

Small Group Guide



"Contending for the Faith"

Opening Prayer & Icebreaker

Icebreaker Question: What's something you own that's precious to you? How would you feel if someone used it disrespectfully or for the wrong purpose?

Key Passage

Jude 1:1-25 (*optional: Read the entire book together - it's only 25 verses!*)

Sermon Summary

Jude originally wanted to write about the joys of salvation, but instead felt compelled to warn the church about ungodly people who had slipped in among them. These weren't obvious outsiders—they looked spiritual but lacked true reverence for God. Jude calls believers to "contend for the faith" while building themselves up through Scripture, prayer, and dwelling in God's love.

Discussion Questions

Understanding Ungodliness

1. **The sermon defined "ungodliness" as living without fear, awe, or respect for God—not just doing bad things.** How does this definition challenge or expand your understanding of what it means to be ungodly?
2. **Jude warns about people who "pervert the grace of God into a license for immorality" (v. 4).** What does this look like in modern church culture? Have you ever been tempted to use God's grace as an excuse rather than a motivation for change?
3. **Jeff said, "Sometimes ungodliness wears nice clothes, carries a big Bible, and claims to love Jesus."** Why is it so hard to recognize ungodliness when it looks respectable? What are some warning signs we should watch for?

Discernment and Fruit

4. **Jesus said we'll recognize false teachers "by their fruit" (Matthew 7:15-20).** What kind of "fruit" should we be looking for in spiritual leaders and teachers we follow? What about in our own lives?
5. **The Secret Service trains agents to recognize counterfeits by becoming extremely familiar with the real thing.** How well do you know the "real thing"—the apostles' teaching and Scripture? What would help you become more familiar?

Building Up Our Faith

6. **Jude gives three practical instructions in verses 20-21: build yourselves up in faith, pray in the Spirit, and keep yourselves in God's love.** Which of these three feels most challenging for you right now? Why?
7. **The sermon stated, "Nobody drifts into maturity. Nobody accidentally walks in holiness."** What practices or habits help you intentionally build your faith rather than drift?
8. **Prayer was described as acknowledging our dependence on God and His authority.** How does your prayer life (or lack of it) reflect your view of God? Is it "personal" to God when we don't pray?

Living in God's Love

9. **The illustration of the waiter carrying soup—you don't know what's inside until someone gets bumped.** When you get "bumped" by life's difficulties or frustrations, what typically spills out of you? What does that reveal about what's filling you?
 10. **Jude calls us to "be merciful to those who doubt" and to seek restoration, not attack (v. 22-23).** Why is mercy sometimes harder than calling out error? How can we balance truth and grace?
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Key Takeaways

- ✓ **Ungodliness is fundamentally about lacking reverence for God**, not just bad behavior
 - ✓ **Not everyone who looks spiritual is Godly**—we must discern by examining fruit
 - ✓ **Ground yourself in Scripture** to recognize counterfeits when they appear
 - ✓ **Faith must be strengthened intentionally** through Bible study, prayer, worship, and obedience
 - ✓ **Prayer is personal to God**—it acknowledges His authority and our dependence
 - ✓ **Dwell in God's love** so that love spills out when you're shaken
 - ✓ **God is able** to keep us from stumbling and present us faultless before Him
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Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge

Choose ONE of the following to practice this week:

Option 1: Build Up Your Faith

- Read through the book of Jude once each day this week (it's only 25 verses!)
- Journal one new insight each time you read it

Option 2: Pray in the Spirit

- Set aside 10-15 minutes daily for prayer
- Use the ACTS model: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication
- Focus especially on acknowledging God's authority and your dependence on Him

Option 3: Dwell in God's Love

- Each morning, list 3 ways you see God's love expressed in your life
- Throughout the day, pause to thank God when you notice His love
- Before bed, reflect on how dwelling in His love affected what "spilled out" when you were challenged

Option 4: Show Mercy

- Identify someone who has doubted or strayed from faith

- Pray for them daily
 - Reach out with a message of encouragement (not judgment)
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Reflection Questions for Personal Growth

- Am I treating Jesus as both Savior AND Lord, or just Savior?
 - What "fruit" is my life producing? Would others see genuine godliness or just religious activity?
 - Am I drifting spiritually, or am I intentionally building my faith?
 - When I get "bumped," what spills out reveals what's filling me—what does that say about my spiritual life?
 - Do I truly believe that God is ABLE to keep me from stumbling?
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Closing Prayer Focus

Pray together using Jude's closing doxology (vv. 24-25):

- Thank God that **He is able** to keep you from stumbling
 - Praise Him for His glory, majesty, power, and authority
 - Ask Him to help each group member contend for the faith this week
 - Pray for discernment to recognize ungodliness, even when it looks respectable
 - Commit to building each other up in faith
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For Next Week

- Read the next book in the "Dusty Books" series (Philemon)
 - Share with the group one way you practiced this week's challenge
 - Be prepared to discuss how dwelling in God's love changed your perspective
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"To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen." - Jude 24-25