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Jude

"It's Worth Fighting For!"

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The writer of this short letter is Jude, the half-brother of Jesus, and brother of James.¹ The exact date is not known, however, the approximate date is some time between 65AD to 80AD. Jude's main theme is contending for the faith against false teachers and evil influences.

Jude was rightly concerned about the people who had *"secretly slipped in among you,"* who have *"changed the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign Lord."*² Jude calls them "godless, dreamers, blemishes, rainless clouds, fruitless trees, stormy waves and wandering stars."³ If these comments aren't condemning enough, he leaves no doubt about his feelings when he states that these people are those *"for whom the blackest darkness has been reserved forever."*⁴ His dislike of these false teachers who lead others astray with false doctrine is obvious in his reference to the *"blackest darkness,"* which is a reference to Hell!

The Bible has a lot to say about false teachers because the Lord wants us to be discerning concerning them. It should be understood that just because someone has written a lot of books, has a large church or a TV ministry, that doesn't give him or her automatic credibility.

¹ **Matthew 13:55** - *"Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas?"*

² **Jude 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."*

³ **Jude 4-13**

⁴ **Jude 13b**

The Lord wants us to be wise and discerning, constantly evaluating what people say and write, using our knowledge of the Bible. Vigilance is required because Jude says these people “*secretly slip in among you.*” Peter writes that they “*secretly introduce destructive heresies.*”⁵ After all, no false teacher introduces himself or herself by saying, “Hi, I’m a false teacher and I’m here to deceive you!”

Jude, in addition to the false teacher warning, also gives some encouragement and instruction for Christians. In this study we’ll learn more about the ways we are loved by God and kept by Jesus Christ.

We Are Loved By God

1. Sadly, many people lack understanding concerning the depth of God’s love for them.
2. Paul writes about the wonder of God’s love in [Ephesians 3:17b-19](#): “*And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*” (Emphasis added)
3. Some people have trouble accepting the love of God for several reasons:
 - a. The home in which they’ve grown up was very unloving and love wasn’t modeled very well, so they don’t know what real love is.
 - b. Some are haunted by some past sin in their life and they think they are unworthy of God’s love, so they believe they’re outside the parameters of his love.
4. We would be wise to open our hearts to the vast, immeasurable expanse of the love God has for us.
5. Paul’s encouragement was that people would “*know this love that passes knowledge.*”
6. The way to personally “*know*” his love is to allow the Lord to supernaturally plant his love in your heart, which transcends human intellect or human experience.

⁵ [2 Peter 2:1](#) – “*But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them—bringing swift destruction on themselves.*”

7. **Romans 8:39** - “[Nothing] in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is Christ Jesus our Lord.”
8. **1 John 3:1a** - “How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!”
9. **Jeremiah 31:3** - “I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness.”
10. **Psalms 143:8a** - “Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love...”

We Are Kept By Jesus Christ

11. Some people mistakenly have believed that getting saved and staying saved is completely up to them, however, the truth is that God is actively at work to preserve and protect our relationship with him, which demonstrates that he is a keeping God.
12. The Greek word for “kept” is *tereo*, which means to hold fast, preserve or guard.
13. In **Philippians 1:6**, Paul writes about God, saying, “... he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”
14. **1 Corinthians 1:8-9** - “[God] will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.” (Emphasis added)
15. **2 Timothy 1:12** - “... I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him for that day.” (Emphasis added)
16. The ancient priestly blessing found in the book of Numbers highlights God’s keeping power.
 - a. **Numbers 6:24-26** - “The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.” (Emphasis added)
17. So, he is a loving and keeping God, but Jude turns his attention to our responsibility, which is to contend for faith and fight for what has been entrusted to us.

18. The Greek word for “contend” is *epagonizomai*.
 - a. *Epi* means over or above, and makes the word more intense.
 - b. *Agonizomai* means to struggle, fight, labor or agonize.
 - c. The KJV translates this as “earnestly contend.”

19. Jude is describing a battle concerning what God has done for us, and the fact that it’s worth fighting for.

20. He uses three examples of people who lost the battle, which will help us understand that the three greatest threats that constantly wage war against are the world, the devil and the flesh.⁶
 - a. The world – Israelites
 - i. The Israelites had been slaves in Egypt for 400 years when their cry went up to God.
 - ii. God sent Moses to be their deliverer who would rescue the people from their bondage using one miracle after another.
 - iii. Moses led them toward the Promised Land, but they were barely on their way when most of them wanted to go back!
 - iv. This is how it is with some Christians who fall back into their former life.
 - v. Egypt represents the world and the powerful delusion that things were better in the old days.
 - vi. The world only presents the attractive side and never gives the whole story, failing to reveal the pain, disappointments, addictions, shame and sorrow.
 - vii. The Israelites had God’s best right in front of them, but they opted to settle for less and were destroyed.
 - b. The devil – angels
 - i. [Revelation 12:4](#) says, that one-third of the angels joined Satan’s rebellion.
 - ii. Jude tells us that the worst of those demons are bound until Judgment Day.
 - iii. The angels had the privilege of being in the presence of God, but they were persuaded by Satan to believe that somehow he had something better for them than God!
 - c. The flesh – Sodom and Gomorrah

⁶ [Jude 5-7](#) - “Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. 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.”

- i. God destroyed these cities because of homosexual and heterosexual sin.
- ii. [Genesis 18:16-19:29](#) tells the account of the proud and public arrogance of their sin and the way they paraded their rebellion against God.
- iii. The lust of the flesh has ruined countless lives, marriages, families and reputations.

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read [Jude](#) to provide an overview for this study.
3. Would you say that your knowledge of the Bible is adequate to help you discern false teaching and false teachers?
4. Allow the people in your group to describe God's love.
5. Read and discuss [Romans 8:39](#) and [1 John 3:1a](#).
6. Would you say the home you grew up in was loving or unloving?
7. Did your parents and family model a loving relationship with you?

NOTE: If you're aware of someone in your group who had an abusive home life, etc., you may want to refrain from discussing the preceding questions.

8. Was it your experience that God's love, mercy and kindness played a major part in your coming to him? ([Romans 2:4](#))
9. Read and discuss [Philippians 1:6](#), [1 Corinthians 1:8-9](#) and [2 Timothy 1:12](#).
10. When you first came to the Lord, did you find that it was hard to move forward in your relationship, and in so doing break your ties with the past, including certain friends, lifestyles, and habits?
11. How are you doing in the fight with the world, the devil and the flesh?

12. Do you rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to resist the inevitable temptations from the world, the devil and the flesh?
13. Do Jude's examples of people who lost the battle help you see the schemes and lies of the devil more clearly?
14. If you were honest with yourself, would you say that there have been too many times when you've slipped back because of the pull of the world, the devil and the flesh?
15. Read and discuss [John 8:44](#).
 - a. What is it about the lies of the devil (God doesn't really love you - You're not really saved - You're not really forgiven - God isn't good - God isn't true - God is not real) that cause us to believe them?
16. How can Christians receive help to gain the victory?
17. Close your time in prayer by asking the Holy Spirit to help each person: remember that God is at work to help them persevere, to protect and guard them so that one day they will be able to stand before him forgiven, redeemed and with great joy!

Note: Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).