



Insights – The Book of Jude

Date: Sunday 5th June

Speaker: Andrew & Rosie McNeil

Key Verses: Jude (the whole book!)

Talk Summary:

Jude is the youngest of Jesus' 4 brothers. None of the brothers followed Jesus during His earthly life but after His resurrection appearances they did. Jude was writing to a people who had a deep knowledge of Jewish history. The letter of Jude addresses what happens when leaders are immoral, and they become a corrupting influence.

Jude is addressing this abuse of God's grace that says we can behave in any way we want to because we know that we will be forgiven. It's actually a form of Gnosticism - This idea that what I do with my body has no impact on my spirit.

Jude draws on apocryphal literature, which is not included in our bibles today. He references the books of 1 Enoch and The Testament of Moses, quite possibly because the false teachers themselves use them and his readers are aware.

The Church can be destroyed by internal compromise or corruption. He's issuing a warning "contend for the faith". These teachers are peddling a distortion of the true faith.

Jude starts a critique by reminding his readers of some stories they know. 1) People from Egypt. Unbelief spread through the whole community and they didn't enter the promise land. 2) Rebellious angels imprisoned for rebellion and a reference to Sodom and Gomorrah where violent men tried have sex with Abraham's guests (visiting angels). 3) A story about the tomb of Moses.

This connects to the second trio of examples. Cain was jealous and murdered his brother Abel. Balaam the sorcerer lured the people into idolatry and sexual corruption. Korah in his jealousy led a rebellion against Moses.

Jude gives a series of images to illustrate what the false preachers are like. Selfish shepherds, clouds without rain, fruitless trees, wild waves of the sea, shooting stars. All the things Jude names are useless. Jude is exposing the hypocrisy in the leaders because they should be like Christ and they simply weren't. People can excuse behaviour that should actually be called out. Everything from ungodly and unkind behaviour, to having a new take on the historic convictions of faith, believing they have fresh revelation and justifying a departure from what Jude would call "the most Holy Faith".

Verse 17 on Jude calls believers to persevere. We see 4 responses.

1: Don't be surprised - v17. Jesus said there'd be false teachers. The apostles said the same.

2: Take responsibility for your own discipleship - v20-21. Pray and obey. Pray in the Holy Spirit. Obey Jesus teaching. Jesus said "If you love me, obey my commandments. John 14:15. "If you keep my commands you will remain in my love." John 15:10

3: Show mercy - v22. If we're honest mercy isn't the first thing that comes to mind dealing with grumblers and fault finders. That's how God treats us so it's what we're to extend to others.

4: Recall the promise - v24. We have a future with Christ, and we need to live our lives now in the light of that. Keep our focus on Christ and live now in the light of our eternal future with Him. As disciples of Jesus we need to know it's perfectly possible to go through life without stumbling because He is able to keep us.

Conclusion. God's grace in Jesus demands a whole life response. For Christians how we live is the most reliable indicator of what we actually believe.

Worship

Worship is not just singing, it is thanking God for who he is and what he has done and is lived out through a life of trusting obedience. Discussing this together is an act of worship.

(Small group worship resources can be found at bvc.so/sgworship)

- What are you thankful for this week?
- Where has God been at work in your life?
- When have you taken risks in faith and obedience this week?

If you have a time of singing you can skip the above questions but please do ask this question each week:

- What has God been speaking to you about this week? *(Go around the group quickly don't spend a long time on it)*

Discussion Questions (choose some which are most relevant to your group)

- What do you think it means to "contend for the faith" v3.
- What are the features of being led by instinct, and what are the features and the evidence of being led by the Spirit (v10, 19)?
- How can a disciple of Jesus pray in the Spirit? What are the characteristics? The activities? What is there more of, and what is there less of? Ephesians 6:18, Romans 8:26,
- What can we do to learn the leading of the Spirit and learn how to yield to the wind of the Spirit; John 3:5-8?
- How can you build yourselves up in the most holy faith; Jude 20?
- How have you managed to "keep yourself in God's love".
- What's phrase strikes you most from the doxology (the expression of praise to God) in v24.

Witness - *How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?*

We want to be investing in authentic relationships with those who don't know Jesus yet and inviting them to anything where they might meet other Christians and Jesus. Pick one of the below each week:

- How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?
- What church events coming up would your friends appreciate an invitation to?
 - Upcoming Events (go to bvc.so/whats-on for details)
 - Young Adults Night – 11th June
 - Team Appreciation Party – 18th June