"Contend for the Faith" (part 1)

Jude 1-16

This week's study focuses on the letter of Jude – an often-overlooked book of the Bible found just before the book of Revelation.

While Jude calls himself "the brother of James" in verse 1, he was also the brother of Jesus (see Mark 6:3, where the Greek "Judas" is equivalent to "Jude"). The twin themes of his letter are the danger of false teachers and the importance of defending the true faith.

Matt Ryman will preach two Sundays in a row on this important little book. This discussion guide will help you apply the truths you hear about on Sunday to your life.

May this study help equip you to "contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints" (vs. 3).

KNOWING GOD

Read **Jude 1-16**. What seem to be the chief concerns of the author of this little letter?

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Clearly, the tone of the letter of Jude is severe. Jude, the brother of Jesus, is warning believers about false teachers. Make a list of all the words and phrases he uses in vss. 1-16 to describe these "godless men."

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Why is God concerned about people "who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord" (vs. 4)? Why should WE be concerned?

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GROWING TOGETHER

Tell about a time you had to "contend for the faith" (vs. 3). How did you feel during and after the incident?

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The letter of Jude is filled with references that are rather obscure to modern readers. We may puzzle, for example, over what it means to "slander celestial beings" (vs. 8) and rush into "Balaam's error" (vs. 11). But other descriptions of the false teachers are easy enough to relate to the contemporary scene. If Jude were alive today in the U.S., what errors do you suppose he would talk about in his letter?

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SERVING OTHERS

In Jude 1, the author calls himself "a servant of Jesus Christ." This is striking, since he might have gained notoriety by calling himself the brother of Jesus Christ. Jude had obviously learned humility from his older brother. Is it your ambition to be a servant, "content to fill a little space if God be glorified"[1]? Or do you struggle with a sense of entitlement and a prideful desire to be noticed and admired? If the latter is true, what would repentance look like in your case?

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IN YOUR FAMILY…

a) Biblical and theological illiteracy is a real problem in the church today. *Brainstorm:* What can your family do to help UPC be a place where people grow in their knowledge of God's Word?

b) Has your family tried memorizing Scripture? This week, try memorizing this passage: John 8:31-32.

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[1] A line from the hymn "Father, I Know That All My Life," by Anna Waring, 1850.

SERMON NOTES