

# **The Message From Jude**

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Good afternoon to everyone here, and greetings to everyone watching this “live” on the phone hook-up. It is good to be here.

What I’m going to talk about today is one of the smallest books in the New Testament, the Epistle of Jude. It contains twenty-five verses. The only other book that has twenty-five verses, that I know of, is Philemon. Even at that, Philemon is a smaller book, word wise, than Jude. Jude is also a close parallel to 2 Peter. In fact, if you wanted to do an extensive Bible study, you could almost do 2 Peter and Jude overlaid with one another. They talk so much about the same thing. 2 Peter 2 and Jude are some of the strongest chapters in the entire Bible. They have to do with Paul’s teachings.

As good Bible students know, in the original order of the New Testament, the general epistles preceded Paul’s epistles. Not that this is all that important, it’s a technical thing. When you look at the theme of those letters that precede Paul’s, there’s James, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, 1 Peter, 2 Peter and then Jude. James talked about faith which is an essential ingredient for all of God’s people. Peter’s letters talked about hope, which is also an essential part for us. Where would we be without that? John teaches about love in his letters.

As you know and as it is discussed in various ways throughout the New Testament, there are counter influences to all those things that will affect us. In fact, all those letters and even Paul’s messages in many respects, if you think about Colossians, Ephesians, etc., those people were basically being influenced and under attack constantly by false teachers.

So in that original order, my point is that Jude is the very last one before Paul’s letters, not like the King James has it. We have to consider, too, that God obviously inspired that original order. No matter what order they are in, God inspired the messages that are contained within those. It is for the ecclesia down through the ages.

So what I would like to do today is just explore this short, but meaningful letter that Jude gave to the churches. The title is:

## The Message From Jude

The only way I know how to do this, because this is such a short epistle, is to go through those twenty-five verses and glean the message contained there. It was for the church then and it is for the church today as I hope we will see as we go along.

Let's begin with Jude 1. I'll be using the New King James unless I say otherwise. In Jude, verse 1, he identifies himself as Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and a brother of James. There it identifies who Jude is. It says he is the brother of James.

***Jude 1: Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James ... (NKJV)***

Just as a reference scripture in Matthew 13, verses 54 and 55, it says:

***Matthew 13:54. When He (Christ) had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "Where did this [Man] get this wisdom and [these] mighty works? (NKJV)***

"Who is this guy?"

***55) "is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?" (NKJV)***

So Christ had four half-brothers and at least two sisters. There were seven in the family that we know of, from the record we have. The one here called Judas is Jude, the one that we're looking at. He was the brother of James, the half-brother of Christ. Jude is also a half-brother; he just doesn't identify himself that way. I think it is because of his humility that he didn't do that. He didn't call himself an apostle, but there must have been some recognition. It doesn't even say that he was an elder. God can use anyone He wants to do whatever He wants at any time or place in history. It doesn't really matter. But he must have had some recognition so his brethren would know who was talking and it would give some credibility to what he was saying.

It's interesting too, that he called himself a bondservant. In the Greek, we know that just means a *slave*. In the sense here that it was given, it means that he was converted. He actually experienced a rebirth. So that signifies that he was a converted man. Again, he didn't glory in the fact that he had any special claim to fame, that he was the brother of James and the half-brother of Christ. He didn't do that. If you look around at the Churches of God and even the churches of the world, you know that nepotism is a common thing. That's not necessarily always wrong, but many times it is.

Also, within that same thought, if you look at those who exalt themselves, later on we're going to talk about some of the characteristics of the false teachers that they had and we even see today.

The New Testament writers that were converted, had God's holy spirit and were being inspired; they had humility. There was no noted egomania seen in these individuals. It's kind of the same thing displayed by Jude. He could have exalted himself, but he didn't do that.

In the last part of verse 1:

**Jude 1b) ... To those who are called ... (NKJV)**

And that just means us. That means all of us that have accepted that calling.

*1 continued) ... sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ:  
(NKJV)*

We know that “sanctified” in the Greek is “hagiazō” and it means *set apart*. It also says they are preserved in Jesus Christ. The Greek word for “preserved” is “tereo” which is often rendered as *kept* or *reserved*. Looking at just that little tidbit there in that first verse, we can take great comfort in knowing that Jesus Christ watches over what is His. He keeps us by His power and by His love. Also, there is the sense that we are preserved. You don’t preserve something that you’re not going to use later. You preserve it to be used later.

Just as a reference scripture, John 6:39 says:

**John 6:39.** *“This is the will of the Father who sent Me (Christ speaking), that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.  
(NKJV)*

He is going to use all of us that He preserves.

Now to verse 2:

*2) Mercy, peace, and love be multiplies to you. (NKJV)*

Jude is saying this to the brethren there. Jude is going to talk about some rather unpleasant things, so he is letting the brethren know that he cares about them. He expresses his love for them. Later on he calls them his beloved, and he is doing that to kind of soften them up, as it were, for the things he is going to discuss.

It’s interesting that Jude, in his style of writing, has a fondness for “threes.” It is evident throughout the letters. That style is not unfamiliar to us. If you look at some of Paul’s letters, an example would be 2 Timothy 1:2, where he talks about grace, mercy and peace. It’s kind of a threesome there. Just looking at that in Jude’s style of writing in the first two verses we have three names; we have Jude, Jesus Christ and James. Then we have three forms of relation; servant, lord and master, and brother. Then we have mercy, peace and love that we just mentioned. Later on in Jude verses 5 and 10, we see three examples. There are lots of “threes” in this letter. It’s interesting when you look at the style of Jude’s letter. In verses 5 and 10, we see examples of apostasy. It talks about the exodus, the rebel angels and the citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah. There is another threesome.

Then it talks about the three-fold characterization of the evil men as walking in the ways of Cain, Balaam and Korah. So that just goes all the way through this.

Then he moves on to the real purpose of his letter which is right up front in verse 3. Again, he uses this term of affection to the brethren.

**Jude 3.** *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. (NKJV)*

So in that one statement, he deviated from his first intention, because he is concerned about what is going on there. He admits that he had hoped to write something about their common salvation, but then he changed. It could have been that someone had written to him or he may have had contact with someone that said, "Well, this is going on in this particular congregation, and maybe you should address it."

You can tell from this also that Jude had two major concerns.

His first concern: that the brethren would not drift.

His second concern: that they wouldn't be led astray by false teachers, teachings or other influences.

So this is Jude's message: He prays that they will instead take the initiative and contend and fight for that faith. Sometimes it is a struggle, as we all know.

Looking at that term, "contend earnestly," means to *struggle* and *fight*. It's a reference to the inner battle, that warfare that goes on that we can see in some of Paul's writings. We face that all the time. These are situations that oppose God and Jesus Christ and oppose us. The faith that Jude is talking about contending for is not the faith that we have when we were first converted. We believed God and had faith that He will do what He says. It's talking about the entire package. It's not just a little piece of it. It's the whole thing, everything that we believe in, that faith we follow. In fact, from the Amplified, Jude 3 is put like this:

**Jude 3.** *Beloved, my whole concern was to write to you in regard to our common salvation, but I found it necessary and was impelled to write to you (He changed his mind) and urgently appeal and exhort to you to contend for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints. ... (AMP)*

Then it goes on to amplify it.

**3b) ... The faith which is the sum of Christian belief which was delivered to the holy people of God. (AMP)**

So it's the whole deal there. It's all of it, not just a little piece of it. In fact, in Acts it's called "the way" and everywhere the apostles went, that "way" was attacked from almost every quarter. On an individual basis, that's never changed for any one of us.

The moment we come out of that baptismal grave there's a fight. We're in a fight. We might not recognize it right away. It might be overt, or it might be covert, but there are a lot of things that will try to influence us to not follow what we know we should, those beliefs and that faith system. What Jude is addressing here is that many times influences will come at us from the outside, but far too often they come at us from the inside. Going down to verse 4, it begins to address this situation.

**Jude 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. (NKJV)*

In 2 Peter 2:1, as a reference scripture, the context here is talking about the Old Testament prophets. Peter says:

**2 Peter 2:1.** *But there were also false prophets among the people ... (NKJV)*

So this has been going on through history against God's people.

*1b) ... even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, [and] bring on themselves swift destruction. (NKJV)*

It kind of reminds me of Acts 20. Again, this is a reference scripture, where Paul is talking to the Ephesian elders.

**Acts 20:29.** *"For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock." (NKJV)*

Verse 30 is significant; it says:

*30) "Also from among yourselves (the elders) men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves." (NKJV)*

Paul goes on to tell them, "Watch. This is going to happen." He's giving them a warning, just like Jude is to the entire church even down to our time. He's telling them to stay alert. That is part of what we should watch for. It snuck up on us. That happened to us in Worldwide when we first came into contact with the Church of God.

*31) "Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears." (NKJV)*

So like Paul and Peter, Jude is warning about the influence of false teachers creeping into the church. Again, verse 4 from the Amplified:

**Jude 4.** *For certain men have crept in stealthily ... (AMP)*

They imply that they snuck in through the side; came in through a side door.

*4b) ... Their doom was predicted long ago, ungodly, (impious, profane) persons who pervert the grace ... (AMP)*

Grace means spiritual blessing and favor.

*4 continued) ... of our God into lawlessness [and] wantonness [and] immorality and disown and deny our sole Master and Lord Jesus Christ, the anointed One. (AMP)*

It's referring to those who teach a cheap grace, and that's often what these false teachers do. That's what they promote.

We shouldn't think that Jude is against grace. He isn't saying that at all. We need to know the phraseology that he uses there. He is talking about the beautiful subject of grace and cheapening it by a compromising approach to God's law. It's lawlessness, that licentiousness and works of the flesh.

You know, false teachers don't really submit to the authority in the church. They don't recognize it, they don't like it, and certainly that's a reflection of the way they feel about God and Jesus Christ. They don't submit to their authority. In their lawlessness and cheapening of grace, they take the approach, "Well, this is okay or that's okay. You don't really have to worry about the Sabbath or the holy days or the laws or any of that." That's the way it goes. We have seen that in the world's churches.

I knew a man that came into the Church of God years ago, and he had been baptized previously in a protestant church. When he was baptized and came up out of the water, he said, "What do I do now?" They said, "Well, it doesn't really matter. Do whatever you want." He knew then that he was in a lot of trouble. He wasn't in the right place.

We can see how this affects society around us. If we look at the cultural war that's going on, all we have to do is watch the news once in a while. Christian values are being attacked from almost every angle. You have to feel really bad, because it's tragic how kids are being raised. We find ourselves in a culture where if you stand for anything wrong, then you're the bad guy. I think they're even moving to make laws against this, aren't they? I just hope it doesn't come to the point where we get sued for whatever we say here publicly.

That culture and philosophy spills over into the church. It takes the form of a lackadaisical Christian walk. People can be drawn into these lawless things, like the works of the flesh, the wantonness and immorality that tends to take over the lives of people. As far as false teachers go and what they teach, actually they are covering up the way they live their lives and their conduct. Unfortunately, if you look at all the churches in the world, look at all the scandals. It's often sexual immorality, which is the baser work of the flesh. If you look at that list of the works of the flesh, it starts at the

bottom and works its way up. Unfortunately, we've even seen that in the churches of God.

In reality, these false teachers are allowing the leaven of compromise to influence their conduct. In effect, they are denying Jesus Christ. That's what Jude is saying. They deny the Lord that bought them.

The point that I'm trying to get across is that we need to be portraying God's values and living now like we would in the Kingdom of God. As we resist and fight this battle for the faith that we have been given, to resist those anti-God influences, we know that Satan is in the mix ... always.

In verse 5, he comes to another set of three. He is using examples of disobedience, sin and the consequences of that. Jude puts a reminder here to emphasize his point, even though he expects us to be familiar with what he is saying. He says in verse 5:

***Jude 5.*** *But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt (talking about the Exodus), afterward destroyed those who did not believe. (NKJV)*

We review this almost every year before the Passover. The Israelites were given everything they needed by God. They had the guidance, the protection and everything. But right away at Mt. Sinai, without the influence of Moses there, they went right back into adultery. This is the type of apostasy that Jude is talking about here, what he is addressing.

It's the same for us. We were also pulled out of that slavery, that bondage. We review that before every Passover. God offered us that grace. He gave us the things we need. Yet the lesson here is that He destroyed all of those because of their behavior. They went back. They left that faith in a sense. It's a type of that, because of all the things God had given them. God grants us grace, and He calls us. We really don't deserve it. We're not worthy of it. However, He has expectations for that. He wants us to not only believe it, but believe and follow it.

Going on to verse 6, and here is another set of threes. He talked about the exodus and now He's going to talk about the angels.

***Jude 6.*** *And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode (Talking about those that followed Satan), He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day; (NKJV)*

Regarding the proper domain, a lot of commentaries will say this is talking about angels coming down and cohabitating with physical women. That is a false idea. The point he is making is that these angels were seduced by Satan; again, anti-God influence.

You remember what we were once taught in the church. Satan and the angels were cast back down to earth. It talks about that in Revelation 12:1-9, that they were representative of God's government on earth. That was during our "God's government" days, when we were in that mode of the government thing. It was extrapolated from that. We were told that because they were God's government on earth and they rebelled against God, that if we rebelled against church government, we were like Satan and the demons. That's quite a jump there. If you read Revelation 12 correctly, the rebellion was never between men on the earth. It took place in heaven. That's where it took place, at God's throne. That's where the rebellion happened. It's still going on there. So the key is that we don't want to rebel or disobey against government. It has nothing to do with men, or organizations or men's theories about government. It has to do with rebelling against God. As the example they use here, that's what they did.

The third one he mentions is in verse 7, which is Sodom and Gomorrah.

**Jude 7.** *As Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality (there that is again) and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. (NKJV)*

In Sodom and Gomorrah, the sexual immorality is emphasized. If you look at some of the influences that were going on in the early days of the church, one of them was Gnosticism. They believed and taught that it doesn't matter what you do with the human body. We see that in society today. We see society trying to redefine marriage and homosexuality. There is a total disregard for God who created the sexes. It's all based now on polls, freedom, rights, being sensitive and tolerant.

We believe in the liberty of Jesus Christ, but that doesn't allow this lawlessness or this cheap grace. Talk about influence, it's interesting. Everyone is familiar with those cities that I talked about that were around Sodom and Gomorrah. They were caught up in the same sexual debauchery. What was their result? We never see these two cities mentioned, but they were Admah and Zeboiim. That is mentioned in Deuteronomy 29:23-28. It's a bit plainer in the NIV. It was once a very fertile and productive area. That's why Lot chose it. He said, "I want that piece." There was water there.

**Deuteronomy 29:23.** *The whole land will be a burning waste of salt and sulfur-- nothing planted, nothing sprouting, no vegetation growing on it. It will be like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboyim, which the LORD overthrew in fierce anger. (NIV)*

Then it goes on to say in the context that all the nations around said, "Why has God done this? What is so bad about what they were doing?" The answer is in verse 25.

**25)** *And the answer will be: "It is because this people abandoned the covenant of the Lord, the God of their ancestors, the covenant he made with them when he brought them out of Egypt. (NIV)*



There was a total disregard for God, their Creator.

*26) They went off and worshiped other gods and bowed down to them, gods they did not know, gods he had not given them.*

*27) Therefore the LORD's anger burned against this land, so that he brought on it all the curses written in this book. (NIV)*

He destroyed it completely.

*28) In furious anger and in great wrath the Lord uprooted them from their land and thrust them into another land, as it is now. (NIV)*

Again, what Jude is pointing out (and these people knew that) is that those cities came under the perverted influence of Sodom and Gomorrah. That is the point that Jude wanted them to get.

**Jude 8.** *Likewise (In the same way) also these dreamers... (NKJV)*

These are false teachers, those who attack God's people all through history.

*8b) ... defile the flesh (sexually immoral), reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. (NKJV)*

Jude knows there are many things counter to the faith outside the church, but he knows these things work their way into the church and work from the inside. This is one of Satan's favorite tactics. If you look at the context, there's a lot in that little verse. It talks about people that are nominal, theoretical Christians. They may have been part of the church at one time; evidently they lost their way. It's the same category of people that are called tares. These are folks that are baptized, but their hearts are not in it. It's like the parable of the sower of the seed. But that can happen. We have an outstanding example that shows this happened in the early church, in Acts 8, where it talks about Simon Magus. We know the story. Phillip was preaching the gospel in that area and this individual became associated with the group there, but in Acts 8:12, it says:

**Acts 8:12.** *But when they believed Philip ... (NKJV)*

This is not the apostle. He's one of the seven that were chosen in Acts 6. We see later on that he is not an apostle.

*12b) ... as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.*

*13) Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done. (NKJV)*

The story goes on where the apostles in Jerusalem heard about that, so they sent Peter and John down there to take care of things. Actually they learned that they had been baptized, but hadn't had hands laid on them, because this Phillip did not have authority to do that.

*17) Then they (Peter and John) laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. (NKJV)*

Then as the story goes, Simon wanted to buy that power. He thought he could purchase it. Down in verse 20, Peter tells him:

*20) But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money!"*

*21) You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God. (NKJV)*

It seems from the story there that he was not only baptized, but he had hands laid on him. You can fool men and ministers, but you can't fool God. God never granted him His holy spirit. He just didn't do that. Now to verse 24:

*24) Then Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me, that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me." (NKJV)*

He never took any responsibility at all. He wanted them to pray for him. They told him to repent and get his heart right, but he didn't want to do that.

**Jude 8.** *Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries. (NKJV)*

Going back to the first part of Jude 8, where it talks about these dreamers; that could mean any number of things. It could be idle speculations, certain visions they had, or divine revelations they claim they had. Maybe they claim that they're one of the two witnesses or whatever. It goes on and on. Perhaps they claim to have special knowledge. They can get everyone to the place of safety, etc. They are dreamers. Whatever the exact meaning is, it just means that all their activities had a single objective, which was defilement which means self-pollution and corruption of others, and maybe both. That was their motive.

In the last part of verse 8, where it talks about "*reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries,*" that rejection of authority if you look closely at the Greek, it means *someone with a low opinion of someone else*. That is what it is referring to. It's kind of a difficult translation. The glorious one that it talks about, again that gets a bit difficult. Some people think that they're angels, but the Greek says that dignitaries are the glorious ones. It could be referring to those that resent authority. They hated that. It could mean God and Jesus Christ or those called. They had a low opinion of them.

That's often what happens. The false teachers come in, and they have no respect. They have contempt for everyone. That's the whole approach. A couple of references on that are in Hebrews 2:10.

**Hebrews 2:10.** *For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. (NKJV)*

That's talking about us. In Romans 8:18, it says:

**Romans 8:18.** *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. (NKJV)*

Again, these false teachers are contemptuous of the true ministry and also the brethren. That's the point that Jude is making there.

Let's continue in Jude 9.

**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!" (NKJV)*

You have to wonder why he did that, but he didn't want to be like Satan. He didn't want that kind of accusatory attitude. Satan already despised authority, and he inspires that in others. Michael didn't want to be in the same situation. There is a lesson there for us too. As an aside, often we can recognize evil. We may size up the situation correctly, but if we make harsh judgments, we don't know the things that God does. We shouldn't get into that kind of judgmental approach either even when we see things that are wrong. The point is that we don't want to fall into the same category as Satan and these false teachers, because that is one of the strategies that they use. They accuse others to discredit them and, thereby, gain a little credibility to themselves, they hope.

**Jude 10.** *But these speak evil of whatever they do not know; and whatever they know naturally (or instinctively), like brute beasts, in these things they corrupt themselves. (NKJV)*

In other words, never having God's spirit, they think only in carnal terms. Like the works of the flesh in Galatians 5.

**Jude 11.** *Woe to them! For they have gone in the way (here's another set of 3's) of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah. (NKJV)*

Looking at that set of three examples:

The first one: You know that Cain murdered his brother because he was jealous of his favor with God. His sacrifice was not correct in God's sight. It's the same with these infiltrators who come into the church. They are without God's spirit. They are jealous of those that do have God's spirit, just like Simon Magus was. It's the same pattern. It goes on and on.

The second one: Balaam was a double-minded man. He thought he could serve God and still use God's people for profit by cursing them. Balak hired him to curse the Israelites, but God didn't allow him to do that. He turned his donkey against him.

The whole point there is that a lot of people are in religion for the money, when you think about Balaam. With that kind of attitude, it's just a business. They teach and preach certain things. They teach multiple layers of tithing. The approach is, "What's in it for me?"

The third one: This concerns Korah. Recall how we were taught previously and how this was used against us. The approach was if Korah rebelled against God's servant, Moses, then the leadership of Worldwide used that to beat us over the head. They said we should never rebel against God's servant. Well, that's not the lesson of Korah. The lesson of Korah is about the priesthood, which was a group of individuals that rebelled against Moses. It was the priesthood, period. So what we were commonly taught was not correct. It doesn't have anything to do with rebelling against church, ministry, man or whatever. It's talking about doing that against God. Obviously Moses was directly appointed by God for that particular function in history.

The irony of that is when you think about how we were kind of beat over the head with that (if I can use that term), the worst heretics in the church were sitting right there. Look what happened. Look how vulnerable that made people. People went out searching for everything. That made them all the more vulnerable. I can't speak for everyone else, but we were looking at different groups, we were looking at different ideas. Some people are very susceptible to that. Personally, I think that is why God scattered the church. If you can't generate the money and the power and the control over people, you can't do that. You can't have the same effect. I don't know if you have noticed or not, but in some of the bigger groups out there, the more those things tend to happen the more trouble they seem to have. The important point is that what we heard before was not accurate and it led to the destruction of an entire church. How many people never recovered from that? So this is all very relevant to us when we think about it. We never thought it could happen then. We don't think it could happen now, but it could, it just could.

Let's continue on in verse 12. We're still talking about these same individuals.

**Jude 12.** *These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves ... (NKJV)*

Then and now, they're spots in God's feasts. They are not there for what they should be, for the spiritual food. They have an agenda. They have a motive for being there. Too often they seek out vulnerable individuals in the congregation, and that's how it works and it spreads from there. The parallel scripture is 2 Peter 2:12 and 13.

**2 Peter 2:12.** *But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption,  
13) And will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you, (NKJV)*

And that has happened. Again, the point is that these are people that have crept in, then and now. They hurt people and they're in it for their own agenda. In every sense of the word they are rebelling against God in doing that.

Then Jude goes into a series of metaphors with pretty graphic language. He describes the state of these false teachers, something that we don't want to be drawn into. Continuing in verse 12 where it says:

**Jude 12b)** ... *They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds ... (NKJV)*

When you think about clouds without water, this metaphor is drawn from that arid region that they were in at that time. It was familiar to those people. Over in 2 Peter 2, it talks about empty wells. The metaphor is that they are empty. There is no substance there. They don't have anything that is refreshing, like water would be. Speaking of clouds without water, if you're in an area where drought is a concern, this is a terrible disappointment if you need rain.

It says too that they are carried about by winds and that is a similar metaphor. It just means instability. If you look up in the sky and see a cloud, it could be there one minute and gone the next. Like today, we got up and had high winds and cloudy skies and then all the way here it was clear. That's the way of these false teachers. It means they are unstable. In the last part of verse 12, it continues with more metaphors.

**Jude 12 continued)** ... *late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; (NKJV)*

"Autumn trees without fruit" is talking about trees that bear fruit in the autumn. If a farmer expects fruit, apples or whatever, it's a disappointment if he sees that the tree is bare. If you look at the spiritual side of that metaphor, the spiritual fruit, the love, joy, peace and faithfulness and all of that, those fruits are not evident. It's like a barren tree. It's like when Christ said, "A tree cannot bear good and bad fruit at the same time." It means the same thing.

Then it goes on to say, *“Twice dead, pulled up by the roots.”* An unfruitful or barren tree is dead, but when it is uprooted from the earth it is doubly dead. It’s really gone. It’s just fire wood. Applying the metaphor, spiritually speaking, those individuals that are twice dead were baptized and part of the church, but now are not. They returned to that death of sin.

We can see a parallel to that in Hebrews 6:4, where it talks about the unpardonable sin. These individuals threw all that faith away. Also a reference scripture along those lines would be 1 Timothy 4:1-3.

**1 Timothy 4:1.** *The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. (NIV)*

That is certainly what false teachers do.

2) *Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. (NIV)*

They have no relationship with God; they have none of God’s holy spirit in them.

3) *They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods ... (NIV)*

That might sound a bit strange, but there are a lot of folks out there unfortunately, who seem to take on a religion of trivia. It’s Pharisaical in nature, but they think if they do these little bitty things that somehow they will become a super Christian. We’ve seen that.

3b) *... which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. (NIV)*

Hopefully that is us. Continuing with more metaphors in verse 13:

**Jude 13.** *... raging waves of the sea ... (NKJV)*

Jude, like all of us, has been to the seashore. Have you ever seen trash on the seashore? Look at all that stuff we inherited from Japan that floated up on our beaches. That’s what the metaphor is looking at here. The beach is littered and polluted with all kinds of filth and trash, and the nasty stuff is really in the foam. We went to the Feast once in Destin, Florida and there was red tide going on there. They didn’t want anyone to even go near the water. It had nasty foam that washed up on the beaches. I guess you could get infected by just breathing the stuff. So that’s what he’s talking about.

He could have borrowed this from Isaiah. Isaiah had a similar metaphor in Isaiah 57:20. He said:

**Isaiah 57:20.** *But the wicked are like the troubled sea,  
When it cannot rest, Whose waters cast up mire and dirt. (NKJV)*

That could even have the implication that they stirred up trouble. So a foul, polluted beach is what Jude used as a metaphor here, and it's a perfect picture of what these evil teachers do. Their teachings are polluted.

**Jude 13b.** *... foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. (NKJV)*

The reference there is clearly to meteorites that blaze for a moment in the sky and then they are gone. They just fall into darkness forever. It is a reference to meteorites if you'll look at the commentaries. You will see different ideas there, but the technical term is meteorites. Metaphorically, that's what he was talking about. It's like the other expressions that he used, they are metaphorical in nature. Trees can't be twice dead; oceans don't foam up shame, and stars don't wander.

Jude's point is that these evil men who trouble the church are just like shooting stars. They shine for a minute and then they just plunge into darkness. They're gone. Turn to 2 Peter 2:18, as a reference:

**2 Peter 2:18.** *For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness ... (NKJV)*

They sound really good. Most of these guys, unfortunately, have discovered a microphone.

*18b) ... they allure through the lusts of the flesh ... (NKJV)*

There it is again, the lower, baser carnal nature.

*18 continued) ... through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error.*

*19) While they promise them liberty... (NKJV)*

And they can't deliver that. They promise them a certain freedom and they promise all kinds of things. They just cannot deliver on it.

*19b) ... they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage. (NKJV)*

They are sinning and they seduce others to sin. That is plainly what that is saying.

*20) For if, after they have escaped the (spiritual) pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning. (NKJV)*

That is usually what happens. The people that get sucked in by the false teachers, they go right back into the world, they go right back into paganism. They start keeping Christmas and Easter again, and they do all kinds of things. We've seen that.

*21) For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. (NKJV)*

Peter gets really graphic here. He says in verse 22:

*22) But it has happened to them according to the true proverb ... (NKJV)*

He's talking about Proverbs 26:11.

*22b) ... "A dog returns to his own vomit ... (NKJV)*

Then Peter throws in his own analogy.

*22 continued) ... and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire." (NKJV)*

That's pretty gross and very graphic.

The point here is that these individuals are in a bad spiritual state that we don't want to get drawn into. Unfortunately that's what happened. Again, we're talking about a counter influence against the faith that we have.

**Jude 14.** *Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also ... (NKJV)*

You won't find that in scripture, by the way.

*14b) ... 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." (NKJV)*

This prophecy is simply talking about the coming day of judgment. That's a promise that came very early in human history. It's been there all the time. It's a prediction of when God will come and settle accounts with the wicked men who have despised and rejected Him. These individuals are going to be in that category because they rejected God, and they have influenced others to do the same. If you think about it, that coming judgment colors every page of the Bible, if we're looking for it.

*16) These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage. (NKJV)*



They have their own motives and agenda. A commentator pointed out the numerous charges against these guys. He said, "They're grumblers, they're complainers, they're malcontents, their sole guide is their lust, they're noisy boasters. All they do is direct at procuring some personal benefit for themselves." Even this commentator can see this. He asks, "How many people on earth today are described by this same analysis?" We can ask, how many in the church? Going on to verse 17 of Jude:

*17) 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 (some say scoffers) in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. (NKJV)*

These individuals are there. In 2 Peter 3, he also prophesied of those scoffers, if you remember those scriptures. They make light of the truth. They come up with the idea that Christ is delaying His coming, there's really no judgment and we don't have to worry about all that.

*2 Peter 3:1. Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure (unpolluted) minds by way of reminder)*

*2) that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior,*

*3) knowing this first: that scoffers (or skeptics) will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, (NKJV)*

Again, they have their own agenda and they want to do things their own way. We can't say that this cannot happen to us today, that false teachers creeping into the church can't happen. We lived through it. We have had that experience.

Here is something that maybe you haven't thought of. If you think of this historically and keep everything in context, if you go to Revelation 2 and 3 and look at those churches and the influences in those churches, what do we have? Here is a short list: In Revelation 2 and 3 we have the doctrine of Balaam, doctrine of the Nicolaitans, Jezebel, the church that lost faith and their first love. They were being negligent. This is a church that was spiritually dead. Something influenced that. Something drew them away from the faith that was originally delivered to them. There was only one faithful church mentioned in Revelation, chapter 3, the Philadelphia Church. Notice also within those seven churches, there is an element of sexual immorality. It's kind of a trademark of the counter influence to God's way of life.

Remember what Christ said in Matthew 7, that you will know false prophets and false teachers by their fruits. Here is a short list of some of the characteristics of false teachers:

- Covetous
- Boasters (how special and great they are)
- Immoral ... every aspect of that, not only sexually.
- Liars ... they don't present the truth.
- Self willed
- They twist scripture; they put their own spin on it.
- They deny Christ

These are the characteristics of these individuals. These are the fruits that we can see if we are watching these things. Continue in verse 19.

*19) These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit. (NKJV)*

Think of all those metaphors we just talked about. A sensual person is guided by their lust and passion. Their Bible is their covetousness. It's the covetousness of their hearts. That's their Bible and what motivates and drives them. They have faith in themselves. They cause divisions. How do they do that? They do that by separating themselves and inducing others to do the same. There are people out there that will tear apart whole groups to get a group of their own. That just goes on and on.

Another commentator made an interesting statement. Talking about Jude, he said, "These false teachers were so absorbed in the lower sensuous nature." Again that is one of the extremes of Gnosticism, where it just means that human beings are no different than animals, not that there weren't other influences besides Gnosticism. If you look closely at the history, there was a mixture of many things that went on there. Satan was using these as instruments to attack God's church and destroy that faith. The commentator continued to say, "They no longer possess, in any real sense of the word, that element in man's compound being which is self spiritual." He doesn't really identify it as such, but he is talking about the spirit in man. "Incapable, therefore, of communing with the divine spirit." In other words, there isn't a connection there. These individuals are not right with God, and they cannot have God's holy spirit. There is no way to do that.

If you think about that, "*not having the spirit*" as it says in the last part of verse 19, if they ever had it, it is long since gone. It's been grieved, it's been insulted and it's been resisted in every way. It's been lusted after and quenched. You name it. They were not capable of Godly behavior because they did not have a shred of God's holy spirit.

*20) But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith ... (NKJV)*

It takes work to build faith. It takes work over a lifetime. It takes the exact opposite of tearing it apart, like many of these individuals would like to do for their own gain. That is what Jude is warning about.

In other words, praying in the power of the holy spirit. That is what he is asking for them. He is saying, "*building yourself up.*" What he is saying is that you can't be your own savior. He's not implying that. He is just saying that we have responsibility to God because of God's grace. We need to do our part in obeying Him and live in a way that pleases Him.

Old Testament and New Testament writers were not afraid to stress that at all. They stress what people must do themselves if they hope to receive salvation. At Pentecost, Peter said, "*Save yourselves from this crooked generation.*" Paul wrote, "*People should work out their own salvation.*" The stress there is what we are commanded to do. The implication there is that if we refuse to do those things, it is tantamount to forfeiting the grace and calling that God has given us. We throw it all away. The point is, we cannot earn salvation, but neither can we willfully disobey God and expect to be in His kingdom. There is definitely a human response that we need to direct towards God.

*20b) ... praying in the Holy Spirit, (NKJV)*

Jude stresses this because prayer is vital to our relationship with God. That is where our real security is. If we have that relationship with God, then we won't be so vulnerable to false ideas and false teachers. We need that prayer for our Christian growth. That's what builds us up, and if we neglect that, it is to our own peril. We have scriptures that tell us that.

*21) keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. (NKJV)*

There is a lot packed into that verse, where it says, "*keep yourselves in the love of God.*" Our human response to God is stressed. It means exactly like it was in verse 1, where it says, "*keeping yourself in the love of God.*" It's the same thing as obeying God, and it is extensively taught throughout the New Testament by all the apostles.

In summarizing the context and the encouragement in these verses that we have covered, Jude is pleading with the faithful about what they should do. We should work at our faith, give constant attention to prayer. We need to receive, cultivate and cherish the indwelling of God's holy spirit that we have been so graciously given. We must keep ourselves in God's love; and how do we do that? We do that through obedience to God. Christ said, "*If you love me, keep my commandments.*" That's what we need to do even if we are frustrated or discouraged, with failures and shortcomings. There is no getting around that. We've all experienced that in some way. Part of that verse says to look to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ and He will save us if we do that, even when we have failures and stumble and trip and fall.

In the last part of that verse, it talked about eternal life. We don't have that now, but in a sense we have a promise of that. We have that vital living hope, and it's tied to our obedience, our love towards God, seeking His mercy to forgive us and help us whenever we do stumble and fall, and just maintaining that faith that we have.

Paul's words in Philippians come to mind. In Philippians 2:14 through 16 says:

**Philippians 2:14.** *Do all things without complaining ... (NKJV)*

Unfortunately that's what we do as human beings. We complain a lot, don't we? We just have a tendency to do that.

*14b) ... and disputing, (NKJV)*

It means fighting the wrong battles amongst ourselves. That was even mentioned among the fruits of a carnal spirit, which are the bad fruits.

*15) that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation ... (NKJV)*

Where do we find ourselves?

*15b) ... among whom you shine as lights in the world, (NKJV)*

That is our job description. That's what we should be doing, and if we are faithful and hanging onto this faith, struggling and doing what we need to maintain it, that's what we will be. We will be lights to the world.

*16) holding fast the word of life (God) ... (NKJV)*

Again, that's the faith once delivered.

*16b) ... so that I may rejoice (Paul is saying) in the day of Christ (at Christ's return) that I have not run in vain or labored in vain. (NKJV)*

Remember, this is talking about humility, the approach of the apostles, the approach of Jude. He always pointed to Christ, not his ideas, not his theories. It wasn't his church. He always pointed to Christ.

Now Jude is closing, as I am.

**Jude 22.** *And on some have compassion ... (NKJV)*

He is talking about some people that have been affected, as many of us have been and maybe will be.

*22b) ... making a distinction; (NKJV)*

*23) but others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment defiled by the flesh. (NKJV)*

If you look at that closely, it's talking about a couple of classes of people. But if you look in other translations, you will see that there is actually more. In fact, in the Amplified, it says:

**Jude 23.** *[Strive to] save others, snatching [them] out of [the] fire; on others take pity [but] with fear, loathing even the garment spotted by the flesh and polluted by their sensuality. (NKJV)*

So it's talking about more than two classes. The first class where it says, "*convict, rebuke disputers,*" it's talking about the people that have already had their minds made up. They're right. They have all the answers, and no one else has any. You can't reach those folks. We've seen some of that in the church. There are a lot of examples of people getting sucked into different ideas. They are set in their ways.

It's not so much here, but in some places there is the Hebrew roots movement. I'm not saying that in a mean way. Looking back at some early church history, there may be cultural or technical things to learn, but the idea behind the Hebrew roots is based in Judaism. Judaism was never a part of Christianity. They are entirely incompatible. Judaism is an invention of the Pharisees, the same people that murdered Christ.

Then we have the other ideas floating around that Christ is a created being. What Jude is implying here, in these individuals, is to rebuke and convict them. He's talking about the responsibility of the church and us, the brethren, to reject and refuse contact with these folks. Remember Christ in Matthew 15, that isn't being mean. Sometimes we get a wrong idea that we have to show love to everybody. That's not necessarily true. Back in Matthew 15, Christ was in a confrontation with the Pharisees, which had to do with washing hands. The Pharisees came to Him and asked, "Why don't your disciples wash their hands?" Christ went on to explain that it's not what goes in you that defiles, it's what comes out of you. He's telling them to stay away from those people. He said, "Leave them alone. Don't be around them, because they are the blind leading the blind. If you get associated with them you're going to fall into the ditch too." That's what He is saying. That's the way we would put that today. We don't need to apologize for that, for not having contact with them.

The other category he is talking about, "*pulling them out of the fire,*" just means metaphorically to rescue people that have been naively influenced, if we have an opportunity to do that. Perhaps these are newer brethren. We have a number of newer people now. Remember Jesus Christ said, "*Whoever causes one of these little ones to stumble...*"

It also teaches us in Galatians 6:1, and Romans 15:1 that the stronger members should support, or in this case, rescue the spiritually weak. These are those that maybe haven't built up much faith and are vulnerable to deception.

Another category he talked about is, "*others take pity, show mercy.*" It's those that have maybe been weakened by outside influences or false ideas brought into the church, but

they're not following those people. They're not there yet. It goes on to say, "*but with fear, hating the garments,*" which means those that, if we're trying to help people like that, we need to be very careful.

You could make the comparison regarding garments to the lepers. One of the first things they destroyed were the garments they wore, because they were contaminated with the leprosy. It's kind of the same idea here. Paul dealt with this with the Corinthians. They took the approach of being really tolerant of the sins going on in the Corinthian Church. Sometimes people trying to help folks by being over sympathetic will be influenced by some of the teachings. That's what Jude is trying to point out here, by staying away from those beliefs if you're trying to help those in that situation.

Now after all this unpleasant discourse that Jude has discussed with these people, he has some encouraging and positive words. What he is going to say here is the greatest protection against false teachers and teachings, and that is a solid foundation in the word of God and focus on Jesus Christ. That's exactly what he is saying at the end. So in verses 24 and 25, he closes.

***Jude 24.*** *Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling ... (NKJV)*

Those tripped up by false teaching and lawless ideas.

*24b) ... And to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, (NKJV)*

Someone once said that if you give Christ half a chance, He is going to get you in His kingdom.

*25) To God our Savior (Jesus Christ), Who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen. (NKJV)*

Jude's message is clear. He's saying that we must cling to God's way of life, to the faith once delivered. He points out that in that day and for us today, those forces are still there to struggle against. We need to beware of those who will infiltrate the church with wrong things. They infiltrate with their agendas, maybe political agendas or whatever. Look even outside the church, at all the lawlessness that we can get drawn into.

Jude points out with this warning and admonition to keep our focus, faith and hope in God the Father and Jesus Christ. We must put our efforts into our relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, and look to them for the faith that we earnestly need to contend for that which was once delivered to us.

A closing scripture in 2 Peter 3; and this is the same message.

***2 Peter 3:17.*** You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked;

*18) but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.  
To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen. (NKJV)*

Brethren, if we follow this advice, we will win this spiritual battle, and stand before our Savior, Jesus Christ.