

Some Answers to Handout 2

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Learn by Doing: The Epistle of Jude

1. Read through the whole book.

- a) Identify one or more verses that provide the interpretive key to the message of the book.

v. 3 - contend for the faith; vv. 4, 18 - danger inside the church

- b) In one sentence, summarize the main message of the book of Jude.

It is imperative that true believers labour to teach and defend the orthodox faith in submission to Jesus Christ and to unmask false teachers for the sake of those who might fall prey to their sneakiness and to their own ungodly instincts.

- c) Identify any questions you have about the text. Make a note of what kind of resources you could use to find answers to your questions.

2. Intended audience:

- a) Who is the intended audience and how do you know? Try to estimate the relative date of composition for this book.

- Audience: general believers (see v. 1)
- Date: sometime in the second half of the 1st century AD
- Clues: 1) Reminder of things they already know (vv. 3-4) from the apostles (v. 17) of our Lord Jesus Christ (vv. 1, 4, 17, 21, 25); 2) clear intertextual relationship with 2 Peter (D. A. Carson believes with many that Jude precedes 2 Peter); 3) canonical position near Revelation and after 2 Peter

- b) Now that you know the intended audience, what implications does this have for the application of Jude's message to our own lives?

Since the book is addressed to believers in general it is very easy to apply this message directly to our own lives.

3. Intertextual knowledge:

- a) Jude assumes that his audience knows certain things (how do you know?). What biblical and extra-biblical texts does Jude expect his audience to be familiar with?

Extra-biblical: 1 Enoch 1:9 (Enoch has sections dating from about 300 BC to 1st cent. AD); 'sons of God' as angels is probably a development of Gen 6 by Jewish tradition (e.g. 1 En 6-19; Jub. 5); unknown (reference to a story about Michael the archangel)

Biblical: Genesis (Adam, Cain (think hatred that leads to murder; cf. 1 John 4), Enoch, the 'sons of God'; Sodom and Gomorrah); Exodus-Deuteronomy (Moses, Balaam (Num 22-24), Korah (Num 16))
- compare 2 Peter 2 for overlap in language and theme
- destruction of those who did not believe (golden calf - Exod 32; Num 14)
- clouds without rain (Prov 25:14: "Like clouds and wind without rain is a man who boasts of gifts he does not give.")

- b) What levels of Jude's meaning are illuminated by knowing well those other texts?

4. Christ-centered reading:

- a) What does Jude have to say about Jesus Christ?

- b) Is there anything else that you could say about the book of Jude in relation to our Lord? If so, what other passages of Scripture could you connect to the point you are making?

- Contrary to the sneak teachers, Jesus is characterized by humility and obedience – He cares about the needs of others more than His own (cf. Phil 2); we too must be characterized by these words (cf. 1 John 4-5). Compare the self control Jesus shows in Gethsemane (e.g. Matt 26:39, 42).

- The sneaky teachers are greedy and power hungry (v. 11) and looking for human approval (v. 16; cf. John 5:44), but Jesus has overcome those temptations (Matt 4:1-11) and does not seek approval from humans (John 5:41), but waits to be vindicated by the Father (Phil 2:9).

5. Imagine you are preparing a series of Bible studies. Read through the book again and determine whether you would prefer to break up the text into 2, 3, or 4 portions (or any number above 1). Identify the boundaries for your sections and for each one provide a one sentence summary for the message of that section.

2 Sections:

- vv. 1-16: It is necessary to contend for the true faith because some are twisting the truth so that they can live in an ungodly way, and these people are recognizable in the way they deny our Lord Jesus through their actions.**
- vv. 17-25: We, contrary to them, must focus on building each other up and showing mercy so that we may be secure and may save some from destruction; all this by the Spirit and grace of God.**

3 Sections:

- vv. 1-4: True Christians – those beloved in God the Father and kept in Jesus Christ (v. 1) – are united in salvation thanks to the faith and obedience we have toward our Lord and Master Jesus, the Christ.**
- vv. 5-16: Those who prefer their own desires to Jesus are obvious by their ungodly choices and lifestyle, and these people are headed for a destruction of their own making.**
- vv. 17-25: (as above)**

4 Sections:

- vv. 1-4: (as above)**
- vv. 5-16: (as above)**
- vv. 17-23: (as vv. 17-25 above)**
- vv. 24-25: It is God alone who is able to sustain us in our contending, holy living, and ministry of mercy and to save us through Jesus our Lord, and therefore God alone deserves all recognition and honour.**