# **The Original Message, By Jude**

READ Letter

Review: Perspective while Waiting for Christ's return - Labour while Waiting for Him. Reminded me of 1st sermon on series "The Original Message' How to keep things "original", 1st = Undertake to Labour, cf Jesus rising early to pray, determining to move on to the other villages

# **Urgent Labour Required!**

## Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for **the faith** that was once for all delivered to the saints. (Jud 1:3)

contend = labour, work agonisingly

something blessed substituted for something urgent

The Wait for Christ can feel like labour **itself** - hence perspective needed. But the Wait for Christ also **requires** Labour

Reason is: Until He comes, we are always choosing between 2 paths - Preserving the Faith, or Abandoning it.

**PRAY**

## (2Pet3)The Purpose of His delay: ‘to make room for his determined will in us’ – Get working!

2 very similar letters - even quotes Peter (17,18!) - same threat, same concern. Of course, that's part of the reason I'm doing this series - to demonstrate that there was really only 1 original message in all the NT writers - the Gospel of Jesus: Rejected, Resurrected, Returning - and to impress upon us that 3rd part is mostly neglected, ... but not Originally - and therefore if we want to be part of the extended church of Acts - we must re-nurture our awareness of His Return. It has such impact on our hope, perspective and... labour

Right then, people were abandoning their faith, as they listened to and imitated these false teachers. 2 paths we're always choosing: **Preserving the Faith, or Abandoning it**

Well, How do I know if I'm abandoning the Faith? The way Jude writes implies they may be oblivious that they are!

# **3 ways to Abandon the Faith**

## **Rely on ‘Dreams’** (8)

While we **wait** for the **long-time-coming** return of Christ, dreams and new philosophies are rather attractive

Now the false teachers at that time, and many today, build their faith upon supernatural dreams and visions. But Jude is contrasting these Dreams with (3) "*the faith once for all delivered to the saints*"

### The faith delivered once-for-all-time, v3

+ Notice "the faith" - not ref to the act of believing - but the content of what we place faith in - the scriptures.

+ I've hyphenated those words because the emphasis is ONCE. Jude presents on the one hand a continual series of new revelations, and on the other, a once-for-all-time faith.

= Distilled - The Original Message

If you want to abandon the faith, change the content of what we believe to a different revelation. Now it might not be *supernatural dreams* - but the point is anything which comes from man's mind and not God's. Jesus prayed:

### The Only Truth, John 17:17

Paul wrote: the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets - NT and OT.

If you want to abandon the faith, reduce your bible intake. You mind will quickly be conformed to the dreams, philosophies, of men and women - successfully undermining the Faith once delivered.

## **Abandon your proper Humanity** (5-7)

I didn't know how better to write that. 'Proper Humanity' because when Christ redeems us, He restores us to our proper domain - as Adam and Eve were created to be - walking in trust, serving God, and displaying His Image - the things that distinguish us from animals.

### Your belief in Christ

### Your position as God’s servant

### Your calling as God’s Image

People have successfully managed to talk boldly about **the Faith** - study the Old and New Testament, yet still **live like animals**.

Jude gives 3 examples of abandoning belief in Christ, service to God, and perverting His Image, with its results

1. (**5**) Failure of Israel - nation saved from Pharaoh, severed their trust in God - went it alone - and perished in the Wilderness

2. (**6**) Fall of Angels - once privileged servants of God, abused their gift and power, chained like animals for judgement

3. (**7**) Fire of Sodom - chosen by Lot for its lush pastures (like Garden of Eden) - becoming salt and ash, driven by animal instinct instead of honouring God's image

**While we wait for the long-time-coming return of Jesus**, it is far easier to let go [not contend] ... exchange proper Humanity for **Animal** instinct (10) - "the flesh"

## **Forget the fear of God** (12-13)

see their Bold character - no sense of shame, 'without fear' at God's table. Context: in community - to abandon the Faith you don't need to leave the church! Can even preach and teach (shepherds feeding self, waterless clouds, dead trees, shameless waves, wandering stars) Don't need to become a heathen - wear the clothes and talk the talk.

Imagining that being part of the community of believers is a "covering" of the mercy of Christ (cf covenant children, hyper-grace teaching). But they forget... v5

### Jesus Saves and Destroys (5) - explain

Well, Christ rejected, but Resurrected and Returning, therefore there is a labour to undertake... So let's now see what is:

# **...the Labour of Waiting**

read 20-22

we are: “waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to Eternal Life”

if we would not abandon the faith and find ourselves like Israel in vain, Angels in chains, Soddom in Flames, there is an urgent labour,. The Labour is in **v21,** "*Keep yourselves*"

## **Keep Yourselves (20-21)**

1. Your Labour: personal reflexive -> this is not something someone else must do for you - you must "undertake to" labour

2. **Guard** - implies threat; if you don't labour, you are not guarded!

So HOW do we keep ourselves: v20-21

## **Building up your most holy Faith**

this is so important, "most holy faith". We build our **most holy faith**, through the **faith once-for-all-delivered** - ***God's Word***

I'm reminded of Jesus parable - whoever hears these words of mine and does them is like a man building his house upon a rock. Jesus himself likened faith to the process of building.

I'm reminded also of Paul who likened ministry to building - saying that only quality materials will last

I'm reminded of Eph 4 which says the church is a living organism building itself up

And Peter who said we're like living stones being built - pay attention to the Word as to a lamp in a dark place, Crave the pure spiritual milk that you may grow thereby

the call to *abandon faith* come to each believer : The Word of God builds a fortress of faith

## **Praying** in the Holy Spirit

(Not tongues - because not everyone had the gift.)

+> In contrast to "praying in the flesh" - which Jesus also had a lot to say about = performance for self, leverage with God

+> The Holy Spirit is the 3rd person of the Trinity - gift to believers, minister and conform us - therefore to pray in line with God's Spirit, depending on Him, in truth and sincerity; not at odds with God's will but submitted to Him

Genuine, sincere, dependent prayer - authentic calling to God, appealing to His grace, communicating ourselves to Him

**Point** - they're together! Word and Prayer - in essence how we abide in Christ. "Communion" - hearing and approaching. *Abide in Me and I in you - bear much fruit* - => "keep yourselves in the love of God"

*Jude urges, contend!* **There is Labour - just like Jesus rising early to pray!**

! But not only for ourselves: v22-23

## **Rescuing others** who are abandoning (22-23)

- get the picture that this abandoning has been going on for a while, and there's varying degrees of carnage - // might be you: have put aside God's word, losing proper place of your humanity, forgetting fear of God - all kinds of effect: "doubting", "playing with fire", so deep you're stained in sin..

I'm here to rescue you and remind you that Christ is coming again...

# **Hope for the Labour of Waiting**

## Waiting for **the Mercy** of our Lord Jesus Christ:

It's a war - we'll always be choosing between **guarding the faith** or **abandoning it**. Until we leave this world, it will always be.

But of all the warnings he gives and appeals he makes - there is one overarching encouragement to KEEP OURSELVES, see (1)

NOTICE "MERCY"... see v1

## Called, Loved and Kept (1)

* who's doing the keeping?

## Able to Keep (24)

* who is willing and able?

When we abandon the faith, it can only be because we've forgotten who our Faith is in!! Only God, Saviour, Glory, Majesty, Power, Authority

Whatever path you've been choosing lately - *Forgetting what is behind, and pressing on to what is ahead* - let us Contend!