “**confession**” has been turned into “**catharsis or liberation**”

The result, in many instances, is that “SIN” has become an “addiction.” Or, SIN isn’t really SIN at all if the individual’s definition of TRUTH doesn’t define it as such. Consider Jude’s warning to the Christian church about false teachers/false teaching. What are some ways that we, as Christians, can “contend for the faith [**vs. 3**], and “build ourselves up in our most holy faith [**vs. 20**]?” Comment below:

A SUGGESTED CLOSING PRAYER: *Lord, when faced with making decisions in today’s world, help me understand where real truth comes from, The Holy Bible. Amen.*

All our Blessings,
Men’s Group Foundation, Inc.
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* Apostasy in Christianity is the rejection of Christianity by someone who formerly “was a Christian.” The term apostasy comes from the Greek word apostasia (“ἀποστασία”) meaning defection, departure, revolt or rebellion. It has been described as “a willful falling away from, or rebellion against, Christianity.”