

=FAVORITE BIBLE CHAPTERS=

Lesson 23

Jude

INTRODUCTION: Jude, the brother of James, wrote a little one-chapter epistle admonishing us to contend for the faith, warning us about the apostasy (the falling away), and admonishing us to help those who have erred to come back to the truth.

- I. THE LETTER IS WRITTEN TO ALL CHRISTIANS. Notice in Jude 1, the word “sanctified” means “set apart.” Actually, “to them that are sanctified” means “to the saints”; in other words, it means “to all believers.” Jude realized that every believer is a potential backslider and that any of us could fall away from the Lord, so he admonished all of us to watch ourselves and to help others, lest, we fall away from God. Notice in the Bible the great men who fell away, at least for a season. There was Peter, who denied the Lord; David, who went into sin; Abraham, who fled the will of God and went to Egypt; Solomon, who turned to pagan religions, etc.

The word “preserved” in verse 1 is exactly as one would think. The Christian is preserved just like the preserves a lady makes. She prepares the fruit, makes the preserves, fills a jar, and seals it. The contents are kept just as they were placed in the jar; they will stay “preserved” until the jar is opened. The Lord likens Christians to this. We are “preserved” in Christ until the day of “opening” when He comes again and we rise to meet Him in the air.

- II. WE ARE TO CONTEND FOR THE FAITH EARNESTLY. Read Jude 3. This is the key verse of the book. We are admonished to hold on to the faith. This does not mean we hold on to salvation. It means we hold on to our profession, we hold on to our testimony, we hold on to our usefulness, we hold on to our working for God. In other words, we are to work diligently at this thing, staying in the will of God and being useful for Him.
- III. WE ARE TO WATCH FOR DECEITFUL WORKERS. In Jude 4, notice the words, “For there are certain men crept in unawares.” False teachers slyly work their way into the hearts of God’s people, God’s churches, God’s schools, etc. We are to keep vigilant against them constantly. It is a daily process. If a car is to stay in good condition, it must be cared for constantly. If a house is to stay in good repair, it must be cared for constantly. If a person would stay in good health, he must diligently and daily watch his health. If a church is to stay in good health, it must be watched daily and diligently. If the schools are to stay this way, they must be watched constantly. The same, however, is true with the believer in Christ. The individual Christian must watch himself constantly lest he fall away from the will of God and the blessings of God.

IV. GOD GIVES US EXAMPLES, WHICH ARE WARNINGS TO US.

1. The Israelites. See Jude 5. The Israelites who marched from Egypt to the Promised Land refused to go in; they fell away. For 40 years they suffered, and those over 20 years of age never saw the Promised Land. How tragic this is! This is a warning to us.
2. The angels. Notice Jude 6. Think of the angels in Heaven who fell. These angels were under Lucifer, who was an archangel. They rebelled against God, pride came, and they were cast out of Heaven, never to regain their place of usefulness. Here is another warning to the Christian.
3. Sodom and Gomorrah. Read Jude 7. Sodom and Gomorrah were two cities into which came awful sin. Their sin was so great that God destroyed them. There are no cities of Sodom and Gomorrah

today. They both are buried beneath the waters of the Dead Sea. Here again is a warning to us, lest we become castaways, not from salvation, but from usefulness.

V. GOD TELLS US OF THREE ERRORS WE CAN MAKE. Notice Jude 11.

1. The way of Cain. Cain was a religious man who was not born again. We are warned here to be sure of our salvation. (Teacher, tell the story about Cain bringing his offering to God but not bringing the blood offering. Show how that Abel's offering was accepted and Cain's was rejected.)
2. The error of Balaam. Balaam was a faithful prophet of God who was lured to leave the will of God and go into Moab. He preached the truth, but not where God wanted him to preach it and not under the sponsorship that God would require. In other words, he was in the wrong crowd. Here is one of the grave dangers to every Christian. Practically every person who gets away from God's will does so because he gets in the wrong crowd.
3. The gainsaying of Core. This is the same person known as "Korah," who is mentioned in the Old Testament. Korah led a rebellion against God's man. The earth opened up, and an earthquake destroyed 14,000 people because of Korah's rebellion against God's man. Many people have left their usefulness for God because they did not stay close to the man of God and stand for him.

VI. WE SHOULD CONSTANTLY BE TRYING TO HELP OTHERS WHO ARE DRIFTING AWAY. See Jude 21-23.

CONCLUSION: This book concludes with God's reminder that He is able to keep us from falling. Read Jude 24, 25. Once again, this does not have to do with salvation; this is written to those who are already sanctified (set apart). It deals with our falling away from God's blessing. If a Christian will daily, yes, even momentarily stay close to Him, he can live a life of fruitfulness and usefulness without ever leaving the will of God for his life.