

JUDE

Lesson 3

CLEAR FAITH IN A BLURRY WORLD

IS IT FAKE
OR THE
REAL DEAL?

INTRODUCTION

Some of you, like me, can remember when the seatbelt law came into effect. Some people had a hard time accepting the law that you have to wear seatbelts. One man, a New Zealander named Ivan Segedin took it to an extreme. The police ticketed him 32 times over five years for failing to use his seat belt. Even though this was costing him big money, he refused to buckle up.

Finally, instead of obeying the law, the man decided to rely on deception. He made a fake seat belt that would hang over his shoulder and make it appear that he was wearing a seat belt when he wasn't. His trick worked. He didn't get any more tickets. But then he had a head-on collision. He was thrown forward onto the steering wheel and killed. His fake seat belt couldn't save him.

If there's a moral to this story, it's this: When tested, what's fake won't save you.

We've been looking at the book of Jude. Jude wanted to write a letter to the church about our common salvation. He wanted to major on what's real about our faith: the story of Jesus Christ, the Son of God who became man, and who died for our sins and rose to give us new life. But Jude knew there was a problem. He's writing to a church that has fake seatbelts in use. He's writing to a church that's left this common salvation, this faith once for all delivered to the saints, and has instead substituted fake teaching. If you haven't been here, I hope you'll take a chance to read the entire book. Jude's explained why this is a problem we need to be concerned about.

By the way, this is not just a problem for them. Charles Colson, president of Prison Fellowship, says, "Most Christians do not understand what they believe, why they believe it, and why it matters." For two years, Colson asked mature believers to name the fundamentals of the faith. Most of them, he says, looked surprised and perplexed. They came up with a short list. Colson stopped in the middle of some of his speeches, and asked the audience, "What is Christianity anyway?" At one church in the Bible belt, there was silence for what seemed to be a full minute before three or four painful answers. Colson concludes, "Our ignorance is crippling us."

Remember: when tested, what's fake won't save you. So today we come to the end of Jude. Jude has been explaining why it's so important that we don't accept false teachings. But Jude doesn't spend all of his time condemning false teachers. Today he's explaining to us how we can respond to false teachings. He says we need to take three steps to hold on to what's real.

OPEN IT

1. Can you share a personal experience where you have been deceived or bamboozled? What did you learn from that experience?

READ IT

Jude 1:17-23

EXPLORE IT

2. What does Jude tell us to remember?

3. What should we be building?

4. What should we be waiting for?

5. How should we treat those who doubt?

APPLY IT

We remember in verses 14-16, Jude recorded a prophecy found in I Enoch, then applied it to these false believers/teachers. Now, he reminds his readers of a prophecy – words spoken beforehand by the apostles regarding these false believers in verses 17-19, and applies it to them. Jude is simply saying, the apostles all spoke about the coming of these false teachers – you heard it. There's no indication they're dead and gone – Jude is simply saying – you heard them say this. Which tells us, the readers were actually contemporaries of the apostles, so it couldn't be the second century.

Anyway, the apostles, most agree, consisted of the Twelve plus the Apostle Paul. And a cursory reading of NT books reveals that the apostles did regularly speak and warn of false teachers – wolves in sheep's clothing – rising among them. 22 of 27 books in the NT warn of false teachers.¹⁰

6. Take time to read the following passages. What words of warning do they give about false teachers and the doctrines they seek to spread to others?

Matthew 7:15-16: "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits."

Acts 20:29-30: "I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them."

1 John 4:1: "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world."

2 Peter 2:1: "But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction."

2 Peter 3:3: "Knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires."

¹⁰ Sermon Excerpt from Scott Andrews Found @ <https://www.abfboone.com/jude-17-23/>

- 7. Jude 1:5 and 1:17 both emphasize the importance of remembering key teachings and warnings. How can the act of remembering, especially in the context of spiritual and doctrinal truths, help us navigate challenges related to false teachings and remain steadfast in our faith?**

Jude speaks of apostates in verse 18 as “scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires.” They will use every means in the book to challenge The Book. They will question whether the Bible was written by the authors whose names it bears or at the time it purports to have been written, they will challenge its interpretation, they will doubt its relevance, and they will contend that science has superseded it. And as they succeed in casting doubt on God’s Word, that will open up the playing field for them to write their own rules. Tolerance has become their watchword because they want tolerance for their own sin.¹¹

- 8. What type of mockers do we see today all around us in our culture? What is their contention?**

- 9. We think of false teachers as filling pulpits within church settings but what “secular or cultural ” false teachings are prevalent today that Christians must defend against?**

¹¹ Sermon Excerpt from Michael Andrus found @ <https://studyscriptureonline.com/sermons/jude-17-25/>

The portrait of false teachers is clear. Jude says they follow a similar pattern.

- They are scoffers. v. 18
- They are sensual. vv. 18-19
- They are schismatic. v. 19
- They are Spiritless. v. 19

10. How would these characteristics manifest themselves in today's context?

False teaching is coming whether you're prepared for it or not. You can get comfortable and be unprepared when it comes. But if you're smart, you'll remember that you've been told to expect it, and you'll be prepared to deal with it when it comes. Don't be surprised, he says, by false teaching.¹²

11. How confident are you when it comes to withstanding the false teachings that are prevalent in our world today? Are there any teachings that you find yourself being more successful over than others?

¹² Sermon excerpt from Darryl Dash found @ <https://www.dashhouse.com/201165how-to-fight-jude-117-25-html/>

Warren Wiersbe says: The church is always one generation short of extinction. If our generation fails to guard the truth and entrust it to our children, then that will be the end! ¹³

- 12. What can we do as adults to help equip the young believers around us? In what ways might they be more susceptible to these destructive and deceptive ideologies?**

First, there's only one command here: "keep yourselves in the love of God." He then describes some steps we can take in order to keep ourselves in the love of God: building ourselves up in our most holy faith; praying in the Holy Spirit; waiting for Christ's return. We're to do these things in order to keep ourselves in God's love. By the way, it's a good description of some of the things that we need to build into our lives if we're going to keep ourselves in God's love. We do well to devote ourselves to growth in the faith, to prayer, and to live in light of Christ's return.¹⁴

- 13. In what ways are you "building yourselves in your most holy faith"? How have you seen it produce greater maturity by making you a stronger believer?**

¹³ Be Worshipful Commentary on Psalm 12

¹⁴ Sermon excerpt from Darryl Dash found @ <https://www.dashhouse.com/201165how-to-fight-jude-117-25-html/>

Second, this is not a command to individuals; it's a command to a church. He doesn't say to keep yourself in the love of God; he says to keep yourselves. I need this reminder. We don't do this alone. We are responsible to do this together. One of our main purposes as a church is to keep ourselves in the love of Christ.¹⁵

14. In verses 22-23, we are given our approach to others within our church. Why is mercy so important to show other believers in a world of error? When have you seen this done?

15. What imagery does Jude give regarding rescuing people from false teachers? How does this reinforce the great danger that is out there?

¹⁵ Ibid.

John MacArthur says: We live in the last days. The Bible makes it clear that the last days began when Jesus arrived. It's probably true that we are living in the latter portion of the last days before our Lord Jesus returns. If we are living in the age symbolized by the apostate church of Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-19), how are we then to react to the increasing apostasy around us? ¹⁶

16. How does the promise of Jesus' return amidst these difficult times give us confidence and hope as believers?

Jude says the return of Jesus will be one of mercy for the believer, in what ways does that bring peace and joy amidst these difficult days?

¹⁶ Sermon excerpt from John MacArthur found at: www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/41-66/the-grim-reality-of-the-last-days
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