

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Jude 1:17-25

LEADER'S STUDY

Standing Firm Against Slavery to Sin

Jude 1:17-25

What is happening?

In this passage, Jude is warning the believers that there would be people whose purpose in life is to satisfy their ungodly desires and that these people would create divisions among them. They follow their natural instincts because God's Spirit is not in them. In our day, it is easy to get sucked into the lie that our wisdom and knowledge have "evolved": that there are certain desires that used to be called sinful, but now we know better, and we know people have no control over "natural" instincts. We have forgotten fundamental truths. God never changes, and so His law never changes. While we certainly do each have natural desires, when we say yes to Jesus as Forgiver and Leader, the Holy Spirit gives us a supernatural desire to know God, and these two sides of us are constantly at war.

Where is the Gospel?

Jude reminds us to build ourselves up in our most holy faith, pray in the power of the Holy Spirit, and rely on the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, who gives us eternal life. Jesus died to bring us new life in the Spirit. The only way to experience freedom from sin is to surrender to God's Spirit. When God's Spirit reigns, He brings unity to both the natural and the supernatural desires in us. The natural desires that have been twisted by our self-leadership and Satan's condemnation are restored to their rightful place under submission to the Spirit. Jude commands us to show mercy to those whose faith is wavering, and in the same breath, warns us to be cautious, hating the sins that contaminate their lives. We must constantly search our own hearts and humbly seek God's forgiveness for our sin. It is not our place to judge those living in sin, it is our place to show mercy. A most pernicious lie is that a person's identity is entirely rooted in their natural desires and instincts: we forget that God created us for Himself. People become ensnared to sin because they believe that if they deny the sin, they are denying their very selves. Let us not make the same mistake by condemning them: let us have mercy and compassion on them and pray that God will free them from their sin to find their true identity in Christ and that He would do the same in our lives. After all we need to depend on God's grace the same way.

As you prepare for this week, ask yourself questions like these: From whom does freedom come? Who did God create me to be? How is God calling me to depend on Him more? How does this change my perspective today? How is God calling me to respond based on this scripture? Spend some time reading and meditating on these truths as you prepare for your meeting. Be willing to share this with your group and invite them to join you in sharing how God is asking them to respond to His word. Be willing to share areas that He is calling you to "follow Him" and make clear "I" statements about how you are going to align with Him.

Some helpful scriptures: Isaiah 30:18-22; Matthew 12:41-45; Galatians 5:1, 13-21; Ephesians 4:14-16; James 4:4-8; 2 Peter 2:19-21

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INTENTIONAL BIBLE READING

READ Jude 1:17-25
and meditate on it.

Read in the ESV or similar word-for-word translation. Read it again in the NLT to get a thought-for-thought perspective.

Try to summarize the passage in your own words.

Jude was one of Jesus' brothers, and was writing to a general Christian audience, encouraging them to remain faithful to Jesus.

POTENTIAL STUDY QUESTIONS

These are just questions you might ask to help your group discussion. Don't feel like you need to answer all of these as a group

What seems to be the main point of this passage?

How does God's Spirit in us help us recognize false teachers?

What is eternal life?

Are we capable of becoming all we were created to be on our own power?

Why is our wisdom foolishness to God?

What did you discover or learn about God and His character from this passage?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Who did God create me to be, and how can I become more like Jesus this week?

When I see sin in a fellow believer's life, how do I love that person as Jesus loves me?

Why is humble submission to God's word so crucial to being able to resist false teaching?

How is God calling you to obey, based on this passage?

With whom are you going to share what you have learned?

(This is a critical part of growth that is often overlooked. If we can share it with someone else it means we really understand it, it cements it in our own minds, it makes us accountable to the truth and it blesses the one who hears it. Rom 10:17)

Based on this passage, what can we pray about and how should we pray?