

# “Standing in Faith, Clinging to Truth”



January 21, 2026

Facilitator – Minister Bonita Easter

**Our Text: Jude 1-4;17-25**

**Key Verses** – “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.” Jude 3 (NIV)

## Lesson Outline

**Introduction-** “How to Spot a Counterfeit.”

**The Dilemma:** “Hidden in Plain Sight (Jude 1-4)

**The Reminder:** “Remembering What They Told You” (Jude 17-19)

**The Call:** To Build - (Jude 20-23)

**The Assurance:** God keeps His Contenders (Jude 24-25)

**Introduction:** “To those who are called, loved by God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ.” Jude is one of the strongest letters in the New Testament, and before we read it, I want to say this clearly: this letter in Jude’s pastoral epistle shows how deeply he cares about the church and its future.

The Book of Jude is the least taught, preached, and studied book in the Bible. Many scholars have theories as to why this may be true, difficult to preach or teach, perhaps? Or could it be just difficult to read it in context? I would like to offer a theory of my own as to why Jude is not taught or preached: “It’s just too close to The Book of Revelation.”

However, I have found during my study of “The Letter of Jude” that it is so much more than a “call to shame” false teachers or apostates. It is a deeply profound call to believers to “contend,” remember, and to “fight” for the faith.

**Background:** Who wrote the Letter of Jude? “Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James” (v.1) is almost certainly Jude/Judas, the brother of Jesus Christ (Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3). However, Jude does not appeal to family status—importantly because he understood that authority comes from Christ, not proximity. Jude was likely written between AD 60-80. Some date Jude's writings to be 35 years after Jesus’ resurrection. Even though Jude grew up with Jesus and saw and heard about his ministry, he did not believe his brother was the Messiah. Actually, his brothers thought that Jesus was a little different, out of His mind (Mark 3:21).

The epistle does not specify who the letter is addressed to, but based on the language and structure, we can infer that it is intended for Jewish-Christian congregations. People who are well-versed in Hebrew Scriptures and Jewish interpretive traditions, which explains Jude’s heavy use of Old Testament and Jewish examples. Jude is not addressing outsiders—he’s warning believers about people inside the church.

Jude is encouraging mercy, peace, and love to be given to us in abundance. Why? Because just like the believers of that day, we are going to need more as well.

#### **Lesson Text— The Dilemma: “Hidden in Plain Sight” (Jude 1-4)**

**Scripture:** <sup>1</sup> 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: <sup>2</sup> Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance,<sup>3</sup> 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. <sup>4</sup> For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about<sup>[b]</sup> 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.

**Key Notes:** Jude came to believe and became a devout follower and leader of the early church, taking on the role of a servant (slave), not by force, but in honor. It is recorded that Jesus appeared to his brother James in 1 Corinthians 15:7, but there is no Biblical account of Jesus appearing to Jude; by faith, he believed. Jude’s posture is not anger; he is protecting what we all should view as a profound privilege, understanding that there is nothing more valuable than the gospel. The letter can be an example of what true Spiritual leadership is called to do: protect faith with love, wisdom, and courage. The goal is not to instill fear but to call all believers into the fight to preserve our faith.

It is important to understand that we don’t contend for our own opinion, our own preferences, or the cultural trends. We contend for “the faith once for all delivered,” A faith that is complete, sufficient, and unchanging (Hebrews 1:1-4). When Jude talks about people who have “crept in unnoticed,” he’s not encouraging us to become suspicious of each other. He’s warning us that ideas and attitudes can slowly reshape a community and a church. Jude never names a group, but the traits are clear: They pervert the grace of our God into sensuality (v.4). They practice what some call “cheap grace,” where anything goes, and no repentance is required; grace to them means moral freedom. They separate belief from behavior, claiming God’s grace excuses corruption. They reject the authority of Jesus, denying that Jesus is the only “way, the truth, and the life” (John

14:6). They claim spiritual insight or freedom to behave as they please, but all are arrogant, divisive, and self-serving.

**Application:** Discernment is one of our greatest gifts. False ideas didn't arrive loudly; they slipped in. We must guard against the snares, believing that everything that sounds spiritual is spiritual. Believers must be rooted in the Word, not just reacting to emotions.

False teachers don't always reject Christ openly—they redefine Him. If it doesn't require the cross, it's not the gospel.

Just as currency doesn't change every year, faith doesn't need updating—it needs defending.



### **Lesson Text: The Reminder: “Remembering What They Told You” (Jude 17-19)**

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

**Key Notes:** Jude's instruction: “But you must remember...” False teachers thrive when memory fades. Paul's writings in (Acts 20:29-30) warn of the wolves coming after the flock. Jude isn't condemning questions or doubt; he's describing a posture that thrives on dissatisfaction and subtly erodes trust. (2 Peter 3:3-4). These impostors could not understand why the Christian faith was so strong; Jesus had not yet returned. They tried to divide the believers by alluding to what their natural instincts would say, “What's the point? He's not returning.” “Why are you still waiting?” Slowly, we become divided, eating what they eat, drinking what they drink, and believers would start to copy what they do and speak. (1 Corinthians 2:14), tells us that these people lived in their flesh and not in the Spirit.

**Application:** Healthy congregations ask tough questions. Unhealthy cultures feed on constant suspicion.

What you forget spiritually, you will replace culturally. We are encouraged to remember apostolic teaching, remember Scripture over sensation, and remember truth over trends.

## **Lesson Text- The Call: “To Build”- (Jude 20-23)**

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

<sup>22</sup> Be merciful to those who doubt; <sup>23</sup> save others by snatching them from the fire; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.<sup>[1]</sup>

**Key Notes:** Building up Faith (Pistis) in Greek means trust, belief, faithfulness, or conviction, encompassing our loyal commitment to God (Ephesians 2:8;2 Corinthians 5:7). Praying in the Holy Spirit is when we pray in accordance with God’s agenda. The second coming of Christ, though it involves judgment for the ungodly, is mercy for believers who build their lives on the most holy faith and pray in the Spirit. These verses refer to the God who is the Father, Son, and Spirit, whom Jude recognizes as the Triune God. Jude does not tell us to cut people off quickly. He tells us to lean in carefully. We must discern the needs; some need patience, some need rescue, some need boundaries, but Jude assumes wisdom, not reaction. Discernment is not harsh. In fact, harshness is often a lack of discernment.

**Application:** True faith in God produces transformation.

When he says to build yourselves up.... Means to keep yourselves in God’s love, attend to, care for, and stand firm in it. Staying rooted in prayer, remaining grounded in truth, and trusting God to hold us steady.

Love the sinner, but hate the sin.

## **Lesson Text— The Assurance: “God Keeps His Contenders” (Jude 24-25).**

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

**Key Notes:** If Jude ended with a warning, it would crush us. Instead, it ends with worship and praise. The same God who warns us is the same God who keeps us. God's power exceeds any dangers that may be present. Believers do not have the ability to keep themselves, but God keeps us and causes us to stand in God's glorious presence without blemish. The church is not fragile when in God’s hands. God’s mercy through Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit is what redeems us.

Our hope is not in our ability to spot error—it’s in God's ability to hold His people. Jude calls us to be serious about truth, but gentle with people. Jude's final words end with hope, not alarm; he reminds us of God’s faithfulness.

**Practical Application:** We can stand strong in our faith because God is holding us, and our faithfulness is sustained by His grace, not fear.

When we know true faith deeply, false teaching—no matter how polished—cannot fool us. “Know the truth, and the counterfeits will reveal themselves.”

### **Conclusion**

We contend—but God keeps. We stand—but God sustains. We guard—but God guards us.

### **Final Thoughts**

God wants true contenders, not pretenders.