

# POWER HOUR

3/3/2024

Lesson Text:  
Jude 17-25

Background Scripture:  
Jude

Devotional Reading:  
1 Corinthians 15:1-11

“SUSTAINING OUR FAITH”

NLT TRANSLATION

Learning Facts: To understand Jude's warnings about perilous times of the Christian faith.

Biblical Principle: [To recognize and identify the dangers.](#)

Daily Application: To be secure in God's love and show love and mercy to others.

## Jude 17-25 NLT

**17** But you, my dear friends, must remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ predicted. **18** They told you that in the last times there would be scoffers whose purpose in life is to satisfy their ungodly desires. **19** These people are the ones who are creating divisions among you. They follow their natural instincts because they do not have God's Spirit in them. **20** But you, dear friends, must build each other up in your most holy faith, pray in the power of the Holy Spirit, **21** and await the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will bring you eternal life. In this way, you will keep yourselves safe in God's love.

**22** And you must show mercy to those whose faith is wavering. **23** Rescue others by snatching them from the flames of judgment. Show mercy to still others, but do so with great caution, hating the sins that contaminate their lives. **24** Now all glory to God, who is able to keep you from falling away and will bring you with great joy into his glorious presence without a single fault. **25** All glory to him who alone is God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord. All glory, majesty, power, and authority are his before all time, and in the present, and beyond all time! Amen.

## INTRODUCTION

### Anxious Times

We live in anxious times. Many believers live with doubt. Many often feel like people are mocking their faith from both inside and outside the church. Historic beliefs are under attack. The gospel itself is under attack. Skeptics deny the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and His ultimate return. Within the church, abuse, and immorality are becoming

more known. Some leaders have destroyed their congregations through their ambition and pride. Social media and newspapers are filled with these kinds of stories. The church has lost its moral credibility and its authority to speak the truth in the eyes of many people. While the church and its ministers at one time were ranked high in trustworthiness, that ranking has fallen over the past 30 years. These are perilous times for the Christian faith.

## **LESSON CONTEXT**

Jude is a brief letter, and it reflects a perilous time similar to our circumstances. Some ambitious and prideful people had attached themselves to congregations, presented themselves as leaders, and practiced an immoral lifestyle. Jude calls them “ungodly” people who turn the “grace of our God into lasciviousness” (Jude 4). These intruders exploited their welcome by promoting immorality (Jude 4). They mocked the judgment of God and behaved as if God would not hold them accountable for their actions and immoral ethics. They despised authority, spoke evil of others, and sought wealth in their greed (Jude 8, 11). Jude called them “spots in your feasts of charity” who had nothing true or valuable to offer; they were like clouds “without water” and fruitless trees (Jude 12). They walked “after their own lusts,” and though they influenced many, their words were filled with their own ambition (Jude 16). This was a dangerous time for the churches, and Jude addresses the situation directly with both warning and hope. Jude, the author of this letter, was the brother of James, and James was one of the elders and leaders of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Galatians 1:19; 2:9). Since James was a brother of Jesus, this means Jude was as well. Though both opposed Jesus during His ministry before His death, both became committed believers after the resurrection of Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:7; Jude 1).

What we know as the Book of Jude was probably a sermon that circulated among several congregations as an open letter. Jude addressed several congregations at one time, and they were all endangered by ungodly intruders and leaders. Jude clearly stated his main interest. He encouraged believers to “contend for the faith” that had been delivered to them (Jude 3). He identified the troublemakers, warned that their destiny is the same as that of Sodom and Gomorrah (Jude 7) and the devil (Jude 9), and promised God would execute judgment against the “ungodly” for their “ungodly deeds” (Jude 15).

But what are believers to do? How do they “contend for the faith” (Jude 3)? How do believers live out their faith in such perilous times? Jude ends his letter with a call to persevere in the faith. That call is our lesson text.

## QUESTION(S)

- What steps do you take to guard against any impure motives in your own faith walk?
- Do we truly realize that it is God's loving mercy through Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit that redeems us and gives us a righteous and holy standing before the Triune God?
- Do we recognize that praying in the Spirit means: to pray out of a heart sanctified by the Spirit, and pray by the power of the Spirit who unites us with God's own heart?

## CONCLUSION

### The Love of God and Loving Others

We live in perilous times, much like the church at the time when Jude was written. So we should recognize and identify the dangers. The church is called to exercise healthy discernment and heed the warnings of the apostles. We ignore them at our own peril. At the same time, the church does not live in fear but in confidence. We root ourselves in God's love for us, and we pour that same love on those who have been damaged by these perilous times. We confidently live within the love of God as God's beloved, and we mercifully show that love to others in our community. Our response to this divine grace is deep joy and gratitude.

While we practice discernment and contend for the faith, we also show God's mercy to others as we minister to those who doubt, those ensnared in the fire, and those who have soiled their garments. Secured in the love of God by the foundation laid down by apostolic teaching, praying in the Spirit, and looking forward to the mercy of Christ's second coming, we help others and show them the love with which God has loved us.

## PRAYER

Heavenly Father, keep us secure in Your love and enable us to show mercy to others in need of Your love. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

## THOUGHT TO REMEMBER

Secure in God's love, we are able to love others.

## ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON

Next week's lesson is *"Testing Our Faith"* and asks us to submit to self-examination to determine if we are "in the faith." Study 2 Corinthians 13:5-11.