

We now move into the instructive phase of the epistle. Almost all the verbs so far are *descriptive*, not *prescriptive*.

Only suggested command: Verse 3, but in *indirect discourse*.

- I wanted to write
- But I needed to write **urging you to contend**

To make that word a direct command, you would say it this way: I needed to write urging this: Contend!

Everything that follows is *descriptive*. Jude explains why he is urging contention, describing “these men” who make the effort necessary.

In the **conclusion** of the epistle, we find Jude making application with imperatives

Remember! (17)

Keep! (21)

Have mercy! (22)

Save! (23a)

Have mercy! (23b)

On whom are the readers to act in fulfilling these commands?

On themselves (17)

On themselves (21)

On others (22)

On others (23a)

On others (23b)

Compare v. 17 with v. 3. What is the point of contact between the two verses?

The faith once delivered/the words spoken beforehand

What is the content of the words spoken by the apostles? (18)

A warning that false teachers are inevitable

Compare 2 Peter 3.3. If Jude wrote after Peter, he could be quoting him, but both statements are probably meant as summary statements of apostolic warnings.

Numerous passages in the epistles and some in Acts warn of the rise of false teachers (mockers).

What consequence of false teachers do we see in v. 19?

Divisions

What do mockers say of people who hold to the truth of the Bible?

“You are so divisive!”

Their claims are the opposite of reality. If you are obedient to the Scriptures, you are not causing division. Those who mock the Scriptures cause division, separating people from God’s truth.

Notice the word “these” in v. 19. If you recall last week’s study, who are the mockers Jude has in mind?

“These men” – the false teachers, the ones disturbing the church and the focus of the body of the epistle

What terms in vv. 18-19 speak about the character of the mockers?

“ungodly lusts” and “worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit”

So, remember that such people are no surprise to God, they should be no surprise to us.

Next Jude commands that we keep ourselves in the love of God (21). What things are essential for keeping ourselves in the love of God?

Building yourselves up in your faith (20)

Praying in the Holy Spirit (20)

Waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord (the second coming) (21)

What is another way you could describe these terms?

The Normal Christian Life

The last set of commands comes in vv. 22-23. They direct the readers towards others who appear to be under the influence of the false teachers.

The two commands to “have mercy” are the same word: in the LXX (Gk trans. of the OT), the word is used to translate *chesed*, often translated in English “lovingkindness” or “covenant love” or “loyal love.”

To whom are we to have mercy?

Those who are doubting (22)

Those who have polluted garments (23)

If having mercy is related to loyalty, what does this imply about these ones God calls us to rescue?

They are brothers, ones with whom we share a spiritual bond

The middle command is “save others” (23a). What does “snatching them out of the fire” imply?

They are in danger of harm, perhaps divine judgement

In having mercy on some, why should we “hate the garment spotted by the flesh”?

The fear of contamination from the error of the most degraded of those who have fallen away

Many commentators see regress to lower and lower levels here. Hiebert puts it this way:

1. Those needing Compassionate Aid (22)
2. Those whose condition demands Aggressive Action (23b)
3. Those whose pollution requires Personal Caution (23b)

Finally, the epistle concludes with a Doxology (24-25)

How is God described in this song of praise and how does it relate to the subject of the epistle?

He is the one able to keep us from stumbling

He is the one who can make us stand in his presence

If you focus on our Great God, as extolled in the doxology, what effect should that have on the struggle for purity in the church? How will it affect our activity in obedience to this epistle?

We should be energized to study the Word, preach the word, reach out to the troubled, rescue those who can be recovered, and oppose false teaching and false teachers.

Our focus on God will keep our own hearts and doctrine pure.