

## SCRIPTURES FOR 10/1/06 LIFEGROUP LESSON

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### **Jude 17-25**

<sup>17</sup>But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. <sup>18</sup>They said to you, "In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires." <sup>19</sup>These are the men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit.

<sup>20</sup>But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.

<sup>22</sup>Be merciful to those who doubt; <sup>23</sup>snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.

<sup>24</sup>To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— <sup>25</sup>to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

### **Hebrews 13:17**

Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

<p>NOTE TO LEADER: There is a lot of material here. Familiarize yourself with it so you know which stuff you are most comfortable with and what you will cut if you get short on time. Try to keep the lesson/discussion 20-30 minutes in length. Good luck and let me know if you have any questions. - Ed</p>
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## LESSON 5: CONTEND FOR THE FAITH

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**NOTE TO LEADERS:** All items in *italics* are for your information and not designed to be read aloud.

### INTRODUCTION:

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This week, Curt Nordhielm leveraged our theme, extending it to our whole mission. He applied Jude's observations to our experience in a bold way. Jude begins in verse 3 with an encouragement to "contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints," warning that some will show up and try to woo us away for the truth. Later in this short book, Jude lays explains some of the complications of ministry and the struggles inherent in "contending for the faith." We must develop certain skills...

### MEMORY

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*Have some read Jude 17-19.*

In order to help us remember, God set up holy days and feasts and ultimately communion to help us remember what is important. Now, we have His word right in front of us and we still sometimes forget our roles as Christians. Jude focuses on one specific injunction that we **MUST NOT** forget. Some will come to promote their own agendas and we must not allow them to divide us. Curt even went so far as to suggest that some without power will attempt to exert power they do not have and we should be wary of their motives.

Have you ever seen this play out in the church?

*Have someone read Hebrews 13:17.*

Do you think there are times when it is okay to question the authority of your church leadership? When?

### PATIENCE

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*Have some read Jude 20-21.*

Jude says we must "build ourselves up."

Do you think Jude is putting all of the responsibility of this on the individual or do you think he is saying "build each other up?"

Curt shared that his primary concern for the modern church is our lack of discipleship. We are pretty good at attracting a crowd -- our nation is full of mega-churches, numbering in the thousands -- and crowds are good, but **crowds are not disciples**. We are pretty good at converting people -- some folks claim thousands of conversions in one Sunday -- but **conversion is not discipleship**.

We must be patient in building ourselves and each other up. Jude says we must **BUILD, PRAY, and WAIT**.

Do you ever get impatient?

Have you ever experienced a season where you got frustrated with God's pace?

### MERCY

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*Have some read Jude 22-23.*

Jude says we must extend mercy so that we can do our part in God's plan to save those around us. Paul said he tried to be, "all things to all people," so that he might save a few. Paul knew he wasn't saving anyone himself, but he wished to be God's agent, as Jude has recommended. Jude shares three types of people with three challenges...

THE DOUBTERS -- be empathetic

THE DOOMED -- be aggressive

THE DANGEROUS -- be careful

How can we show mercy to the doubter?

How can we be aggressive to the doomed?

How can we enter into dangerous witnessing situations and still help the dangerous?

Share a story of you or someone you know who faced these challenges and was successful.

### CONCLUSION

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*Have some read Jude 24-25.*

Jude shares that God wants to partner with us on this journey. He is the God of "majesty, power, and authority" and yet is wants to keep you from stumbling. We must remember...

He is **ABLE**

He is **ACTIVE**

He is **PRESENT**

God will bless your efforts if you participate in His plan. **CONTEND FOR THE FAITH** by feeding your **MEMORY** with the scripture, exhibiting **PATIENCE** in your growth, and showing **MERCY** in your relationships.