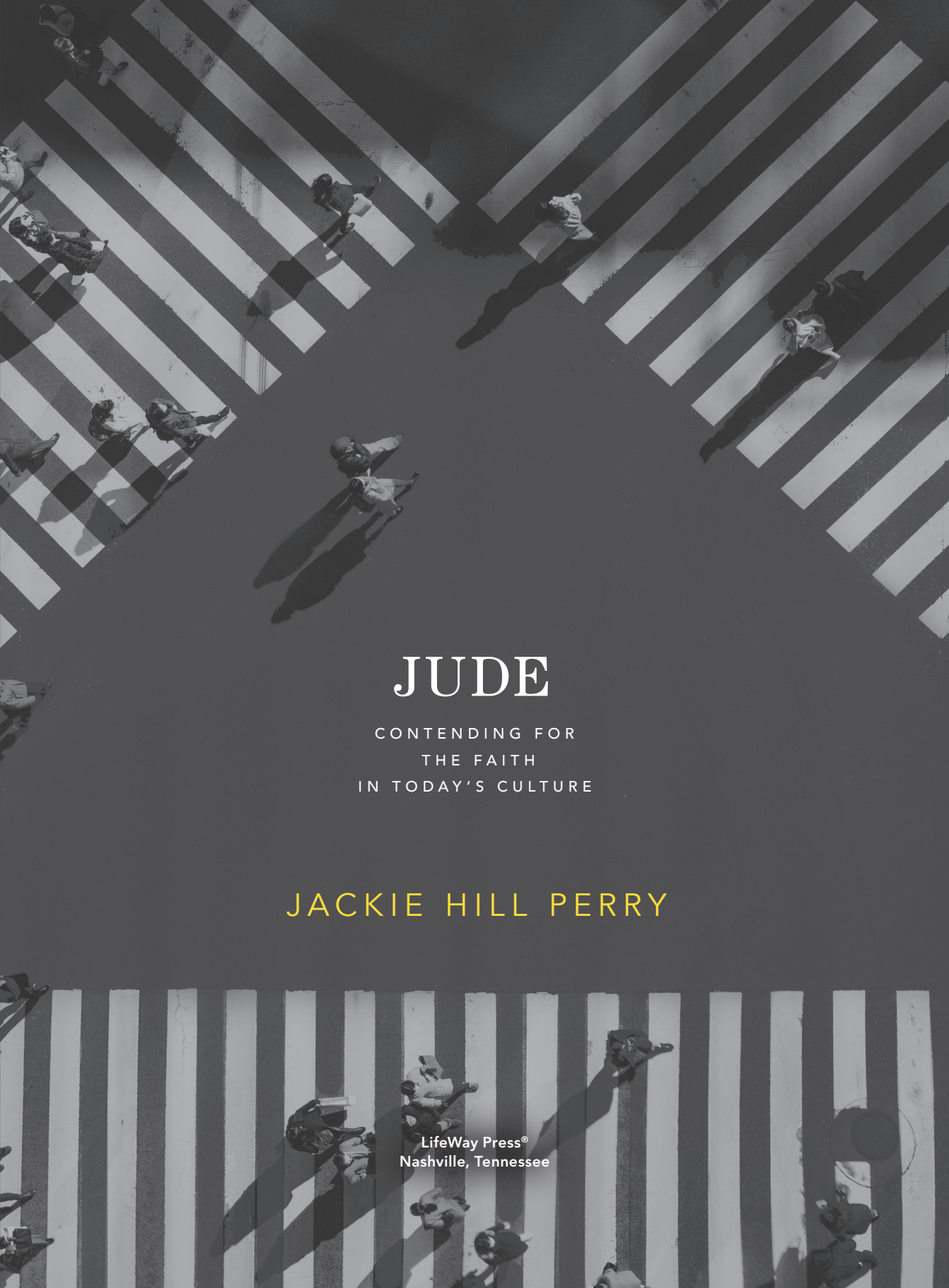


VIDEO-BASED
7-SESSION BIBLE STUDY

JUDE

CONTENDING FOR
THE FAITH
IN TODAY'S CULTURE

JACKIE HILL PERRY



JUDE

CONTENDING FOR
THE FAITH
IN TODAY'S CULTURE

JACKIE HILL PERRY

LifeWay Press®
Nashville, Tennessee

**EDITORIAL TEAM,
ADULT MINISTRY
PUBLISHING**

Faith Whatley

Director, Adult Ministry

Michelle Hicks

Manager, Adult Ministry
Short Term Bible Studies

Elizabeth Hyndman

Content Editor

Sarah Doss

Production Editor

Lauren Ervin

Art Director

Amy Lyon

Graphic Designer

Chelsea Waack

Graphic Designer

Published by LifeWay Press® • © 2019 Jackie Hill Perry

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, except as may be expressly permitted in writing by the publisher. Requests for permission should be addressed in writing to LifeWay Press®; One LifeWay Plaza; Nashville, TN 37234.

ISBN: 978-1-5359-4801-2

Item: 005812989

Dewey decimal classification: 227.97

Subject heading: BIBLE. N.T. JUDE—STUDY AND TEACHING/
FAITH/EVANGELISTIC WORK

Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked (CSB) have been taken from the Christian Standard Bible®, Copyright © 2017 by Holman Bible Publishers. Used by permission. Christian Standard Bible® and CSB® are federally registered trademarks of Holman Bible Publishers. Scripture quotations marked (NASB) are taken from the New American Standard Bible® (NASB), Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. www.lockman.org.

To order additional copies of this resource, write LifeWay Church Resources Customer Service; One LifeWay Plaza; Nashville, TN 37234; FAX order to 615.251.5933; call toll-free 800.458.2772; email orderentry@lifeway.com; or order online at www.lifeway.com.

Printed in the United States of America

Adult Ministry Publishing, LifeWay Church Resources,
One LifeWay Plaza, Nashville, TN 37234

Author is represented by Wolgemuth & Associates.

Table of **CONTENTS**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR	4
INTRODUCTION	5
HOW TO USE THIS STUDY	7
THE BOOK OF JUDE	8
SESSION 1: JUDE 1-2	10
SESSION 2: JUDE 3-4	36
SESSION 3: JUDE 5-11	68
SESSION 4: JUDE 12-16	92
SESSION 5: JUDE 17-23	116
SESSION 6: DOXOLOGY	154
SESSION 7: WRAP-UP	194
LEADER GUIDE	196
ENDNOTES	204

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



JACKIE HILL PERRY

is a Bible teacher, writer, and artist. She is the author of *Gay Girl, Good God: The Story of Who I Was, and Who God Has Always Been*. At home she is known as wife to Preston and Mommy to Eden and Autumn.

INTRODUCTION

I first discovered Jude when I was a year into knowing Jesus and full of uncertainty about what that actually meant. I'd spent the majority of my Bible reading in the common books like John, Romans, and Psalms—all of the books Christians liked to quote—and not once had I heard them make reference to Jude. I don't know how I didn't notice it myself, as if I didn't have to see it after skimming through 3 John and before tiptoeing toward Revelation. But when I did, I had no clue what I was getting myself into. As I read, the talk of angels being kept in chains and the devil arguing with an archangel over Moses' body was all too odd for me to even try to understand, but I kept going anyway, trusting that God must have something to say to me in this strange little book. Eventually the words, "Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling ..." (Jude 24a) stood up and looked me dead in the face. I didn't keep reading to the end of the sentence; I stayed there, staring at the words, hoping they were true. For far too long in my Christian faith, I'd been afraid that my being kept was dependent upon the strength of my own hands, but according to Jude, it was Him who was able, not me. It was unnerving that this book that I'd been ignoring for so long had a heaven-sent answer to my unsaid questions.

I think the Bible is like that, full of surprises. Every page, paragraph, sentence, and word has in it something God wants us to hear. And that's really the thing, God has given us His Word so that we might know Him. Period. The stories and narratives are cool and all when taken at face value, but when you dig into what's written and how it's pointing to the One for whom you were made, the words come alive. It's then able to unveil our hearts, readjust our minds, redirect our focus, anchor our feet, and strengthen our legs. Because Jude is God breathed (2 Tim. 3:16), it can do all of the above and so much more.

When I originally read Jude, the closing doxology is what stood out to me most, but after spending a significant amount of time in Jude in preparation for this study, I now see that this letter has so

much to teach us about how to live in our current cultural climate as well. Jude's letter will not only teach you about God's mercy through Jesus Christ, but it'll also challenge you to be merciful. It won't just provide wisdom on how to love those who are falling, but it will also instruct you on how to remain standing. Unlike some of the more popular "Christian" books and approaches to ministry, Jude did not mince his words in the name of compassion. This letter is hard to understand with themes that are quite uncomfortable at times, but I'm grateful for it. Grateful that we serve a God who, through a man, was willing to say the hard things if it meant we'd know and believe the truth. The truth might hurt sometimes, but it's what sets us free. For that reason and more I'm excited (*and I say that in the most melancholy introverted way possible*) for you to study this small and yet glorious book. God has a lot to say, and I'm encouraged that you've made the commitment to listen.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jude', written in a cursive style. The signature is centered on the page and is set against a light gray, diamond-shaped background.

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Welcome to *Jude: Contending for the Faith in Today's Culture*. I pray this study leads to boldness of faith and faithful study of God's Word.

In each session, you'll find a group guide along with four sections of personal study (and a fifth section on the last week of study). You can decide to meet weekly as you study alongside a group or study individually. If you are leading a group through this study, check out the Leader Guide on pages 196-203.

IN THE BIBLE STUDY BOOK:

WATCH

Watch the video for each session of the study, answering the questions found on this page as a group. Use this page to take notes during the video teaching.

OPENING

Each session, you'll find verses from Jude on the opening pages, along with a prompt to jot down your initial observations and a few prompts for beginning the session in prayer.

PERSONAL STUDY

The following sections are for your personal study throughout the week. There are four sections for each week (and a fifth section on the last week of study). You can complete one section each day or spread them out over multiple days. This study will require you to dive deeply into Scripture—take your time! This study will also ask questions that are meant to provoke critical thinking and personal worship. You may not have the answer to every question and that's OK. The goal is to develop the skills to study God's Word and apply the truth found in Scripture to our everyday lives.

LEADER GUIDE

If you are leading a group or helping to facilitate the meetings, the Leader Guide will walk you through an optional session outline with additional discussion questions for your group time.

GREETING

¹Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James,

To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ:

²May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.

JUDGMENT ON FALSE TEACHERS

³Beloved, 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. ⁴For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

⁵Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. ⁶And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day—⁷just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

⁸Yet in like manner these people also, relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones. ⁹But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, "The Lord rebuke you." ¹⁰But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively. ¹¹Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam's error and perished in Korah's rebellion. ¹²These are hidden reefs at your love feasts, as they feast with you

without fear, shepherds feeding themselves; waterless clouds, swept along by winds; fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted; ¹³wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever.

¹⁴It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, ¹⁵to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” ¹⁶These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own sinful desires; they are loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage.

A CALL TO PERSEVERE

¹⁷But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁸They said to you, “In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions.” ¹⁹It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit. ²⁰But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. ²²And have mercy on those who doubt; ²³save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

DOXOLOGY

²⁴Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, ²⁵to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

JUDE 1-25

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a pen, poised to write on a spiral-bound notebook. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent yellow filter. The text 'SESSION 1' is positioned in the upper left corner.

SESSION 1

JUDE 1-2

¹ JUDE, A SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST AND BROTHER OF JAMES, TO THOSE WHO ARE CALLED, BELOVED IN GOD THE FATHER AND KEPT FOR JESUS CHRIST: ² MAY MERCY, PEACE, AND LOVE BE MULTIPLIED TO YOU.

JUDE 1-2

At the beginning of each session of study, I'll have a few verses of Jude for you to read. Jot down a few of your initial observations of the verses, and then spend some time in prayer before beginning your study.

OBSERVATIONS

Don't skip this part. Observation is an imperative part of studying the Scriptures. This is where you get the chance to pay attention to the little things you're reading so you can figure out the big picture. This is where you get to interrogate the text. Ask it questions like, *Why is this there? What does this mean? Isn't that a contradiction? Why is there a "but" here instead of an "or"?* *I've seen this word used a lot in one paragraph, I wonder why.* While making observations, turn it into a conversation with God as you read so that you're actually asking God these questions and allowing Him, by His Spirit, to lead you to the answers. Studying without observing is like cooking a meal without paying attention to the ingredients.

DAY 1

Read over Jude.

OK, now that you've read it once, read it again.

What's your first reaction to what you've read?

What do you sense is the theme of this book?

What words are repeated?

Do any sentences stand out? Which ones?

What was confusing?

Convicting?

Encouraging?

What do you hope to learn from this study?

Spend some time praying for that.

DAY 2

GREETING/SENDER

Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ: May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.

JUDE 1-2

Once upon a time, people wrote letters. There weren't any phones to text or emails to send. There was no FaceTime® or Facebook®; there were no tweets, or even planes, trains, or automobiles to make for a quick way to relay a message. When one person wanted to communicate to another person when they were apart, they'd write to them.

Of the twenty-seven books in the New Testament, twenty-one of them are Letters or Epistles. As the early church was being established, the apostles and other disciples of Jesus had some things they needed to communicate—things dealing with faith, the gospel, false teaching, and judgment. At times, churches needed to be encouraged, at other times particular churches needed to be rebuked. But the early leaders of the church were not always in close proximity to the particular churches or individuals they wanted to communicate with. So they communicated, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, via writing a letter. These letters would then be received by the recipients, read, and prayerfully put into practice.

In Greco-Roman times, most letters followed a particular format or structure. Letters almost always began with a greeting. And the greeting typically had the same elements: Name of sender, description of recipient, and a prayer, blessing, or thanksgiving.

In the following examples of New Testament letter greetings,

1. Underline the sender.
2. Put brackets around the recipients.
3. Circle the blessing or thanksgiving.

Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes, To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS 1:1-3

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

EPHESIANS 1:1-2

John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth.

REVELATION 1:4-5

Greco-Roman letters, written by Christians and non-Christians alike, followed this format, showing us that the style of these greetings wasn't a particularly Christian thing but a cultural norm.

Here's everything I learned about God from this greeting:

- God has a gospel.
- God's gospel was promised beforehand through His prophets.
- God's gospel concerns His Son.
- God's Son was descended from David, according to the flesh.
- Christ was declared as the Son of God, according to the Spirit.
- The Spirit is holy.
- Christ resurrected from the dead.
- Jesus Christ is Lord.
- Jesus Christ is gracious.
- Jesus gives apostleship.
- He does it for the sake of His name.
- There are people called to belong to Christ.
- God loves.
- God calls saints.
- God is a Father.
- God the Father and Jesus Christ the Lord have grace and peace to give.

Who would think you could find out so much about God in a simple greeting! This is why we shouldn't skip them in our reading and study of the Bible. "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16). That *all* means every single greeting has something in it that God will use to teach us, reprove us, correct us, and train us in righteousness. These greetings are not arbitrary; they too are God's words to us.

SENDER

Read Jude 1-2.

Who is the sender of the letter and what does the greeting tell us about him?

This word *servant* is *doulos* in the Greek, which is translated as "slave" or "servant." The definition of *doulos*, or slave, is: "a person who is legally owned by someone else and whose entire livelihood and purpose was determined by their master."²

The word *slave* carries a lot of baggage in our culture. It brings to mind pictures of human beings, made in the image of God, being taken captive to do the will of evil men and women. The word is used differently here. Jude was not a slave to men, but God—meaning Jude listened to, followed, obeyed, and honored God. Jude had no intention of living for anything other than the will of God.

Jude followed in the footsteps of others who identified themselves as a *doulos* or slave of God.

Look up the following passages and write down the names of other people who were either called servants of God by others or who called themselves servants of God.

- Genesis 26:24
- Exodus 14:31
- Judges 2:8
- 1 Samuel 1:10-11
- 2 Samuel 7:20-21
- Romans 1:1
- 2 Peter 1:1

Jude calling himself *servant* was not only a marker of his humility and sense of purpose, but it would have also been understood by his listeners as a title of honor. Jude was among the likes of men and women God used to do great things. Being a slave of Christ had honor, not because of Jude but, because of who Jude served.

In Jude's greeting, who did he say he was a slave to? Write down two Scriptures that would help someone get to know Him.

Read Matthew 13:53-55 in your Bible. How did Jude know Jesus? (Jude was a nickname for Judas.³)

Look at how Jude described his relationship to Jesus in Jude 1 and compare it to how Matthew 13:55 describes Jude's relationship with Jesus. What does this tell you about Jude's character?

Which relative of Jesus and Jude is mentioned in both verse 1 of Jude and Matthew 13:55? Look at Galatians 2:9 and write down how Paul described this particular relative.

If James was a prominent figure in the early church, how do you think Jude's recipients would've perceived Jude's authority to write this particular epistle?

Jude's greeting was his introduction to this particular group of Christians. Before he jumped straight into his message (like the writer of Hebrews), he introduced himself. And because greetings are profitable for us, surely there was *something* we learned about God or even ourselves as we read.

What is something you learned about God or yourself while studying Jude 1:1?

DAY 3

RECIPIENTS

To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ ...

JUDE 1b

With any letter, knowing the sender gives us some context while we're reading what's been written. Knowing who the recipient is remains just as important; it helps us know who the letter is for. In addition, we can get a grasp on how the sender viewed the people to whom he was speaking and how it shaped what he communicated to them. The way Jude viewed his recipients, according to verse 1, should be understood as how God viewed the recipients. So as the body of the letter was read, the identity ascribed to the recipients should've been kept in mind.

What three words are used to describe the recipients?

CALLED

What do you think of when you hear the word *called*?

Look up these passages in your own Bible and pay attention to how the word *called* is used in each Scripture.

- Romans 8:28-30
- 1 Corinthians 1:4-9
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14
- 2 Timothy 1:8-9

In your own words, what can you gather about the word *called* from these texts?

Those whom God has called have been summoned into fellowship with Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:9). God's call is not merely an invitation to know Him, but it is a call that inevitably leads to faith in Him (Rom. 8:30). And this calling deals with our past, present, and future.

Read Jude 24.

Jude most likely knew this was where he was heading in his letter. What could he have been priming his recipients to understand about the connection between God's calling and God's keeping?

How might the recipients of Jude's letter have been encouraged by remembering they'd been *called*? (Reread Jude to answer this question.)

BELOVED IN GOD THE FATHER

Define the word below. (Use a dictionary or the internet if you need help!)

BELOVED

The recipients of Jude's letter had been effectually called by God, and they were also loved by God. Do you think God's love motivated God's call? Explain by using Scripture(s) to defend your position.

Jude's recipients were called and loved by God.

What do Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 6:1-5; and Isaiah 44:6-8 tell us about God?

How does Romans 3:10-18,23 describe all people?

How does Ephesians 2:1-3 describe all of humankind's behavior toward God? All of humankind is what by nature?

Considering who God the Father is and who the recipients of Jude's letter were, how should the statement "beloved in God the Father" be received (Jude 1b)?

Circling back to the fact that these people (once unrighteous/children of wrath) had been *called* by God—there was no reason for their being called by God other than the reality that they were loved by God.

Read Ephesians 2:4-10.

What affection preceded God's actions according to this passage?

What did God do for those He's called so they might walk in what He's called them to do?