

041424 Jude

The most powerful force in all of creation was introduced to me as a very small child in Sunday School in a song. I continue to learn and share that power with you: “Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so.” ... I loved Sunday School. Minnie Meek on her knees hugging each of us as we came in - as if each one of us was the most important person on earth. And I continue to gain understanding of that love of Jesus for each of us - as if each of us are the most important person on earth. That is the most powerful force of all creation. Jesus loves you, this I know for the Bible tells me so.

The Bible letter penned by Jude helps us gain understanding and a right life response to the unlimited, unending love of Jesus for each of us.

This letter is addressed to me – and oh yes, to you- and to all Bible believing Christians. Let’s see what Jude was divinely inspired to write to us. /// The inside address and greeting: **Jude 1-2** *Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ: 2 Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.*

There are a number of possibilities who this man by the name of Jude may be. We just do not know for sure. The bottom line is that it does not matter who he is, but what does matter is the content of his inspired writings for our enlightenment and life application! The book was canonized into our Holy Bible and it is a divinely inspired message to all Christians to be used for gaining understanding of God’s love for us, for encouragement and valor in our daily walk. **Jude 3-4** *Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. 4 For 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 apparently set about writing to lift up his fellow Christians, but that goal was quickly diminished in favor of the Holy Spirit’s inspiration for the needs of Jude’s readers which certainly includes our

2. generation. It almost seems with reluctance, that Jude feels compelled to further make us aware that weak, vulnerable to satan - evil persons on earth will flourish until the end of the Church Age and Christ's return. Jude is reminding us right down to specifics what the strategic satanic program is with which we are embroiled, it is to: Verse 4 "*turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.*" In the context of their day and age - that implies that the purveyors of evil were focusing on the prevailing fertility goddesses in the surrounding pagan cultures that were convincing Christians to compromise the purity of righteousness for the perversions of selfish lust and passions. I caution you - it is a coarse, disparaging experience, to read of what that was going on in their generation, just like what caused the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah-- and then to look around and see that it still continues to destroy our world today, destroying sensibility of the love of Jesus.

Let me just give you a scriptural reference to see what I mean: **Colossians 3:-6 NIV** *Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.* Please do not overlook or understate the prophetic certainty of verse 6. *Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.* God's wrath – the specific events of Revelation and prophecy are a very large part the result of the perversions of the first century not being stopped nor abated throughout the ensuing church age. Paul sure had it right in Colossians - and it is not just the pagan, unrighteous world – but so called leaders in the religious culture right up to today who are wantonly, hypocritically, violating righteousness and doing untold damage to the message of salvation's love -- much less to the reputation of everyone who is committed to Holy living. Jude is a fantastic voice for God that proclaims the right and reasonable limitless truth of **UNCONDITIONAL OBEDIENCE** of right minded earthly citizens of Creator God.

Jude continues with further explanation of the ludicrous inevitability of trying to flee from God's deign for humane life! It cannot be done - and has bitter consequence. Jude

3. is trying to save people from those consequences look at **Jude 5-7** *But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. 6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; 7 as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.*

Did you catch the “ouch” in verse 5? *though you once knew this.*/// The truth is God and righteousness is everywhere revealed even in nature, **Romans 1:20** *For since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.* God has always provided a verbal message and testimony to mankind starting with the patriarchs, on to Moses and the law and prophets, then through Jesus, the apostles and the Bible and teachers throughout the church age centuries.

Jude 8 *Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries.* Faith Lesson example – sin on earth is like mormon cricket's or an invading noxious plant – it only gets worse and worse without extremely coordinated and ambitious control procedures. To let down, even a little bit, results in infestation that is systemically destructive! The sin infestation of “*these dreamers*” in verse 8 around in the first century have evolved and multiplied for 2,000 years!

Jude 9 *Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, “The Lord rebuke you!”* The satanic prince of this earth is incredibly powerful - and on an individual basis we are defenseless without Christ!!! Christians we are to recognize that a tremendously effective tool of satan is to separate and divide us as much as he can. That is why church assembly, encouragement and love is such great part of our armor.

4. The church is quite frankly the last remaining united fortress for defense against evil. The ramps outside Christendom are getting close and closer to breaching our wall and some could argue they have already done so. Those attacking on those ramps are described for us in **Jude 10-11** *But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally, like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves. 11 Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.* You can check those names in scripture – they are all examples of the consequence of our heinous enemy.

Jude is not quite through describing them for our attention; **Jude 12-13** *These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; 13 raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.* That contains a faith lesson that every one of us struggle with on occasion. That lesson parallels the temptation and determination of the Sadducees and Pharisees to modify the scripture to meet their desired standards. Though we may on occasion be tempted to modify or at the least compromise with scripture to meet our standards – there will always be a consequence, no matter how inconsequential we may think. A little white lie, pilfering, or moral compromise, etc! Therefore the faith lesson is to read the Bible and obey. Sounds easy, but if you try-- stones are going to be thrown at you from every imaginable direction. So just expect it. **Jude 14-15** *Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, 15 to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”* We reviewed last week that Christians are given and are to put on the full armor of God. Our armor is declared to protect us against things as listed in **Jude 16**

5. These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage. /// Election campaign rhetoric, media, Artificial Intelligence, all contemporarily verify Jude's words. So Christians are given even more instruction on identifying the enemies of the message of Jesus: **Jude 17-19** *But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: 18 how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. 19 These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.* In the absence of the Holy Spirit (without Jesus as the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords) paganism like Mormonism or invading noxious plants are actually easy to identify from these Bible descriptions. We are not left hanging or wondering what to do – Jude explains: **Jude 20-23** *But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, 21 keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. 22 And on some have compassion, making a distinction; 23 but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.* That is Jude's checklist for our lives: 1. Always be gaining Bible truths. 2. growing constantly in faith practice, 3. prayer guided and inspired by your indwelling Holy Spirit. 4. *keep yourselves in the love of God* 5. keep fellowship to keep encouraged and active 6. anticipating the promised inheritance for believers. 7. Show compassion to those to whom it will spiritually equip. 8. be friends with others whom you may counsel, guide or encourage in their challenges of faith. 9. Hating all evil practices, but loving the soul/spirit of people. Jude closes with practicing what he has just declared to encourage, embolden, enable, and exalt the phenomenon of righteousness.

Jude 24-25 *24 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, 25 To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.*

6. God provided Jesus the very essence of love, as the way for us to be saved from every sin – God uses Jesus as our teacher, model and guide throughout life.

Our invitation hymn is _____ This invitation is to provide an opportunity for you to accept Jesus into your life, to constantly be robed in His love. The reason we do this is because no one can ever earn, or deserve the grace and forgiveness that God gave as a free gift. When we sing, if you have a decision to make for God, perhaps a rededication, or if you are an immersed believer to transfer your membership to this church body to be identified as a worker for the Lord, then come speak to me as we stand and sing...

Jude 1-2

Jude 3-4

Colossians 3:-6 NIV

Jude 5-7

Romans 1:20

Jude 8

Jude 9

Jude 10-11

Jude 12-13

Jude 14-15

Jude 16

Jude 17-19

Jude 20-23

Jude 24-25