



JUDE

C O N T E N D F O R T H E G O S P E L

BY DR. JOHN D. MORRISON
DR. TYLER SMILEY, SENIOR PASTOR

 **Lakewood**
PRESS

Contend for the Gospel: Jude
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LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

Jude, the brother of Jesus, recognized in his day that the lamentable prediction from the apostles of Jesus Christ had come true indeed: "...there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions (Jude 18)." As Jude explained in his short letter, "certain people crept in [to the church] unnoticed...who cause divisions" and who are "devoid of the Spirit" (Jude 4, 19). Jude is saddened at the sight of this, and he is clear of the fallacies and self-serving motives of such false teachers, but he is not disheartened. The response to these "worldly people" is to remain firmly committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

As in nearly every succeeding generation, we find in our own time people who twist and pervert the gospel in a variety of ways that makes the gospel a servant to their own desires rather than submitting themselves and their desires to the gospel as "a servant of Jesus Christ" (Jude 1). So, Jude's call to the church rings necessary in our day: "contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). It is the good news of Jesus Christ that offers the only hope of true salvation. It is through the work of Jesus Christ and by the grace of God, that God himself is able to keep us from falling at the feet of the enemy, and cause us to stand in the "presence of his glory with great joy" (Jude 24).

This gospel of Jesus Christ deals rightly with sin, reveals the mercy and grace of God, radiates the glory of God, refutes the lies of the enemy, and rouses the Christian to hold fast to "the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ

our Lord" (Jude 25). We are called to contend for the gospel because it has been entrusted to us as a treasure for which we are to steward.

If we are to contend well, we must listen carefully to God's word in Jude: we will have to be unswerving in our knowledge that one day God will judge the heart, life, and faith of each person. And even in our strong commitment to this truth we are called to "have mercy on those who doubt; save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear" (Jude 22). Truly, in order for us to be strengthened to keep the faith, and for us to join God in making this good news known to others, we will need God's grace and help.

I pray you will join us as we read this short letter together, and that you will resolve to stand for the faith by the grace of God. This wonderful study book will serve us as a good guide. Once again Dr. John Morrison has put together an insightful and inspiring devotional resource, and Joy Willis has designed it beautifully into this booklet that you are now holding (or reading digitally). I trust that you will be encouraged and convicted by the memory verse, prayers, questions, and comments found inside. Blessings to you as you faithfully Contend for the Gospel.

May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you,

Dr. Tyler Smiley
Senior Pastor, Lakewood Baptist Church



MEMORIZE AND MEDITATE

Now to **HIM WHO IS ABLE**
to keep you from stumbling
and to present you blameless before the
presence of **HIS GLORY** with great joy,
to the **ONLY GOD, OUR SAVIOR**,
through **JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD**, be

GLORY,
MAJESTY,
DOMINION,
and **AUTHORITY,**

BEFORE ALL TIME
and **NOW**
and **FOREVER.**

Amen.

JUDE 24-25



WEEK 1 **JUDE 1-4** DAY 1

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | Jude writes to early followers of Jesus and urges them “to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints” (v. 3). He warns against false teachers who slid into the church and were twisting the grace of the gospel into a license for immorality. Jude demonstrates that we cannot merely acknowledge the truth of the gospel. If we have truly experienced the radically transforming power of God in the gospel, then, by God’s grace and through the Holy Spirit, we will live out the gospel in our daily lives.

While this book has little discussion of the content of our faith, it prompts us to examine the nature of true faith. True faith is not a one-time decision; it is the way of discipleship. Faith is more than intellectually assenting to a set of beliefs. True faith leads one to rest in Christ Jesus and to commit to him. Such faith manifests itself in how one lives.

Jude serves as a sobering reminder to the church today. Our faith is not something we can divide from the rest of our lives. Confessing that Jesus is Lord should lead us to live with him as Lord over every inch of our lives. The grace of God in Christ fuels our lives of obedience. To contend for the gospel means that we as individuals and as a church must live out the truth of the gospel.

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24–25

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

PRAY | As you pray, ask the Father to work through his Word and by the Holy Spirit to make you more and more like Jesus



WEEK 1 JUDE 1-4 DAY 2

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | As Jude begins his letter, he identifies himself and his audience in ways that set the tone for the rest of the epistle. Jude calls himself the “brother of James,” and this James most likely was the pillar of the church in Jerusalem (Gal 2:9) who presided over the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:13). This means that the Jude who wrote this letter was the brother of Jesus (Matt 13:55; Mark 6:3).

- ▶ Read John 7:3-5, Acts 1:14, and 1 Corinthians 9:5. What transformation in Jude’s life do you see in these verses? What accounts for such a change?
- ▶ Jude identifies himself as “a servant of Jesus Christ.” The term *doulos*, which is here translated as servant, might be better translated as slave. Why would Jude call himself a slave of Jesus rather than his brother?
- ▶ Read 1 Corinthians 7:23 and Luke 17:7-10. How would viewing yourself as a slave of Jesus change the way you lived each day?

Jude identifies the Christian recipients of his letter as those who are called, beloved, and kept.

- ▶ Who does the calling, loving, and keeping in verse 1? How does that truth offer hope and assurance to you?
- ▶ What does it mean that Christians are called? Consider Romans 8:28-30.
- ▶ What does it mean that Christians are beloved in God? Consider 1 John 4:16.
- ▶ What does it mean that Christians are kept for Jesus? Consider John 17:11-12 and 1 Peter 1:3-5.

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24–25

PRAY | Thank God that in Christ Jesus and by his Holy Spirit he has called you, is loving you, and is keeping you.



WEEK 1 **JUDE 1-4** DAY 3

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | In verse 1, Jude makes clear that believers are secure in Christ because of God's work in their lives. Now in verse 2, he prays for them to continue in that security by praying for God to lavish his mercy, peace, and love upon them. He prays for an abundance of divine blessing to flow into their lives.

▶ Read Exodus 34:5-7. What do these Old Testament verses teach us about the character of God? Based on these verses, does God have to be coerced to answer a prayer like Jude's or is his heart already inclined to pour out these blessings?

▶ How do the blessings of mercy, peace, and love come to us?
Consider Ephesians 2:4-10.

▶ How should these blessing from God overflow into our interactions with others?
Consider Jude 21-23.

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24-25

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

PRAY | Pray Jude 2 for someone you know: *"Father, please multiply your mercy, peace, and love to _____ today. Amen.*



WEEK 1 JUDE 1-4 DAY 4

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | In verse 3, Jude explains his purpose in writing. He writes to encourage these believers to “contend for the faith.” His writing is motivated by his love for them; they are his “beloved” because of their shared faith. While he desired to write to them a general letter about their common faith, circumstances have changed, and Jude now feels compelled to write to them to fight for the gospel. As will become clear in the letter, Jude’s concern is both for the truth of the gospel and for how the gospel is lived.

- ▶ The concerns of verse 3 are echoed in verses 20-23. How do these later verses help unpack Jude’s concern in verse 3?
- ▶ Jude felt compelled to exhort these believers to contend for the faith. Do you have a sense of urgency about faithfulness to gospel truth and gospel living? Why or why not?
- ▶ Since this faith has been “once for all delivered” to God’s people, should we expect new revelations from God? Should we expect a change in his gospel? What has God given us as the guide to our faith and practice?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24–25

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

PRAY | Ask God to give you the same sense of urgency Jude had for faithfulness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.



WEEK 1 JUDE 1-4 DAY 5

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | Verse 4 explains why Jude has felt such urgency to write. He reveals the why of his letter. The “for” that begins the verse shows the connection: false teachers have come unnoticed into the church and are now promoting immorality. They “pervert the grace of God into sensuality.” They teach that grace is a license to live as one pleases, and Jude’s choice of words highlights that they are condoning sexual immorality. By their behavior and the distorting of God’s grace, they deny Jesus Christ. When we read “contend for the faith,” we can easily think Jude has in mind merely a battle of ideas, a fight for truth. Yet, Jude makes clear that gospel truth must result in gospel action.

- ▶ Jude’s concern is not with the immorality of the ‘world’ or ‘culture’ at large but with the immorality promoted and embraced by those who claim to follow Jesus. Rather than first looking outward, consider your own life: where are you prone to pervert the grace of God for your own indulgence? According to Jude, what does that reveal about your belief in Jesus? Consider Titus 1:16.
- ▶ Read Matthew 7:21-23 and 25:31-46. According to Jesus, how is right action connected with right belief?
- ▶ Reflect on Ephesians 2:1-10. How are good works connected with being justified by grace alone?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24–25

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

PRAY | *Father, please give me wisdom to see false teaching and please empower me by your Spirit to live out the gospel for the sake of your Son. Amen.*



WEEK 2 **JUDE 5-16** DAY 1

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | Jude has begun his letter by warning about the danger of false teachers who are twisting God's grace into a license for sin. Now, in verses 5-16, Jude pulls from Israel's history to demonstrate the grave danger that these false teachers pose. As he draws the comparison with notable examples of sin from the past, Jude emphasizes the coming judgment toward which these false teachers are careening.

This section reminds us that not all who claim the name of Jesus are following him. Nor do they necessarily help us follow him better. As Jesus warns, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness'" (Matt 7:21-23). We need Spirit-guided discernment. Indeed, Jesus calls us to be "as wise as serpents and innocent as doves" (Matt 10:16). Such wisdom from God comes through his Word and by his Spirit. We should seek to be like the Bereans and examine by the Scriptures what we hear (Acts 17:10-15).

▶ Why is false teaching such a major concern for Jude? Do you share Jude's concern for unbiblical teaching in the church? Why or why not?

▶ Read Acts 17:10-15. Why were those in Berea commended? How will you emulate their practice this week?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24-25

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

PRAY | Ask God for wisdom and discernment to understand what his Word teaches.



WEEK 2 JUDE 5-16 DAY 2

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | In verses 5-7, Jude offers three Old Testament examples that demonstrate God's punishment of immorality. Jude begins with the Exodus generation, who after being rescued from Egypt begin to doubt God in the wilderness (Num 14:1-11). Their past rescue did not prevent their rejection of God. Then, Jude notes that even the angels with their exalted status did not have the right to disobey (Gen 6:1-4). In both these examples, those with God-granted privilege are punished for their disobedience. As a final example of God's punishment, Jude cites the example of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:1-29). By his grace, Jesus saves, but his grace does not negate the reality that also judges those who reject him and indulge in immorality.

- ▶ Why does Jude identify Jesus as the one who saved and judged in the Old Testament? What does that teach about the biblical view of God?
- ▶ In verse 5, Jude emphasizes Jesus's role in saving and judging. How are those responsibilities connected with the titles of "Master and Lord" from verse 4?
- ▶ Is it biblical to think of Jesus as judge? What examples from Scripture would you give to support your answer? How would thinking of Jesus as judge as well as savior affect the way you live this week?
- ▶ Review the accounts Jude cites from Number 14:1-11, Genesis 6:1-4, and Genesis 19:1-29. What stands out to you from these accounts that supports Jude's argument?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24-25

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

PRAY | Pray Numbers 14:18-19, praising God for his character and asking for forgiveness. After you pray, read 1 John 1:9 to remind you of the hope of forgiveness through the gospel.



WEEK 2 JUDE 5-16 DAY 3

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | Verse 8 connects the false teachers who Jude opposes with those Christ judged in the past. These false teachers reject the faith once for all delivered to the saints for the sake of their dreams, which they claim as revelations from God. They pollute their bodies with sexual immorality, they reject the Lord's authority, and they slander angels, likely, because of their role in giving the Law of Moses.

In verse 9, Jude refers to an expansion of the story of the death of Moses that is found outside of the Old Testament. In this account, Michael and the devil fight over Moses's body. Even as an angel from God, Michael did not reject Satan by his own authority. Rather, Michael called upon the Lord to judge the devil. As one commentator explains, Jude's point is "that no one is a law to himself, an autonomous moral authority." All remain under God's authority. The false teachers, Jude teaches in verse 10, do not truly understand but, instead, act on instinct, like animals, and so are led to destruction by their own desires.

Jude pronounces "woe" on these false teachers in verse 11. He compares them to three key examples of sin and leading others to sin from the Old Testament: Cain, Balaam, and Korah. These past examples point forward to the future destruction of the false teachers.

- ▶ How would you compare "relying on their dreams" (v. 8) with "the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints" (v. 3)? What is our final authority for our faith and practice as Christians? How do we test what we sense the Lord is leading us to do by his Word to us in Scripture?

- ▶ Look up the three Old Testament examples from verse 11. What does Jude and the rest of Scripture highlight about their sin? What warning do you need to heed from their examples?
 - Cain (Gen 4:1-16; 1 John 3:11-15)
 - Balaam (Num 22:1-25:5; 31:16)
 - Korah (Exod 16:1-50)

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24-25

PRAY | Thank God that while we all deserve his judgment and woe, he, instead, has blessed us through Jesus Christ.



WEEK 2 JUDE 5-16 DAY 4

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | Jude piles image upon image in verses 12 and 13 to impress upon his readers how dangerous the false teachers are. There is danger in their midst. It is an internal, not an external, threat. The “love feasts” Jude mentions would have been the central activity for the life of the early church. Believers in the first century would gather together around a meal to pray, sing, read, celebrate the Lord’s Supper, and hear teaching from Scripture. These false teachers are found in the church. Rather than caring for God’s people, they feed only themselves.

The images that Jude employs convey the worthlessness of the false teachers and their judgment. Like waterless clouds, they get blown away before they can deliver anything of value. They are like tress that never bear any fruit; there is nothing worthwhile in their teaching. Not only do they produce no good benefit, but they are like a storm tossed sea that bring up filth on the shore. Their teaching harms the church. They are like stars who have wandered from their God-ordained course who are destined for destruction. These teachers offer no benefit to the church, only harm, and one day, they will undergo God’s judgment.

- ▶ Jude warns about those who claim to lead us closer to Christ but actually lead us farther away. How can you discern whether someone is leading you closer or farther away from Jesus?

- ▶ As you teach others about Jesus and point them to him, are you fulfilling your calling or are you more like a waterless cloud and fruitless tree? What steps can you take to invest more intentionally in those God has called you to disciple?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24–25

PRAY | Thank God for the faithful teachers he has put in your life who have helped to point you to Christ.



WEEK 2 JUDE 5-16 DAY 5

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | Jude turns again to the theme of the judgment of the false teachers in verses 14 and 15. He sees in these false teachers the fulfillment of the words attributed to Enoch (Gen 5:18-24) about God's coming judgment upon the ungodly. Jude has already called these false teachers "ungodly people" (Jude 4), and now this quotation speaks four times of the ungodly. Similarly, the fourfold repetition of "all" speaks to the totality of God's judgment against the wicked. Christ will come to judge (2 Thess 1:5-12), and these false teachers are headed for that judgment.

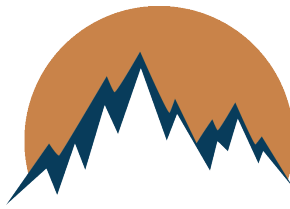
In verse 16, Jude unpacks the nature of the false teachers' ungodliness. They grumble against God. They are not content with life and with God's rule, and so that are not content with God himself. They are driven by their own sinful desires rather than God's will. They arrogantly boast about how they throw off God's rule in their life, and they show favoritism to the wealthy and the influential for their own gain. Such ungodliness not only puts them on the path to judgment, but their teaching entraps others in the same way of life.

- ▶ Grumbling seems to be a consistent temptation for God's people. Read Numbers 14:1-38. What led the people to grumble? What does our grumbling reveal about what we believe about God? Why is grumbling sinful?
- ▶ In many ways, contentment is the opposite of grumbling. Read 1 Timothy 6:6-10. How does the gospel of Jesus Christ lead us to contentment?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24-25

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

PRAY | Meditate on Jude 16 and ask the Holy Spirit to convict you where you may be falling into these sins. Ask for God's forgiveness and pray for his strength to live in a manner that honors him.



WEEK 3 JUDE 17-23 DAY 1

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | Jude continues to warn the church about the danger of false teachers in verses 17-19 by calling to mind previous warnings by the apostles. They had predicted the coming danger of false teachers, and Jude cautions that their warnings are coming to fruition now.

Jude warns, and then in verses 20-21, he calls the church to remain in the love of God. He exhorts these believers toward an active faith that seeks to grow and to help others grow. The best protection against false teaching is faithful teaching that edifies the church, that leads people to prayer guided by the Spirit, and that calls people to live with expectant hope for Christ's return.

Some, however, have already been captivated by false teaching, and so in verses 22-23, Jude instructs the church to respond with mercy to those who have strayed. Those who embrace false teaching are headed toward eternal punishment, and so believers must seek to implore with all mercy such people, encouraging them to return to the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

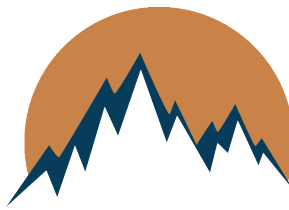
- ▶ Throughout the letter, Jude has been concerned with false teaching. What practices do you have in your life that help you regularly take in God's Word in order to help you discern between false and faithful teaching? What would you like to improve about those practices? What steps will you take this week to improve those practices?

- ▶ Who has God placed in your life to help you discern between false and faithful teaching? Take a minute to thank God for that person. Or, if you do not have someone like that in your life, pray for God to bring someone into your life.

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24-25

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

PRAY | As you pray take time to thank God for his love and Christ for his mercy.



WEEK 3 **JUDE 17-23** DAY 2

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | Having spent the last several verses recalling the far past and connecting it to the present false teachers, Jude calls on his readers in verse 17 to remember the recent predictions of the apostle. These apostles, unlike the false teachers, are from our Lord Jesus Christ and carry the authority of his commissioning. In verse 18, Jude seems to paraphrase a common warning for the early Christian community: beware that false teachers will come. Paul cautions the church in the same way in Acts 20:29-32, 1 Timothy 4:1-3, and 2 Timothy 4:3-4. Likewise, John offers similar warnings in 1 John 4:1-3. These false teachers come “in the last time.” Their appearance proves that we are living in the latter days, the time between the two comings of Christ.

Such false teachers cause divisions as they reject the gospel in favor of their own distorted view of grace. Jude identifies these false teachers as “worldly people, devoid of the Spirit” (v.3), which means they do not know Jesus. They are unbelievers who have snuck into the church by masquerading as teachers and are now leading people astray.

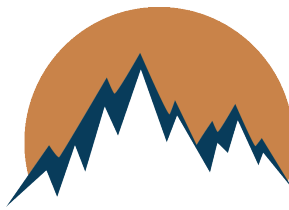
▶ Read Acts 20:29-32, 1 Timothy 4:1-3, 2 Timothy 4:3-4, and 1 John 4:1-3. What do you notice about false teaching from these passages?

▶ What lessons can we draw from the fact that the apostles warned about false teachers and false teachers were so prevalent in the early church? How can we be on guard against false teaching while still approaching other believers in love and grace?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24–25

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

PRAY | Read John 17:17-19 and pray this prayer of Jesus for yourself and for your church.



WEEK 3 **JUDE 17-23** DAY 3

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | After spending much of the letter warning the church, Jude turns in verse 20 to exhort the church. He calls upon believers to remain steadfast in their commitment to God and his gospel. The main imperative in these verses comes in verse 21 where Jude urges, “Keep yourselves in the love of God.” The calls to build, to pray, and to wait help explain what it looks like to keep in the love of God.

At the start of the letter, Jude addresses believers as “those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ” (v. 1). Now, he calls upon believers, “Keep yourselves in the love of God” (v. 21). Then, at the close of the letter, he again refers to God as “him who is able to keep you from stumbling” (v. 24). For Jude, as with all the biblical authors, God’s sovereign action and human responsibility are both true. In a similar manner, the Apostle Paul calls upon Christ followers, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Phil 2:12–13). It is God’s keeping of his people that enables us to live out the command to keep ourselves in God’s love.

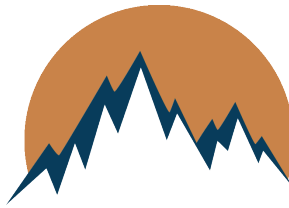
- ▶ Read John 15:1-11. Why is it so important to abide in God’s love? How do we know if we are abiding in his love?

- ▶ Read 1 John 4:7-20. Abiding is another way of speaking of being in God’s love. According to these verses, what does it look like to abide in God?

- ▶ Consider the passages you have read today. How can you continue to keep yourself in the love of God this week?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24–25

PRAY | Thank God that you are kept for Christ and pray for his grace to keep yourself in his love.



WEEK 3 **JUDE 17-23** DAY 4

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | Jude calls upon his readers, “Keep yourselves in the love of God” (v. 21). This is a command for the church as a whole to obey. Jude does not address individual believers but the entire community of faith. “All,” as a commentator explains, “should contribute to the spiritual growth of the whole community.” Jude exhorts the church to work to keep itself in God’s love. We keep ourselves in God’s love through the life and ministry our local church. Each believer has a role to play in fulfilling this command.

Believers keep themselves in the love of God by building each other up in the faith, by praying in the Spirit, and by waiting with hope for the coming of Christ. Unlike the false teachers who rely on claims of personal revelations, followers of Christ will edify one another in the faith once for all delivered to the saints. Where the false teachers are devoid of the Spirit, believers will be guided by the Spirit in their prayers. The false teachers face coming judgment, but those who have put their faith in Jesus wait with expectant hope for his coming. In these commands, Jude describes an active relationship with God. Those who resist the false teachings are those who continue to pursue spiritual growth through the community of faith.

- ▶ What steps are you taking to build yourself and others in our faith?

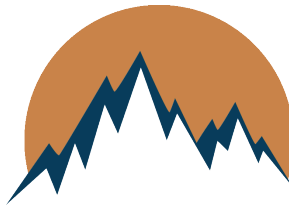
- ▶ How would you assess your prayer life?

- ▶ Are you waiting with hope for Jesus’s return?

- ▶ In light of your answers above, what are specific and realistic steps you can take this week to work on your building, praying, and waiting?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24–25

PRAY | Ask the Father to help you by his Spirit to continue to grow in your faith in Christ and your love for him.



WEEK 3 **JUDE 17-23** DAY 5

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | The goal is for the church to keep itself in God’s love, but there are some who will doubt and some who will stray. In verses 22-23, Jude outlines believers’ obligation to those seduced by false teachers. The key is mercy. Jude does not call on Christians to fight or to ostracize those caught up in false teaching; rather, twice in two verses, he implores believers to show mercy. As those “waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 21), we are to show mercy.

Jude first exhorts Christians to “have mercy on those who doubt” (v. 22). These doubters seem to be those who are unsure of the truth. They have heard the false teachers and are at least persuaded by them enough to question the faith once for all delivered. Believers must show such people mercy.

Jude mentions “others” (v. 23), who also need to be shown mercy, for they have embraced false teaching and are headed toward the fire of judgment when Christ returns. These people, too, should be shown mercy. Jude cautions, however, that the mercy should be shown “with fear.” While mercy is shown, it should be done guided by the truth that God is the righteous judge. Such mercy should also be shown in full awareness of the power and danger of sin. In showing mercy, one must guard against being entrapped in the same sin. Mercy that can rescue will look like the community of believers gathered into a local church working together to pray and to persuade such people to turn back to steadfast trust in Christ.

▶ Jude seems to draw on Zechariah 3:1-5 for this section of his letter. Read Zechariah 3:1-5. What do you observe in this passage?

▶ Who do you know who has been seduced by false teaching that masquerades as the Christian faith? Take time to pray for those people and ask the Lord for the opportunity to have conversations with them in which you can mercifully point them to the true gospel.

▶ Read James 2:13. Why does mercy triumph over judgment? To whom do you need to show more mercy? What will such showing of more mercy look like in your life this week?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24–25

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

PRAY | Thank God the Father for the mercy he has shown us in Christ Jesus and applied to



WEEK 4 **JUDE 24-25** DAY 1

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | Jude concludes his letter by praising God. In writing this letter, Jude understands that right belief and right practice are not ends in themselves. The true and ultimate goal of the Christian life is the praise and honor of God. Worship of our triune God should flow from biblical theology and faithful living, for the end for which God created and redeemed the whole world is his matchless glory.

The attributes of God that Jude highlights in this doxology are characteristics of his that would comfort those worried by the concerns of this letter. Jude reassures his readers of who God is, what he has done, and what he will do. The false teachers will not win the day. True believers can rest in God, and he will be their security and strength.

These verses teach us key truths about worship. We worship God when we recognize who he is, affirm these truths about him, and praise him for them. Scripture should guide our praise and worship of God by the truths it teaches.

▶ One way to use Scripture to praise God is by letting Scripture guide our prayers. Practice praying Scripture with Jude 24-25.

- Praise God for the truths listed in these verses. Pray that he would be honored and glorified.
- Thank God that he is your Savior and that he has kept you from stumbling away from the faith.
- Pray for people you know that God would keep them from stumbling and would present them blameless before his presence.

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24-25

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

PRAY | Pray Jude 24-25.



WEEK 4 **JUDE 24-25** DAY 2

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | As Jude praises God, he begins by highlighting two key truths about God that are particularly relevant to the concerns of this letter. First, Jude honors God as the one “who is able to keep you from stumbling” (v. 24). Jude’s aim with this letter has been to keep believers in the faith once for all delivered to the saints. He has warned and exhorted to that end. In verse 21, he calls for believers to “keep yourselves in the love of God.” Ultimately, it is God himself who will preserve his people. Jude rightly acknowledges God and comforts believers by highlighting God’s ability to keep his people.

Second, God is the one who is able “to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy” (v. 24). The false teachers face God’s coming judgment, but for those who hope in Christ, God will bring them into his glorious presence forever. In his presence, there will be great rejoicing and praise. Those who follow Jesus must contend for the gospel and keep themselves in God’s love, but our hope rests finally in God himself. He will keep his people from stumbling and will bring them into everlasting life with him.

- ▶ Read Psalm 121. What does this psalmist tell about God that gives us comfort that he can and will keep us? Which truth about God from this psalm do you need to rest in today?
- ▶ Read Ephesians 5:27, Colossians 1:22, and the surrounding context of those verses. In terms of being presented blameless to God, what has the work of Christ guaranteed? What does that teach us about Christ’s work? What hope does that give you?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24–25

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

PRAY | Thank God that he is the one who is able to keep you from stumbling and who is able to present you blameless before his presence. Ask the Father to help you rest in the truth of his power and his love.



WEEK 4 **JUDE 24-25** DAY 3

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | The praise that Jude offers is “to the only God, our Savior” (v. 25). Christians affirm the truth that there is only one God, and he is the God who saves. As Jude declares the oneness of God, he also keeps God’s threeness at the forefront throughout this letter. The three persons of the Godhead are each prominent in this letter: the Father, Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This is the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. God is three-in-one and one-in-three.

Precisely because our God is Trinity, he is the God who saves. “Salvation belongs to the Lord” (Ps 3:8). Jude highlights in this doxology the Father’s work as our Savior. While we typically think of Jesus’s work in saving us, the Bible teaches that Father, Son, and Spirit work inseparably to save. Our God works in complete unity and harmony to redeem us.

▶ What echoes of Deuteronomy 6:4-6 do you hear in Jude’s doxology? Why is it important in our day to affirm that there is only one God and that he saves?

▶ How are you comforted and assured by knowing that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have been and are working to redeem a people??

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24–25

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

PRAY | Take time to praise God that he is the one, true, and living God and to thank him for being your Savior.



WEEK 4 **JUDE 24-25** DAY 4

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | In our God who is Trinity, Father, Son, and Spirit are equal in power and glory. With that fundamental equality, there is an order in which God relates to us and we relate to God. God's actions toward us come from the Father, through the Son, and by the Holy Spirit. We relate to God by the Spirit, through the Son, and to the Father.

Such is the pattern Jude demonstrates in his doxology. He praises the Father "through Jesus Christ our Lord" (v. 25). This "by-through-to" pattern is the typical model of prayer in the New Testament. We pray to the Father, through the Son, and by the Holy Spirit. The trinitarian nature of prayer should fuel our prayer life, giving us confidence as we pray. We do not pray alone or in our own strength but by the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, we pray through Jesus, which means that we go before the Father on the basis of Jesus's perfect life and eternal Sonship. We pray to the Father as his adopted children, and we know that he answers us in all wisdom, power, and love.

- ▶ What is going well in your prayer life? What would you like to improve?

- ▶ Reach out to a more mature believe and discuss what has helped that person to pray more faithfully. Consider how you might incorporate these practices into your prayer life.

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24–25

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

PRAY | Thank God the Father that you can approach him with freedom and confidence through Jesus Christ and by the Holy Spirit.



WEEK 4 **JUDE 24-25** DAY 5

READ | Jude 1-25

REFLECT | Jude concludes with four words of praise: “glory, majesty, dominion, and authority” (v. 25). The first two words, glory and majesty, highlight the greatness and splendor of God. He is exalted above all. He is preeminent, and all honor and praise are due him. The second two words, dominion and authority, speak of God’s sovereign rule over all things. He has all power, and he has the authority to exercise that power everywhere. The time element at the end of the doxology is all encompassing: “before all time and now and forever” (v. 25). From eternity past, in the present, and for ever and ever, God has and will continue to manifest these qualities. He has not and will not change. He deserves praise for ever and ever.

Jude has warned the church against false teachers, and he has exhorted the church “to contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints” (v. 3). His concern for the purity and the health of the church has been in service of God’s glory. The aim of this letter and of all of life is to glorify God. His grace to us is that he has linked his glory to our good. The best thing for us is faithfulness to his gospel, and such gospel faithfulness glorifies our God.

- ▶ Do you prioritize gathering as a church to worship God? Why or why not? Given his concern for the church, how do you imagine Jude would respond to your answer?

- ▶ Read Romans 12:1-2. How can you daily offer yourself as a living sacrifice to God? In other words, what would it look like for you to worship God with your daily life?

MEMORIZE & MEDITATE | Jude 24–25

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

PRAY | Praise and glorify God for who he is.



JUDE

C O N T E N D F O R T H E G O S P E L

Jude urges followers of Jesus “to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints” (v. 3). This book prompts us to examine the nature of this faith. Faith is more than intellectually assenting to a set of beliefs. True faith leads one to rest in Christ Jesus and to commit to him. Such faith manifests itself in how one lives. Confessing that Jesus is Lord should lead us to live with him as Lord over every inch of our lives. The grace of God in Christ fuels our lives of obedience. To contend for the gospel means that we as individuals and as a church must live out the truth of the gospel.



Dr. Tyler Smiley, Senior Pastor • LakewoodLife.org
2235 Thompson Bridge Road, Gainesville, GA 30501 • (770) 532-6307
LakewoodLife.org/cr