

## Contend Earnestly for the Faith Jude 1:1-4

### Background

### Doctrinal Points

1. The faith of the true church has been delivered once for all.
2. The fate of the false teachers has been determined long ago.

### Practical Application

1. You may have to change your ministry plans.

### Questions

1. Who is the writer of this epistle?
2. What was the date of the writing of this epistle?
3. Which phrase in Jude is a proof text for the assurance of salvation?
4. The true church must contend earnestly for the faith. What is the true church?
5. What is meant by "faith?" (Jude 3)

## Answers

1. Jude (Judas), most likely the half-brother of our Lord Jesus Christ. See Mark 6:3.
2. Probably in the 70s A.D. 2 Peter, written in the mid-60s A.D., predicted that false teachers would come within the early church, and in the epistle of Jude the false teachers have already infiltrated the church.
3. If you are a true believer in our Lord Jesus, your salvation in Christ is secure. You are kept and preserved in Him. "To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ."  
(Jude 1)
4. All true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.
5. Faith means embracing the whole body of truth as revealed truth in Scripture.

## Discuss / Consider

1. "...*contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.*" (Jude 3).  
This exhortation was made to the early church, but it is an exhortation for the church today as well. The first century church was suffering derision and persecution from without and an apathetic attitude from within. Thus, Jude found it necessary to write, exhorting the believers to contend earnestly for the faith (the whole body of revealed truth in the Scriptures). Where are the "Judes" today to exhort us to contend earnestly for the faith? Do you know such a "Jude?"
  
2. "...*certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (Jude 4)  
The "certain men" were the false teachers of the first century. They were the Gnostics that the apostle John also denounced in his epistles (1 John and 2 John). They distorted the word of God and preached heresy that denied the full deity of Christ. God ordained the fate of these false teachers long ago. The fate of all unbelieving false teachers is eternal damnation. This is just as true today – false teachers will be dealt with by God, as He promised.

## Challenge

1. Jude was planning on writing about the more pleasant theme of our salvation, but he was forced to write about the false teachers because of the urgency of the situation (Jude 3). Have you ever had the Lord change your ministry plans? Be receptive to the leading of the Lord and the urgency of a particular situation.

**The Danger of Falling Away from the Faith**  
**Jude 1:5-11**

**Background**

**Doctrinal Points**

- 1. False teachers take the way of Cain.**
  
- 2. False teachers rush for profit into the error of Balaam.**
  
- 3. False teachers perish in the rebellion of Korah.**

**Practical Application**

**Don't be a prophet for profit.**

**Questions**

1. Who is the recipient of Jude's epistle?
  
2. What was Jude's purpose in writing this letter?
  
3. What is the difference between a backslider and an apostate?
  
4. List the three examples given from the Old Testament to show how God judged those who turn away from the truth in the past. Why was each one judged?
  
5. False teaching and immorality go together. True or False?
  
6. The Gnostic false teachers thought they knew everything about the spiritual realms. Did they?
  
7. Where is Moses' grave located?

## Answers

1. Because there are several references to the Old Testament of people and events, it's a good indication that the recipients of Jude's epistle were Jewish Christians.
2. To expose false teachers that were already in the early church and to exhort believers to contend earnestly for the faith.
3. A backslider is a true believer but has wandered away from the Lord and His word. An apostate is a professing Christian, but not a true believer.
4. a) the generation that came out of Egypt, but perished in the wilderness because of unbelief, b) the angels who left their proper abode and committed sexual sin, and c) Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them because they gave themselves over to sexual immorality. For this defiance of God they were judged with fire from heaven and will suffer the vengeance of eternal fire in hell.
5. True. False teachers not only reject God's authority in the moral area, but they reject all authority and show no spiritual reverence.
6. No. Jude says that they were woefully ignorant.
7. No one knows. See Deuteronomy 34:6.

## Discuss / Consider

1. False teachers take the way of Cain. What is the way of Cain? It is thinking that you can approach God on the basis of human efforts. Cain refused to come to God by way of sacrifice, trying to come instead on the basis of his own good works. Approaching God on the basis of human merit and good works is not God's way of salvation. Salvation is only found by trusting in Christ as Savior. There are false teachers today who are taking the way of Cain. Avoid such a grave error which leads to death and damnation.
2. False teachers rush for profit into the error of Balaam. Read the record of Balaam in Numbers 22-24. Balaam was a diviner, a false prophet hired by Balak, the King of Moab to curse Israel. Note how Balaam counseled Balak to get Israel into idolatry and immorality and see how Balaam was in it for the money, preaching for profit. This is the error of Balaam that characterizes false teachers then and today. Beware of false teachers who preach what people want to hear, and then collect the cash.
3. False teachers perish in the rebellion of Korah. Read about this rebellion in Numbers 16. Korah and the others who joined him revolted against Moses and Aaron (put into authority positions by God). Korah was a Levite but he was not satisfied with just tabernacle service – he wanted to be in authority. God had to judge him and those who rebelled with him because God hates insubordination to the authority structures that He has set up (whether it be in the home or in the church). Look at the religious false teachers posing as authorities today. Like the Gnostic false teachers of Jude's day, they think they know everything, but they are woefully ignorant. Be on guard against such false teachers.

## Challenge

1. Don't be a prophet for profit. the sins of Jude 11 are in reference to false teachers, but true believers must be careful not to commit some of these sins. Are you careful not to commit any of these sins?

**False Teachers Who Infiltrated the Early Church**  
**Jude 1:12-25**

**Background**

**Doctrinal Points**

**1. False teachers are described by five metaphors.**

**2. True disciples are described by five activities.**

**Practical Application**

**1. Don't worry about stumbling in heaven.**

**Questions**

1. What are the two kinds of false teachers within the Christian church today?

2. Describe these false teachers.

3. Do these false teachers leave the church?

4. How can we identify the unbelieving false teachers?

5. "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints..." Who was Jude quoting?

## Answers

1. Those who are true believers and those who are unbelievers.
2. False teachers who are believers are trusting Christ for salvation, but they are off base when it comes to some other area of doctrine. The other kind of false teachers within Christendom today is the unregenerate, unbelieving false teachers. These are the apostates who have turned away from the truth – they deny the deity of Christ; they do not believe in the substitutionary death of Christ on the cross for our sins; they deny the bodily resurrection of Christ; and they teach that there are many ways of salvation.
3. Some leave the church, but many stay and preach their false doctrines within the church.
4. Jude identifies these unbelieving false teachers as not having the Spirit. See Jude 19.
5. Enoch. See Jude 14.

## Discuss / Consider

1. Jude describes false teachers by five metaphors: a) hidden reefs, b) clouds without water, c) autumn trees without fruit, d) wild waves of the sea, and e) wandering stars. Review the description of these metaphors in doctrinal / teaching point #1. The five metaphors of the epistle of Jude, which were selected by the Holy Spirit, had the effect of opening the eyes of the first century Christians and of exposing heretical infiltration into the church. It is the intention of the Holy Spirit to use these five metaphors to help unmask unbelieving leaders within the church today. These metaphors not only reveal the nature of the first century heretics, but they also vividly portray the character and tactics of false teachers and apostates within the church today. This is a good reference for us to identify false teachers.

2. Jude describes five activities of true disciples: a) build yourselves up in the faith, b) pray in the Holy Spirit, c) stay in the love of God, d) keep looking for the Lord's return, and e) show compassion to the deceived. Review the descriptions of these activities in doctrinal / teaching point #2. Are you evidencing these five activities in your life?

## Challenge

1. *"Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our Savior, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, and dominion and power, both now and forever."* Jude 25-25. What a beautiful benediction! In this doxology there are some great and encouraging truths, including the promise that the Lord is able to keep us from stumbling.