

Walking Out the Word: **The Epistle of Jude**

Important Background to Jude:

- Jude the brother of Jesus wrote this important epistle. It could be named *The Acts of the Apostates* because Jude is addressing what happens when believers fall away. Jude was likely written between 65-80 AD, depending on the exact date that 2 Peter was written. Of the 25 verses of Jude, 15 of these verses also appear in 2 Peter. Jude urgently warns against false teachers who are sensual (Jude 4, 16, 18), distorters of truth (Jude 4), and headed for divine judgment (Jude 14, 15).
- Jude warns of the men who have “crept in unnoticed” (Jude 4). Jude writes this short vigorous warning in reaction to the alarming news of the division taking place because of the arrogant leaders who denied Christ. They were using the Christian teaching of freedom and turning it into license to sin. Jude writes this Jewish letter using examples from Jewish history and tradition to warn those who fall away that they will suffer judgment.
- In Jude 11, he warns of the *Way of Cain* (Genesis 4:3-8) which is, wanting to come to God on our own terms. He warns also of the *error of Balaam* (Numbers 31:16) which is to hold a prophetic office and to use it for your own gain. He also warns of the *rebellion of Korah* (Numbers 16:1-3, 31-35) which is the disregard for divine order. Jude’s urgent purpose is to warn against these apostates and to exhort Christians to “contend earnestly for the faith” (Jude 3). His word continues to encourage us today to build ourselves up in our “most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit” (Jude 20). We can look to “Him who is able to keep” us from stumbling (Jude 24).

Things to talk about in Walking Out the Word:

- *Opening:* How does Jude describe himself? Why does he write this letter?
- *Talk about:* What does the *way of Cain*, the *error of Balaam*, and the *rebellion of Korah* look like in today’s church? How does the outcome of faithful believers compare with the fate of these divisive men? How does this brief letter apply to your personal life?
- *Closing:* Close by praying Jude 24 and 25 over each other.