

The Letter of

Jude

1:1-4



Jude 1:1 Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:

2 Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

3 Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should **earnestly contend for the faith** which was once delivered unto the saints.

4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.



Tonight, we begin the last "General Epistle," the Book of Jude.



HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

According to tradition, the writer of this epistle was "Judas" (Jude), who was both the half-brother of Jesus Christ (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3) and a brother of James, the leader of the Jerusalem church (Jude 1; Acts 15:13).

The time of writing is very difficult to ascertain. Perhaps a date between A.D. 66 and 80 would be correct. At that time, Jude may have been living somewhere outside Palestine.[6]

GENRE

Many scholars regard this epistle as an "epistolary sermon."

PURPOSE

Incipient Gnosticism seems to be the primary heresy in view.

MESSAGE

- The Book of Jude is in the Bible to teach us that: we must be careful to remain faithful to the faith.

That is a positive statement. Jude's emphasis, however, was mainly negative. He warned of the danger of departing from the faith once-for-all delivered to the saints (v. 3).

- The subject of Jude, then, is the peril of apostasy: departure from the truth.
- *Apostasy* is a matter of obedience, not salvation.



- Christians can depart from the faith almost as easily as non-Christians.
- "Apostasy," as the word is commonly used in Christian circles, involves a major departure from the faith, not a momentary lapse (e.g., Peter's denial of Christ during His trial).
- Apostasy involves repudiating a major doctrine of the faith.
- "Backsliding" usually refers to a regression in morals and or spiritual enthusiasm. It may or may not involve a departure from the major doctrines of the Bible.
- "Carnality" refers to giving in to the flesh and indulging one's sensual appetites. This also may or may not involve a major departure from the faith.



Jude 1:4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, **ungodly men**, turning the grace of our God into **lasciviousness**, and **denying** the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.



The Path of the Apostate

- Departure from God's Word and His will.
- Conduct of carnality.
- Justification of disobedience via shallow reasoning.
- Conscience becoming seared.

1 Tim. 4:2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; **having their conscience seared with a hot iron;**

- The “falling away” is volitional, moral and then, intellectual decay.
- All three aspects of apostatizing counter **loving God with all one's heart, strength, and mind.**



Next, Jude illustrated the nature and consequences of apostasy (vv. 5-11). He did this by citing three groups, followed by three individuals.



- Group #1: The nature of apostasy in Israel at Kadesh Barnea was *rebellion against God's revealed will* for her—**the volitional root problem** (v. 5).
- Group #2: The nature of the apostasy in heaven was some angels' *abandonment of God's place* for them—**moral rebellion** (v. 6).
- Group #3: The nature of apostasy in Sodom and Gomorrah was *repudiation of God's law* over the residents (v. 7) – **the intellectual self-justification.**

Jude used three individuals to illustrate apostasy:

Jude 1:11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of **Cain**, and ran greedily after the error of **Balaam** for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of **Core**.



- Individual #1: Jude used "Cain" to illustrate apostasy because Cain did not submit to God's will for him volitionally (v. 11). **He was a self-righteous person.**
- Individual #2: Jude used "Balaam" to illustrate apostasy because Balaam advocated to Balak that the Moabites seduce the Israelites to participate in their immoral feast (v. 11). **He was a greedy person** who lusted after money.

- Individual #3: Jude used "Core" to illustrate apostasy because Korah tried to make wrong "right," and right "wrong" (v. 11). **He was a presumptuous person.**



- Note first the general command (v. 3). We are to **"earnestly contend for the faith."** This implies deliberate and determined effort. We learn how to do this in the specific commandments that follow.

Note these specific commandments in verses 20-23. Keeping these commandments involves three things.



- First, it involves "building up yourselves" (v. 20a). This comes through spiritual growth that takes place by consistently yielding to God. This counters the volitional aspect of apostasy.
- Second, it involves "praying in the Holy Ghost" (v. 20b). This means calling on God for help. This counters the moral aspect of apostasy.
- Third, it involves "looking" to the future (vv. 21-22). This requires keeping ultimate realities clearly in focus. This counters the intellectual aspect of apostasy.

- As we keep our hope in view, we will make right choices, such as living for the future rather than for the present. By doing this, we keep ourselves in the center of God's love.



“...ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

- First, what is "the faith" for which we are to contend? It is the "faith...once delivered unto the saints," namely: God's special revelation contained in Scripture. That faith centers on the person of Jesus Christ. This is the mission of the church (Matt. 28:19-20).

- Second, what is the "contending" that defends the faith? It is essentially volitional submission to God's authority. It is also behavior that is morally in harmony with His will. It is also conviction that is intellectually consistent with His revelation. This is the calling of each Christian.



I. THE PLAN, 1:1-4

A. An impressive name, 1:1-2

1. The servant, 1:1a "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James..."

Luke 6:16 NASB Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

Acts 1:13 NASB When they had entered the city, they went up to the upper room where they were staying; that is, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James.

Luke 6:16 NIV Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.



Acts 1:13 NIV When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James.



Luke 6:16 KJV And **Judas the brother of James**, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

Acts 1:13 KJV And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, **and Judas the brother of James.**

2. The Savior, 1:1b “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ...”

3. The saints, 1:1c-2

a. Their invulnerable position, 1:1c
“...to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:”



New International Version

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:



New American Standard Bible

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:

Holman Christian Standard Bible

Jude, a slave of Jesus Christ and a brother of James: To those
who are the called, loved by God the Father and kept by Jesus
Christ.

King James Bible

Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them
that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus
Christ, *and* called:

b. Their invaluable possession, 1:2

Jude 1:2 Mercy unto you, and peace, and love,
be multiplied.



B. An imperative need, 1:3-4

1. The original proposal, 1:3a “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation...”

2. The overriding problem, 1:3b-4

a. What Jude determined, 1:3b “...it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should **earnestly contend for the faith** which was once delivered unto the saints.”

Original Word: ἐπαγωνίζομαι

Transliteration: epagónizomai

Definition: I contend earnestly for.

epagōnízomai (from *epí*, "focused on" and *agōn*, a contest, competition") – **properly, to contend (literally, "struggle upon, appropriately"), i.e. with skill and commitment in opposing whatever is not of faith (God's persuasion).**

<http://biblehub.com/greek/1864.htm>

Gal. 1:23 But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.



1Tim. 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;



1Tim. 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

2 Tim. 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

2 Pet. 1:5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

b. What Jude detected, 1:4

(1) The men described, 1:4a-b

(a) Their cunning, 1:4a “For there are certain men crept in unawares...”



Original Word: παρεισδύω

Transliteration: pareisduó

Definition: I enter secretly, come in by stealth.

("crept in")



pareisdýnō (from *pará*, "from close beside" and *eisdyō*, "enter") – properly, enter alongside, i.e. secretly or under *pretense*. *pareisdýnō* ("enter by stealth") refers to people who *appear* to be true Christians, but in reality *oppose the faith*. (*pareisdýnō*) is only used in Jude 4 of those "*posing* to give help."

[(*pareisdýnō*) means "*to get in by the side*, to slip in a side-door" (M. Vincent). This term can be spelled *pareisdynō* (from *dynō*) or *pareisdyō* (see J. Thayer).]

<http://biblehub.com/greek/3921.htm>

Gal. 2:4 And that **because of false brethren unawares brought in**, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:



2 Jn. 1:7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

11 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

2 Pet. 2:1 But there were **false prophets** also among the people, **even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them,** and bring upon themselves swift destruction.



Acts 20:29 For I know this, that **after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.**

30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Rom. 16:17 Now I beseech you, brethren, **mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.**

18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches **deceive the hearts of the simple.**



(b) The condemnation, 1:4b “...who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men...”

(2) The method described, 1:4c-d

(a) What these men were doing, 1:4c “...turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness...”

Original Word: ἀσέλγεια

Transliteration: aselgeia

Definition: (outrageous conduct, conduct shocking to public decency, a wanton violence), wantonness, lewdness. (“lasciviousness”)



asélgeia (from *aselgēs*/"brutal") – **properly, violent spite which rejects restraint and indulges in lawless insolence (wanton caprice).** <http://biblehub.com/greek/766.htm>

(b) Who those men were denying, 1:4d
“...and denying the only Lord God, and
our Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Jn. 2:22 **Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?** He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

23 Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.

Titus 1:16 **They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him**, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.



Conclusion

Mt. 10:32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

