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Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks
Baptist Church**
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

We may be faint and weary, but our heavenly Father is all-powerful

COMMENT FOR THE WEEK:

Our strength for the present and hope for the future are not based on the stability of our own perseverance but on the fidelity of God

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

22 Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. 23 They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

(Lam 3:22-23 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Apr 24, 2009)

Series: Examining Our Faith

UNIT 1: Faithful vs Faithless

NEXT WEEK

Testing Our Faith
(2 Cor 13:5-11)

Sustaining Our Faith Jude 1:17-25

Lesson Background and Introduction

Jude is a brief letter, and it reflects a perilous time similar to our circumstances. Some ambitious and prideful people have attached themselves to congregations, presented themselves as leaders, and practiced an immoral lifestyle. Jude calls them “ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality” (Jude 4). These intruders exploited their welcome by promoting immorality (v. 4). They mocked the judgment of God and behaved as if God would not hold them accountable for their actions and immoral ethics. They despised authority, spoke evil of others, and sought wealth in their greed (vv. 8, 11). Jude called them “blemishes at your love feasts” who had nothing true or valuable to offer. They were like clouds “without rain” and fruitless trees (v. 12). They followed “their own evil desires,” and though they influenced many, their words were filled with their own ambition (v. 16). This was a dangerous time for the churches, and Jude addresses the situation directly with both warning and hope. Jude, the author of this letter, was the brother of James, and James was one of the elders and leaders of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Galatians 1:19; 2:9). Since James was a brother of Jesus, this means Jude was as well. Though both opposed Jesus during his ministry before his death, both became committed believers after the resurrection of Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:7; Jude 1). What we know as the book of Jude was probably a sermon that circulated among several congregations as an open letter. He addressed a number of congregations at one time, and they were all endangered by ungodly intruders and leaders. Jude clearly stated his main interest. He encouraged believers to “contend for the faith” that had been delivered to them (Jude 3). He identified the troublemakers, warned that their destiny is the same as that of Sodom and Gomorrah (v. 7) and the devil (v. 9), and promised God would execute judgment against the “ungodly” for their “ungodly acts” (v. 15). But what are believers to do? How do they “contend for the faith”? How do believers live out their faith in such perilous times? Jude ends his letter with a call to persevere in the faith. That call is our lesson text for today.

We live in perilous times, much like the church at the time when Jude was written. So we should recognize and identify the dangers. The church is called to exercise healthy discernment and heed the warnings of the apostles. We ignore them at our own peril. At the same time, the church does not live in fear but in confidence. We root ourselves in God's love for us, and we pour that same love on those who have been damaged by these perilous times. We confidently live within the love of God as God's beloved, and we mercifully show that love to others in our community. Our response to this divine grace is deep joy and gratitude. While we practice discernment and contend for the faith, we also show God's mercy to others as we minister to those who doubt, those ensnared in the fire, and those who have soiled their garments. Secured in the love of God by the foundation laid down by apostolic teaching, praying in the Spirit, and looking forward to the mercy of Christ's second coming, we help others and show them the love with which God has loved us.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Sustaining by Warnings of Mockers (Jude 1:17-19)

Beware of mockers by depending on God's Word (17)

Depend on God's Word spoken in the past through prophets and apostles (2 Peter 3:2)

Depend on God's Word because it is righteous (Ps 119:61-62)

Depend on God's Word because it will prolong life (Prov 3:1-2)

Depend on God's Word to gain wisdom and understanding (Prov 4:5)

Beware of mockers that are only interested in their own lusts (18)

Lust of trying to get rich the wrong way (1 Tim 6:9)

Self-seeking lusts that rejects God's truth (Rom 2:8)

Lust of the sinful nature (Rom 8:13)

Lust of wickedness (1 Cor 6:9)

Lust of immorality (Eph 5:5)

Lust of impurity (Rev 21:27)

Beware of mockers because they cause divisions (19)

Divisions that hinder unity (1 Cor 1:10)

Divisions that cause harm (1 Cor 11:17-18)

Divisions that cause factions (2 Cor 12:20-21)

Divisions that causes fights and quarrels (James 4:1-2)

Divisions that comes from serving own appetites (Rom 16:17-18)

Sustaining Through Prayer and Helping Others (Jude 1:20-23)

Pray in the Holy Spirit (20)

Praying in the Holy Spirit helps in our weakness (Rom 8:26-27)

Praying in the Holy Spirit and with our mind (1 Cor 14:15)

Praying in the Holy Spirit because we are a child of God (Gal 4:6-7)

Praying in the Holy Spirit with all kinds of prayers and requests (Eph 6:18)

Help others through remaining in the love of God (21)

Remaining in the love of God because nothing can separate it from us (Rom 8:37-39)

Remaining in the love of God to persevere (2 Thess 3:5)

Remaining in the love of God through obedience (John 15:9-10)

Remaining in the love of God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (1 John 4:15-18)

Help others who have been deceived through compassion and fear (22-23)

Help for deceived saints through godly sorrow and repentance (2 Cor 7:10-11)

Help for deceived saints through restoration (Gal 6:1-2)

Help for deceived saints through disassociation to cause return (2 Thess 3:14-15)

Help for deceived saints through living in peace with holiness (Heb 12:14-15)

Help for deceived saints through others trying to win them back (James 5:19-20)

Sustaining Through the Preservation of God (Jude 24-25)

Preservation through God's power (24)

The power of God is immeasurable (Eph 3:20)

The power of God is more than anyone has seen, heard or conceived (1 Cor 2:9)

The power of God is incomparable (Eph 1:19)

The power of God is unsearchable (Rom 11:33-36)

Preservation through being our Savior (25)

A Savior who brings repentance and forgiveness (Acts 5:31)

A Savior of the Church (Eph 5:23)

A Savior who destroyed death and brought immortality (2 Tim 1:10)

A Savior of the world (1 John 4:14)