

Contend Earnestly For the Faith Which Was Once For All Handed Down to the Saints

An Expository Study of the **Epistle of Jude**

Chapter 1- Introduction **Jude 1** 2 The Brother of James

WOSM Tuesday 11/6/07

WPAS Tuesday 04/22/08

WBEL Tuesday 11/2/10

Welcome again my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing our verse by verse Journey through the **Epistle of Jude** and today I want to continue to examine the Introduction to this amazing Epistle so let's open our Bibles and read **Jude 1** again together:

Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ:

Now the English name "Jude" comes from the Greek name, "Judas", which in turn comes from the Hebrew name, "Judah". And there were many mothers and fathers in the Middle East during the 1st Century who named their children "Judah" in honor of one of the 12 fathers of the nation of Israel and because of one of the heroes of the Maccabean revolt against the Greeks in the second century B.C- was named Judas Maccabees. So, it was a very popular name.

Now there are eight men in the New Testament named Judas, but only two of them are mentioned in connection with anyone named James. One of them was the *Apostle* Jude and the other was the son of Mary- which would make him the half- brother of Jesus Christ.

Now the *Apostle* Jude could not have written this Epistle since the writer specifically identifies himself here in verse 1 as the *brother* of the *Apostle* James. According to the Bible in **Luke 6:16** and **The Acts 1:13**, the *Apostle* Jude was the *son* of James- not the *brother* of James- thus the only possible writer of this Epistle is the half brother of our Lord. And that makes this book the only NT Epistle not written by an *Apostle*¹.

¹ We also do not know for sure who wrote the Epistle to the **Hebrews**. It is *possible* that Hebrews was written by Paul, but it is more likely that it was written either by Apollos, or by Aquila and Priscilla. Neither Luke nor Mark

But we can get a glimpse of the humility that Jude had as he does not link his name to Jesus as anything but as a surrendered bond- slave.

Now many people get real nervous when the fact that Jesus had a half- brother is even mentioned. Some teach that this is wrong to say this. For example- on page 126 of the official Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church- it teaches that the mother of Jesus Christ was what they call, “a perpetual virgin” and therefore had no children after Jesus was born- but the Holy Bible does not bear that teaching out. For example, in **Galatians 1:19**: the living Word of God declares:

But I did not see any other of the apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

Now the word that was translated here into English here as “brother” is the Greek word, *adelphos*, which means: *someone born of the same parents or born of the same mother or the same father*. And even though the word, *adelphos* was used in *some* instances to denote kinship or even countryman- that is *not* the way that this word is used here.

So, we see that the Apostle James was also the son of Mary- which makes him the half- brother of our Lord. We also know from Scripture that the Apostle James was the leader of the Church in Jerusalem. So, by Jude identifying himself as the *brother* of James in this first verse- Jude tells us that he was indeed the half- brother of Jesus Christ (God was Jesus’ Father), or the son of Mary. So, Jude holds the distinction of being the only New Testament writer that identifies himself solely by his family relationship rather than by a title or an official office.

Now it is interesting to note that the man who wrote the only Epistle in the New Testament that deals exclusively with heresy and false teaching has the same name as the infamous Judas Iscariot- who was the ultimate heretic. And this is probably why he is known today as Jude, rather than his Greek name of Judas.

Now Jude *could* have discussed his family connections in this Epistle- but it speaks volumes about the man that he didn’t. He *could* have used his position as the Lord’s half brother or his position as one

were Apostles, but neither of them wrote an Epistle. Mark wrote a Gospel account and Luke wrote both a Gospel account and the diary of the early Church- the **Book of the Acts of the Apostles**.

of the sons of Mary to give himself some degree of prestige or to draw a larger readership- but he refrained from doing so in the introduction on purpose and was content to simply refer to himself as a bond- slave of Jesus Christ.

What a contrast between this man from many leaders of the modern Church who seem to revel in attention and who love to be in the spotlight! Would to God that all of the leaders of the Church today were men who were of a broken and a contrite spirit and men who trembled at the Word of God and men who wept over the sins of God's people.

What a Powerful Church we could have today if all of the leaders would teach people how to be holy instead of giving them tips on how to be happy and successful. What a glorious City set on a hill the Church would be if all of those who held positions of responsibility in the Church loved their wives like Christ loved the Church and ruled their own houses well; if all of them proclaimed the whole counsel of God without fear and without fail; if all of them were willing to take the reproach of the Gospel as a good thing; if they were far more concerned about being faithful than they were about being popular; and if none of them were ashamed of the Gospel.

Jude, like all the other New Testament leaders, understood the importance of "getting the Gospel right". Jude knew that it was the integrity of the Gospel that was paramount. He understood that God has chosen the foolishness of the Gospel that must be preached to save them that believe. Jude knew that the success of Christ's Church had nothing to do with clever phrases or slick presentations or new revelations or Madison Avenue marketing techniques or choreographed shows or being cool or hip- but the success of the Church of Jesus had to do with being faithful to the only thing that we have been empowered to do- and that is- to preach what God said.

Like Jude before him, John Piper, in his book, *Brothers, We Are Not Professionals*, cries against the modern thinking that in order for a Pastor to be effective- he must become the CEO of the Corporation called the Church as he writes,

"We pastors are being killed by the professionalizing of the pastoral ministry. The mentality of the professional is not the mentality of the prophet. It is not the mentality of the slave of

Christ. Professionalism has nothing to do with the essence and the heart of Christian ministry. The more professional we long to be, the more spiritual death we will leave in our wake. For there is no professional childlikeness; there is no professional tenderheartedness; there is no professional panting after God. Brothers, we are not professionals. We are outcasts. We are aliens and exiles in the world. Our citizenship is in Heaven, and we wait with eager expectation for the Lord. You cannot professionalize the love for His appearing without killing it. And it is being killed.

And Piper goes on to say,

“The world sets the agenda for the professional man. But God sets the agenda for the spiritual man. The strong wine of Jesus Christ explodes the wineskins of professionalism.”²

Now by identifying himself with James- who had already been killed by the time that he wrote this Epistle- Jude was proudly linking his name to that of a fallen martyr. He was unashamedly linking his name with those whom God used to found the Church, and who had gone before him into a martyr's death.

Jude was, like James and Stephen, and all of those who had already received their reward in heaven- Jude was willing to be labeled; willing to be ridiculed; willing to be unpopular; and even willing to be hated and killed- but just so long as he could be called faithful- it didn't matter.

Jude- proudly and with honor- linked his name to the two men in his life who had transformed him the most. His Lord and Savior who lived and died and rose again and his now dead brother James- who was with the other martyrs crying out under the mercy seat.

Like both Jesus and James- Jude was a powerful defender of the Faith. He was a vigilant watchman who stood on the walls of the Church and cried out against heresy and false teaching! But like so many of us- like me- perhaps like you- Jude was not always this way.

The Bible tells us in **John** and **The Acts** and in **1Corinthians** that Jude didn't accept Jesus as being the Son of God until *after* the

² John Piper, *Brothers, We Are Not Professionals*, Broadman and Holman, Publishers 2002, pages 1&2

Resurrection. And so, *after* Jesus rose from the dead- Jude's relationship with Jesus changed from simply being Jesus' half-brother to him being Christ's bond-slave.

Beloved, I find it odd that so many in the modern Church find it difficult to preach the very same Gospel that Jude preached. I find it strange that so many can't seem to preach the Gospel in the same way that Jude preached it. To think that I can hold in my hands right now the glorious Gospel of Peace- that is all by itself the very Power of God- that can alone transform lives and save souls; and yet today this precious Book is so little understood; so little studied and learned; and so little obeyed and followed; and so little loved.

My brothers and sisters, so much is spoken and written about "revival" today. We relish in our crystal cathedrals, and we rejoice at the crowds and our book sales and we in the ministry congratulate each other on being in a last day revival. But I believe that Jude would find it odd that we rush out to purchase the latest book *about* the Bible, yet we never seem to be able to have dedicated and consistent time necessary to study the Bible itself.

Christian friends, those who read Jude and who can grasp just who this man was and can hear what this man said would agree with me that it is not a sign of revival today when Prayer Meetings and Bible Studies are the least attended services in Church today. That it is not a sign of revival when Churches shut down because Christmas falls on Sunday or when the leaders of the Church cancel their services because of the Super Bowl. It is not a sign of revival when Churches all over the country are setting up quilting classes and pottery classes and yoga classes in the place of weeping between the porch and the altar in seasons of serious and effectual and fervent prayer.

We teach people in Church today how to lose weight and how to balance their checkbooks but that is a complete waste of time if we don't teach them how to be holy and how to die to self. According to *Ministries Today Magazine*, 95% of all the converts to the cults of Mormonism and Seventh Day Adventism and Jehovah's Witnesses and others who pervert the right way of the Lord don't come from lost unsaved people- they come from people who are already going to Church and yet who don't know what they believe or why they believe it.

So, Jude linked his name to Jesus on purpose. Jude wanted everyone to know what it means to be saved and what it means to be a bond-slave of Jesus Christ. He also linked his name to his martyred brother James, and he preached and he taught the same Gospel; the same Truth; the same power and life changing Word that he tells you and I to earnestly contend for.

Well, I have to stop right here- but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **Jude**. May God help us all.

© 2007- 2023 by Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America
Enjoying God Ministries, Inc. PO Box 147 Saucier, Mississippi 39574 www.covenantofpeace.net

Scripture quotations, except those noted otherwise, are from *The New American Standard Bible* © 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

This is a single transcript in a larger series of teachings taken from a verse- by- verse Journey through the **Epistle of Jude**. You are free to reproduce it and distribute it as the Lord leads you- without cost or reimbursement to us with the stipulation that you may not add anything or take anything away from this transcript without the express written permission of The Covenant of Peace Church and that this complete copyright statement be at the end of all copies.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.