

Jude Part 1 – Contend For The Faith – Aug 23, 2026 – Study Guide

Summary

The provided text offers an in-depth analysis of the **Book of Jude**, highlighting its urgent call for believers to **strenuously defend their faith** against corrupting influences. The author explains that **ungodly individuals** have covertly entered the church, distorting the concept of **divine grace** to justify immoral behaviour and spiritual rebellion. By drawing parallels to **historical divine judgments**, such as those involving Egypt and Sodom, the teaching warns that those who abandon obedience face **catastrophic consequences**. It emphasizes that the church must focus on **internal integrity** and the meticulous preservation of **apostolic doctrine** rather than external worldly trends. Ultimately, the text encourages the faithful to **strengthen their spiritual foundation**, show mercy to those struggling, and trust in **God's power** to keep them from falling.

Study Guide

Definitions of Key Words

- **Contend (*Epagonizomai*):** An intensive form of the Greek word *agonizomai*, meaning to **struggle, fight, or exert intensive effort** on behalf of something in a noble cause. In the context of Jude, it implies striving intensely with focused effort to defend the truth.
- **Bond-servant:** A designation used by Jude (and other apostles) to indicate a person who is **fully "sold out" to Jesus Christ**, putting His will and the needs of the brethren before all else, including blood relatives.
- **The Faith:** The body of truth that was **"once for all handed down to the saints."** It is complete and does not require new revelations or additions from external sources.
- **Crept in Unnoticed:** A phrase describing how false teachers infiltrate the assembly in a way that is **difficult to recognize**, often appearing so similar to the truth that they are only identified at the end of the age, when only the Lord Himself identifies them to the Angels.
- **Ungodly:** Individuals who **turn the grace of God into a license for immorality** (sensuality) and deny the unique Lordship of Jesus Christ.
- **License for Immorality (Licentiousness):** The error of twisting the doctrine of grace to suggest that **sin is acceptable or tolerated** within the Christian life and assemblies.

Expansion of Key Points

1. The Identity and Calling of the Believer

Jude addresses his letter to those who are **"called," "loved by God the Father," and "kept for Jesus Christ"**. This reinforces that the revelation is specifically for God's people, the saints, rather than outsiders. He opens with a prayer for **mercy, peace, and love** to be multiplied—blessings that are not automatic but are tied to one's walk in the faith. He closes with another prayer.

- *Biblical References:* Jude 1-2.

2. The Urgent Mandate: Contending for the Faith

While Jude initially intended to write about the "**common salvation**" shared by believers, he felt a spiritual necessity to pivot and urge them to "**contend earnestly for the faith**". This "faith" is the complete revelation of God, which believers are forbidden to add to or subtract from. The act of contending is compared to an **athlete training for a race, or a boxer disciplining his body** to avoid disqualification.

- *Biblical References:* Jude 3; Romans 1:7-8; 1 Corinthians 9:25-27; Luke 13:24.

3. The Internal Threat: Ungodly Intruders

The primary reason for the call to contend is that certain men have "**crept in unnoticed**" among the believers. These individuals are dangerous because their infiltration is "**unnoticed**". They corrupt the assembly from *within* by:

- Changing the grace of God into a **license for sin**.
- **Denying Jesus Christ** as the only Master and Lord, often by misrepresenting His nature.
- *Biblical References:* Jude 4; 2 Peter 2:1; Acts 20:29-30.

4. Historical Precedents of Judgment

To emphasize the severity of the situation, Jude reminds believers that God has a history of **destroying those who do not believe (the disobedient)**, even after they were once "delivered". He cites three specific examples:

- **The Israelites in Egypt:** Saved from bondage but later many were destroyed for their unbelief. Numbers 14:22-33 and Numbers 32:11-13
- **Fallen Angels:** Those who abandoned "their own domain" and abandoned their "proper abode" and are now kept in darkness with everlasting chains for judgment. 2 Peter 2:4
- **Sodom and Gomorrah:** Serves as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire due to sexual immorality and perversion. Genesis 19:1-38, Luke 17:28-32 and 2 Peter 2:6
- *Biblical References:* Jude 5-7.

5. Characteristics and Fate of False Teachers

Jude describes these intruders as "dreamers" who **pollute their bodies, reject authority, and slander celestial beings**. He compares them to three Old Testament men of rebellion:

- **Cain:** Representing a murderous or faithless way of life. Genesis 4:1-16
- **Balaam:** Representing the pursuit of profit through error, sowing his counsel among God's people corrupting them from the true way. Numbers chapters 22 to 24
- **Korah:** Representing rebellion against God's appointed authority. Numbers 16
- *Biblical References:* Jude 8-11, 16.

6. The Believer's Defensive Strategy

In contrast to the false teachers, the "beloved" are instructed to:

- **Remember** the warnings of the apostles regarding scoffers in the last times.
 - **Build themselves up** in the "most holy faith".
 - **Pray in the Holy Spirit.**
 - **Keep themselves in God's love** while waiting for the mercy of Jesus Christ.
 - **Show mercy** to those who doubt and **snatch others from the fire.**
 - *Biblical References:* Jude 17-23; 2 Peter 3:1.
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Study Questions

1. What was Jude's original purpose for writing, and why did he change his focus?
 2. According to the Greek root *epagonizomai*, what kind of effort is required to "contend for the faith"?
 3. Why does Jude focus on what is happening *inside* the church assembly rather than society at large?
 4. Identify the historical examples of judgment Jude uses to warn the believers.
 5. What are the two primary ways false teachers "deny" Jesus Christ according to the text?
 6. How does the Apostle Paul's description of his own ministry in 1 Corinthians 9:26-27 support Jude's message about "striving"?
 7. What does the phrase "once for all handed down" imply about new revelations in the church today?
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Answer Key

1. **Original Purpose:** To write about their "common salvation". **Change of Focus:** He felt a "necessity" to urge them to **contend for the faith** because ungodly people had crept in unnoticed.
 2. **Effort Required:** It requires **intensive, focused, and noble effort**, much like an athletes preparation and intensive training or a soldier preparing for a battle. This battle being spiritual.
 3. **Focus on the Inside:** What happens **inside** determines whether believers are **delivered/saved or destroyed**. God's priority is the purity of where His people gather to worship and that the truth of His word is taught.
 4. **Examples Used:** (1) The unbelieving Israelites in the wilderness after Egypt; (2) The angels who abandoned their positions; (3) Sodom and Gomorrah. (4) Cain, Balaam and Korah.
 5. **Two Ways of Denial:** (1) Turning grace into a license for immorality/sin; (2) Denying the unique Lordship and denying Jesus was, and is a man, often through false doctrines of idolatry.
 6. **Paul's Support:** Paul emphasizes his having to **disciplining his body** and making it a slave to avoid being "disqualified" after preaching to others, mirroring the "striving" Jude calls for.
 7. **"Once for All":** It implies the revelation is **complete**; there is no need for new written revelations to add to what the apostles have already delivered in The Bible.
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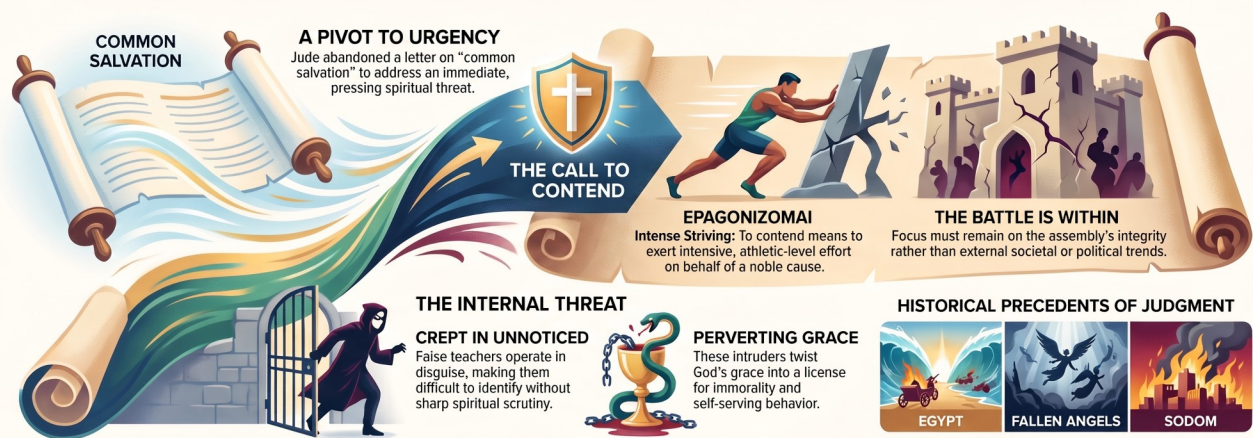
Biblical References within the Sources

- **Jude 1-25**
- **2 Timothy 3:16-17**
- **2 Peter 1:20-21**
- **1 Corinthians 2:13**
- **2 Peter 3:15-16**
- **Galatians 1:11-12**
- **Matthew 10:2-4** (Listing the Twelve Apostles)
- **2 Peter 3:1-2**
- **Matthew 12:46-50** (Jesus' mother and brothers)
- **Galatians 1:19**
- **Romans 1:7-8**
- **Luke 13:24** ("Strive to enter...")
- **1 Corinthians 9:24-27** (Running the race, disciplining the body)
- **Colossians 1:29**
- **1 Timothy 4:10**
- **1 Timothy 6:12-14** ("Fight the good fight of faith")
- **John 14:21** ("He who has my commandments and keeps them...")
- **Acts 20:29-30**
- **James 3:1**

Exhortations

- **Be Vigilant:** Do not be distracted by the "signs of the times" or political shifts; **prioritize what is being taught and practised within your own assembly.**
- **Reject "Strange Fire":** Remember the sons of Aaron; God does not tolerate small errors or unauthorized worship. **Take the purity of doctrine seriously.**
- **Assess the Fruit:** Gauge a teacher not by their miracles or claims of association, but by whether their teaching leads people to **holier lives and dying to their sin.**
- **Don't Forget:** The danger of "forgetting" led the Israelites to destruction after being delivered. **Continually reinforce the truths** handed down by the apostles to remain steadfast on the narrow path.
- **Strive for the Imperishable:** Do not put more effort into worldly goals than you do into your spiritual walk. **Agonize and strive** to ensure you enter the narrow gate.
- **Finish the Race:** Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, the **only one** able to keep you from falling, and **stay awake** as the night grows darker.
- Utilize the **present tense** ministry of the **Lord Jesus Christ as Our Great High Priest.**

Contending for the Faith: An Overview of the Book of Jude



A COMPARISON OF THE INFILTRATORS VERSUS THE CALLED

	 THE INFILTRATORS	 THE CALLED
CHARACTER	 Ungodly, rebellious, and self-serving	 Beloved, kept by Christ, and obedient
ACTION	 Turning grace into a license for sin	 Contending earnestly for the faith
END RESULT	 Catastrophic destruction and judgment	 Mercy, peace, and eternal life