

# Warning!

<sup>1</sup> Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James, To those who have been called, who are loved by God the Father and kept by Jesus Christ: <sup>2</sup> Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance.

<sup>3</sup> Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints. <sup>4</sup> For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.

<sup>5</sup> Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. <sup>6</sup> And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. <sup>7</sup> In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.

<sup>8</sup> In the very same way, these dreamers pollute their own bodies, reject authority and slander celestial beings. <sup>9</sup> But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" <sup>10</sup> Yet these men speak abusively against whatever they do not understand; and what things they do understand by instinct, like unreasoning animals—these are the very things that destroy them.

<sup>11</sup> Woe to them! They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam's error; they have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion.

<sup>12</sup> These men are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm—shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted—twice dead. <sup>13</sup> They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom blackest darkness has been reserved forever.

<sup>14</sup> Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones <sup>15</sup> to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him." <sup>16</sup> These men are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage.

<sup>17</sup> But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. <sup>18</sup> They said to you, "In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires." <sup>19</sup> These are the men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit.

<sup>20</sup> But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.

<sup>22</sup> Be merciful to those who doubt; <sup>23</sup> snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.

<sup>24</sup> To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— <sup>25</sup> to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

## 1. This is an urgent letter

### Jude's authorship of this letter

#### ▼ Jude was a bondservant of Jesus

Jude 1 Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ

#### ▼ Jude was the brother of James

Jude 1 Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James,

#### ▼ Jude and James were the brothers of Jesus

Mark 6:3 Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?

#### ▼ Jude was a believer in Jesus

John 7:5 For even his own brothers did not believe in him.

Acts 1:14 They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

### Jude's audience for this letter

#### ▼ This is a letter written to believers everywhere

Jude 1 To those who have been called, who are loved by God the Father and kept by Jesus Christ:

#### ▼ This is a letter written with a blessing extended

Jude 2 Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance.

### Jude's advisory in this letter

#### ▼ Jude revised his agenda

Jude 3 Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.

#### ▼ Jude reported his reason for alarm

Jude 4 For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you.

- ▶ They are deceivers and dividers
- ▶ They are depraved and detestable
- ▶ They are diabolical and demonic

#### ▼ Jude rendered his advisory

Jude 3 I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.

- ▶ Caution, Christian – there are many deceivers
- ▶ Careful, Christian – there are many dangerous doctrines
- ▶ Concentrate, Christian – there are many distractions
- ▶ Continue, Christian – there are many doubters and defectors
- ▶ Courage, Christian – there are mighty defensive devices available

# Warnings Against Falling

## by Following False Teachers

The unbelieving world is filled with false religions and religious teachers. The New Testament specifically deals with false teachers who claim to be in fellowship with Christ and claim to exercise the authority of Christ. These false teachers harbor within the Church. Jude warned his readers that false teachers had "secretly slipped in among you" (Jude 4). The Apostles warned sternly about and against these false teachers whose teaching and lifestyles introduced dangerous and potentially deadly deception regarding the nature of sin and salvation.

**1. False teachers have always been and will always be present in the midst of the Church.** The Apostle Paul warned the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:29-30: *After I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from among your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.* Paul wrote in 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.* False teachers and their falsehoods are inspired by the devil and are instruments of the devil. Jesus called the devil a *liar and the father of lies* in John 8:44.

**2. The false teachers whom Paul addressed in many of his letters were legalists.** They diminished and insulted the gospel of God's grace by teaching that salvation and justification could only come as a person obeyed the Jewish law in addition to following Christ. First and foremost, they promoted their belief that Gentile believers (and Jewish believers, of course) must be circumcised, but the natural continuation of that doctrine would include the keeping of the whole law. Their teaching suggested that the grace provided by the death of Christ was not sufficient in itself to save the believer. Paul would spend much of his ministry, including much of his letter-writing ministry, combatting this false doctrine and would write in Ephesians 2:8-9: *It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.* Paul would emphatically teach that true faith and salvation by grace produce a life of godliness, not a life of sin.

**3. The false teachers about whom Peter and Jude warned are alive and working today.** They are selfishly motivated, they live immorally themselves, and they promote a so-called Christianity which does not require obedience to Christ and holy living. Such doctrine is devastating to the Church, because it produces a false sense of spiritual security. We must remember the warning of Jesus in Matthew 7:21-22: *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"*

**4. Obedience is always the evidence of real faith.** The Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 1:5: *Through Jesus Christ our Lord, and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith.* And Paul wrote again in 2 Corinthians 9:13: *Men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ...* Thus, real faith in Christ is evidenced by confession and obedience. This obedience is obedience to the requirements of Jesus and his Apostles contained in the inspired and authoritative New Testament Scriptures.

**5. Real spiritual freedom is freedom from sin, not freedom to sin.** Sin is a deceiver, a dominator, and a destroyer. Jesus—through his death, resurrection, teachings, and spiritual empowerment—brings truth into the midst of sin's deception, freedom into the midst of sin's domination, and hope at the prospect of sin's destruction. A true Christian teacher warns believers about the nature of sin and declares the power of Jesus to bring freedom from sin. Failure on the part of a teacher to bring true and timely warnings about sin's nature and consequences constitutes a breach of stewardship before God and an abuse against God's people. Intentional omission of plain New Testament teachings might very well place a teacher in the company or category of "false teachers."

**6. No Christian teacher can address the whole of New Testament truth every time he or she rises to minister.** Over time, though, a true Christian teacher, especially one who serves in a pastoral role, will present a balanced diet of biblical teaching. Such teaching will comply with the charge given by the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 4:1-5: *In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.* James 3:1 declares: *We who teach will be judged more strictly.* Paul declared to the Ephesian elders upon his departure from them in Acts 20:26-27: *"I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God."*

**7. Though God will judge false teachers as the Scriptures declare, believers must guard vigorously against deception.**

- ▶ Every believer should be a diligent reader and student of the Word of God, especially the New Testament.
- ▶ Every believer should be devoted to prayer and worship.
- ▶ Every believer should pursue the fullness and freshness of the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ Every believer should be faithful to a local church where Bible truth is proclaimed comprehensively and consistently.
- ▶ Every believer should carefully and diligently cultivate an all-your-heart-soul-mind-and-strength love for the Lord Jesus.
- ▶ Every believer should guard against sin that so easily entangles.

Without these protections in place, many who were once strong have fallen into the deception of the devil and many young and weak believers have been led astray into false religion. We must hear and heed the exhortation from Jesus in Luke 8:18: *"Consider carefully how you listen."* And we must hear and heed the exhortation of 1 Corinthians 10:12: *If you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!*