

Contending for the Faith Erie Youth Camp—2013

Introduction: The Spirit of the Warrior

1. Jude is a combat-field manual for the spiritual warrior.
2. The book is prophetic, intended for the last generation (ours).
3. Implementation of the principles contained in this book requires the adoption of a spiritual warrior mindset. Suggested reading:
 - *Of Tyrants and Dangerous Old Men* – Bob Owens

I. The Basics of the Battle: Jud 1:1–3

A. The Army Identified, Jud 1:1

1. The Commander-in-Chief

Jude identifies Jesus Christ as “Lord” six times in the book, and once directly calls Him “God.” Each reference declares some truth about His glorious Person and power:

- a. His Deity, equal standing in the trinity, Jud 1:4
- b. His righteous judgments, Jud 1:5
- c. His undeniable authority, Jud 1:9
- d. His future final triumph, Jud 1:14
- e. His authorship of the Word, Jud 1:17
- f. His infinite mercy to His own, Jud 1:21
- g. His redemptive work as the God-man, Jud 1:25

We must always remember that it is Almighty God, in the person of Jesus Christ, who is our commander (Heb 2:10).

2. The Rank and File, Jud 1:1–2

Jude claims no special status, but humbly chooses to place himself on common ground with all who believe in Jesus Christ:

a. “Bondservant”

Every believer is born again as a *doulos* of our Lord. We will be judged either faithful, or unfaithful as such (1Co 4:1–2).

b. “Brother”

Blood ties fade into insignificance in the light of spiritual ties in the Royal Family of God. “*We are His body ... His flesh ... His bones*” (Eph 5:30).

c. “Called”

The invitation to enter eternal life goes out to all mankind (1Ti 2:5–6; 2Pe 3:9). The “*called*” or “*chosen*” are those who respond to the call (Mat 20:16, Mat 22:14). This term identifies one as a believer, one who has received Christ (Joh 1:12–13).

- d. “Sanctified”
Sanctification is a “setting apart” of the believer from the world. It is a process of three phases:
 - 1) salvation by faith,
 - 2) spiritual growth, and
 - 3) glorification through resurrection.
- e. “Preserved”
The word is literally “kept” or “guarded” and is in the perfect tense, indicating our “eternal security” in Christ. Thus, we enter the battle from a position of overwhelming strength.

B. The Supply Line, Jud 1:2

Not only are we spiritually secure in Christ, but we also have a supply line that cannot be disrupted, through which ever-increasing and all-sufficient provisions are given:

- 1. “Mercy”
This term encompasses all provisions which take into consideration our human frailty and sinfulness, making it possible to rise from defeat and gain strength to overcome our failures and weaknesses (cf., 2Co 12:7–10; Heb 11:34b).
- 2. “Peace”
Our peace with God is based on the perfect finished work of Jesus Christ, not our performance (Rom 5:1; Eph 2:17; Phi 4:7). As we grow, our grasp and hold on this peace becomes more and more secure and stable.
- 3. “Love”
Only those who are secure can receive and give love (1Jo 4:9, 1Jo 4:11, 1Jo 4:17–19). Because we are *“accepted in the Beloved”* (Eph 1:6), we are free to love others as He loves us (Joh 13:34–35). This is possible by surrender to the indwelling Spirit of God (Gal 5:22–23). No power on earth can equal, or conquer, the love of God.

C. The Battle Clarified, Jud 1:3

Jude now sounds a clear call to battle, in contrast to most of our modern-day “preaching” (1Co 14:8). Every “just war” must have a rationale that justifies that fight according to principles of truth and honor. Jude does this in four qualifying phrases:

- 1. The desire for peace
Jude’s original intention was to write an epistle to the children of God regarding our *“common salvation,”* that is what we all share by faith in Christ. Though he was *“very diligent”* or eager to do this, his plans were changed by the assault of the enemy.
- 2. The necessity of defense
It became *“necessary”* to write the present “field manual” because of the infiltration and destructive activities of false teachers. In alarm, Jude calls the saints to *“contend earnestly,”* that is to enter into agonizing conflict with the enemies of Christ. The cause is just, and the fight has begun!

3. The cause at hand

Every war is fought for or against something, and that something must be valuable enough to justify the sacrifices and sufferings of the fight. Jude identifies his cause as “*the faith*.” Much more than just “the body of truth we believe” (though that is certainly included), this simple phrase enshrines what it is that makes biblical Christianity unique from all earthly religions. It is that, from beginning to end, all provisions of the redemption Christ died for are received “*by grace ... through faith ... [apart from] works*” (Eph 2:8–9).

It is this message that was “*once for all delivered to the saints*,” and is never to be altered, tampered with, or watered down in any way. Every example and illustration given by Jude from Jud 1:4–16 is an assault on this very principle of grace. Generally, the attack is along one of two lines:

- a. Faith alone is not sufficient, we must supply some work, and
- b. If it is truly “*by grace ... through faith*” alone, then how we live our lives doesn’t matter.

We will see both in the following examples. We can also find both today in our churches!

Summary: The Doctrine of Spiritual War in Every Generation

1. The spiritual war began before human history, with the revolt of Satan and his angels (Isa 14:12–17; Eze 28:6–10; Rev 12:3–4, Rev 12:7).
2. The issue that motivated the revolt (I believe), was the revelation to the angels of God’s plan to create a lesser race (mankind), redeem them, and raise them higher than angels (1Co 6:3; Tit 1:1–3). The question in the Titus reference is this: to whom did God speak of the “*hope of eternal life*” if it was “*before time began*”? It must have been the angels. I believe Lucifer revolted because of his opposition to this plan to raise men above angels.
3. In every generation of human history the invisible war has raged, with all elements of Satan’s forces and arsenal aimed precisely at the Gospel message.
4. Throughout the Old Testament time, the attack was aimed at keeping the Living Word—Jesus Christ—from coming into the world (Gen 6:1–3) and otherwise impugning the righteousness of God.
5. Once the work of redemption was completed by the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Satan turned his sights on the clarity of the Gospel message (1Co 15:1–8; Gal 1:6–9; Eph 2:8–10; Col 2:4–10).
6. In every generation, believers are tempted, assaulted, and persecuted with regard to whether they truly believe and live by “*the faith once for all delivered to the saints*.”
 - a. Satan tempts us to sin, appealing to our own sin nature, so that our actions deny the power of the faith we proclaim.
 - b. When we sin, Satan then seeks to overwhelm us with feelings of guilt and shame, seeking to get us to doubt either our salvation, or the truth that God’s love for us is unchanged by our sin.

- c. We are persecuted, in order to move us by fear to deny the faith, thus becoming a stumbling-block to others coming to Christ.
 - d. Finally, Satan seeks to deceive pastors, evangelists, and teachers into adding some system of works into the Gospel presentation.
7. In order to effectively “*contend ... for the faith*,” we must be clear on the all-sufficiency of faith (Heb 11:6) and resist every effort of the enemy to compromise that message, either by our words or our actions.

II. Assessing the Enemy Forces, Jud 1:4–16

A. Their Infiltration and Objectives, Jud 1:4

Note the phrases “*certain persons ... those ... these men*.” Jude’s focus in this section is against specific men, identified by their methods, and illustrated by historical examples and pictorial analogies:

1. In Jud 1:4, they are infiltrators into the churches, “*marked out*” by former prophecies (cf., Jud 1:17–18, 2Pe 3:1–6).
2. In Jud 1:8, they are referred to as “*these dreamers*” whose sins parallel the three examples of Jud 1:5–7.
3. In Jud 1:10, “*these speak evil of whatever they do not know ...*”
4. In Jud 1:12, they are pictured as “*hidden reefs*” (NASB) which wreck ships.
5. In Jud 1:16 “*these are grumblers [complainers] ...*”
6. In Jud 1:18, “*these are sensual persons ... not having the Spirit ...*”
When he says they have “*crept in unnoticed*” (Jud 1:4), the word used means to sneak in for sinister purposes. They have evil intent.

B. Historical Examples, Jud 1:5–7

1. The Exodus generation, Jud 1:5
Their unbelief at Kadesh (Num 13–14) was expressed by their vicious attack against Moses and Aaron (Num 14:1–5).
2. The defection of the angels, Jud 1:6
These are not just angels who followed Lucifer in his revolt, but specifically refers to the “*sons of God*” in Gen 6 who sought to cohabit with female members of the human race, probably to keep the Savior from coming into the world by corrupting the human race. They are mentioned in 1Pe 3:19 as “*spirits in prison*,” and in 2Pe 2:4 as “*the angels who sinned*.” By these actions, they rejected the “*domain*” in which God had placed them.
3. Sodom and Gomorrah, Jud 1:7–8
The argument above about the angels is strengthened by the word “*likewise*” and the following phrase “*in a similar manner*,” which compares the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah to that of the angels. In both cases, the problem was “*sexual immorality*” outside the realm ordained by God. When either angels or men rebel against the authority of God, the results are the same: lying, murder, immorality, and degeneration.

C. Center of Gravity, Jud 1:8–11

1. A pattern of similarity, Jud 1:8

The “*in the same way*” (NASB) once again refers back to the previous three historical examples. An untranslated word *mentoi* follows, meaning “notwithstanding,” in other words, in spite of the overwhelming evidence of certain judgment on these practices. “*These dreamers*” refers back to the “*certain men*” of Jud 1:4. Like Sodom and Gomorrah, they too “*defile the flesh.*” Like the angels of Satan, they “*reject authority.*” And like the Exodus generation, they “*speak evil of dignitaries (glorious ones, i.e., Moses and Aaron).*” False teachers always love to attack and defame men who are called and ordained by God. Why is it that the perpetrators of evil all follow similar methods? The answer is found in the source of their motives and actions, what we might call their “center of gravity.”

2. Two centers of gravity, Jud 1:9

The “center of gravity” is the average location of the weight of an object. It is the point of balance, or the base, of an object.

In an article in the July/Aug. issue of Military Review, by Col. Dale C. Eikmeier, U.S.A., he quotes the Joint Publication 5–0 on the Doctrine for Planning Operations: “*The most important task confronting campaign planners in this process is being able to identify friendly and adversary strategic centers of gravity; that is, the sources of strength, power, and resistance.*” He then continues, “*Centers of gravity are sources of power. Joseph Strange of the USMC War College defines centers of gravity as the ‘primary sources of moral or physical strength, power, and resistance.’*”

3. The center of evil—Satan

The devil is the source and center of gravity for all evil. His contention for the body of Moses was no doubt intended to use that body for some evil purpose. His “*contending*” (*diakriminomenos*, “sharp dispute”) approach to Michael was based on his previous rank before his fall, in which he outranked all other created beings.

4. The center of righteousness—the Lord

Michael made no attempt to stand against the devil in his own right or power. He ended the dispute by appealing to “*The Lord.*” The seemingly mild statement, “*The Lord rebuke you*” is actually a thunderous denunciation based on the only center of gravity for what is good and right. The same word for rebuke is used of Jesus’ rebuke of the demon in Mat 17:18.

It is crucial, in our spiritual battles, to remember that our only hope for victory is by claiming our birthright and taking our stand on the name (character and reputation) of our Lord Jesus Christ.

5. Camouflage: disguise, deception, and destruction, Jud 1:12–13
“These” again refers back to *“certain men,”* false teachers, who have *“crept in unnoticed”* to the assemblies of believers. Though they disguise themselves with false humility and flattering words, they are likened to five awful figures:
 - a. *“spots,”* literally *“hidden reefs”* (NASB) which wreck ships;
 - b. *“clouds without water,”* promising what they cannot fulfill;
 - c. *“trees without fruit”* (in the time of harvest—late autumn—they have no fruit, being not only sterile, but having no life);
 - d. *“waves of the sea,”* carried by the winds, churning up a litany of shame and degeneracy; and
 - e. *“wandering stars,”* without aim or purpose, heading only to eternal darkness.

6. Certain defeat, Jud 1:14–16
 Here Jude quotes from an apocryphal book called the *Book of Enoch*, which is not part of Scripture, but was well known to his audience. Though not a part of the Bible, the prophecy of the Lord’s coming is accurate (see Rev 19:11–14). This makes the prophecy of Enoch the second prophecy in history. The first (Gen 3:15) speaks of the first coming of Jesus Christ into the world, as *“the Lamb of God”* (Joh 1:29). The second oldest prophecy then speaks of His second coming, with *“the armies of heaven,”* and His victory over them, as *“the lion ... of Judah”* (Rev 5:5).

Note that *“the Lord”* here refers to Jesus Christ, and that it is *“against Him”* that all ungodly deceivers through history have spoken. Therefore He will *“execute judgment”* on all who willfully join the ranks of the devil. This judgment will include *“these ... grumblers”* (Jud 1:16), motivated only by lust, with mouths full of high-sounding phrases, yet all designed only to gain personal advantages and self-promotion.

Summary: The Terminal Generation

The Bible reveals seven generations in history that were warned in advance of the coming of God’s judgment upon them. The greatest—and the last—is our own generation.

1. The generation of the flood, Gen 6:1–3
 God warned them, through the preaching of Noah, that judgment would come in 120 years. They did not listen and perished in the flood.
2. The Exodus generation, Gen 15:13–16
 God told Abram that his descendants would be slaves for four generations. This is why Moses assumed they would know that he was their deliverer (Act 7:25), but they did not heed the prophecy.
3. The Exile generation, Jer 34:1–6, Jer 37:17, Jer 42:1–22, Jer 46:13, Jer 51:59–64
 Jeremiah told the people of his generation that they would be carried away into Babylon for their idolatry. They did not believe him and they did not repent.

4. The generation that returned, Jer 25:11, Jer 29:10; Dan 9:1–3; Mat 16:3
Jeremiah declared that the exile would last 70 years. Because Daniel read this and believed, he knew God was about to let the captives return to Jerusalem. All of us living in this present generation should be like Daniel and know “*the signs of the times.*”
5. The generation of the Messiah, Dan 9:24–27; Mat 2:1–6; Luk 2:25–38
Because of the prophecy of Daniel, those living in the time of our Lord’s coming should have known that they were living in the appointed time. The wise men knew, as did Simeon and Anna. But Jesus rebuked the leaders of Israel because they did not know “*the time of your visitation*” (Mat 16:1–3; Luk 19:44).
6. The generation of the fall of Jerusalem, Mat 23:34–36; Luk 21:20–22
Jesus declared to the people of His day that the wrath of God would fall on Jerusalem in their generation. Like every generation before, they did not believe Him.
7. The final generation, Mat 24:32–35
If we understand the fig tree as a symbol of Israel (see Mat 21:18–22 and Luk 13:6–9), then the final generation begins with the “budding of the fig tree” (Luk 21:30), which would be the return of the nation of Israel after 2,000 years of exile among the nations. This occurred in March 1948. Since Moses, in Psa 90:10, declares a generation to be 70 to 80 years, we should know that **our** generation will witness the Rapture of the Church, the Tribulation, and the Second Coming. Surely “no man knows the day or the hour” (Mat 24:36), but I believe we can and should know the generation. Our “*blessed hope*” is near (Tit 2:13)!

III. Battle Tactics and the Strategy for Victory, Jud 1:17–25

In this section, the author returns to his central thought that we must “*contend earnestly for the faith.*” Having provided evidences and examples of the character and methods of “*these*” false teachers, he now gives to us the keys to spiritual victory.

A. **The Five Tactics of Victory, Jud 1:17–23**

1. Knowledge, Jud 1:17–19
The word “*remember*” is a command to review things learned, to call to mind and dwell upon. The price of lasting knowledge is that of constant review. This is especially essential when it comes to the words recorded “*by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” As apostles, what they wrote was His message to us! We are forewarned of “*scoffers [mockers] ... in the last days*” (2Pe 3:1–6), who are devoid of the Spirit. Yet, in spite of these warnings, look at how many immature and/or nominal Christians are being deceived by the deceivers of our time.
2. Fitness, Jud 1:20
A spiritual battle requires spiritual fitness. Like a warrior preparing to go into battle, the believer needs to train hard. Two present participles develop a balanced spiritual workout. “*Building yourselves up in your most holy faith*” requires diligent study of the Word of God, continuing the work of “remembrance” from Jud 1:17. In light of what God says to us through His Word, we are then exercised by “*praying in the Holy Spirit.*” When the Spirit is in control, our prayers are not

the shallow and selfish prayers we often hear. Instead they embrace the big picture and pray from a divine viewpoint, seeking the will of God, and generating great power (1Jo 5:14–15).

3. Commitment, Jud 1:21

There must be a resolute determination to *“keep [yourself] in the love of God.”* The word for *“keep”* is the same word in the original text as the word *“kept”* in Jud 1:1. As we are secure in Christ for eternity, so during our lifetime we are to participate practically by making wise decisions consistent with our standing in Christ. The means of staying spiritually focused is *“[looking] for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

A true appreciation of eternal security never produces laziness or apathy. Rather, in gratitude, we recognize that our lives must conform to our standing in Christ. The process of spiritual growth and service is once again, *“by faith,”* not to gain security, but because we know we have it. The *“love of God”* brings both power and purpose. As we learn His Word and do His will, we *“keep [ourselves] in the love of God”* and our lives become a testament to His grace and goodness. Eph 5:1–21 is a great passage on the wise or foolish choices possible for believers. Our ultimate goal is to *“be imitators of God ... and walk in love, just as Christ also loved [us] ...”* (Eph 5:1–2).

4. Discernment, Jud 1:22

In our quest to bring others to Christ, we must exercise a great deal of discernment. Some may be reached by gracious reason, while others require a bit of *“fire and brimstone.”* Some respond to the message of the love of God, while others must face the warning of eternal fire.

We can *“have compassion”* on those who are convicted of their sinfulness, and long to be set free from guilt and shame. The word *“compassion”* is from *eleos*, the same word translated *“mercy”* in Jud 1:21. Spiritual judgment is required to *“[make] a distinction”* between the various people with whom we are brought into contact. This discernment is the result of study, growth, prayer, and practice. By faith, we trust the Spirit of God to give us wisdom in dealing with the souls of lost men and women.

5. Resolution, Jud 1:23

The ministry of the Gospel message requires boldness. Even the great Apostle Paul requested prayer to be a bold witness (Eph 6:18–19), as did the other apostles (Act 4:29–31). Some souls, hardened by repeated rejection of the truth (see Eph 4:17–19), may only be touched by the awful warnings of eternal hell. We hear very little of this today, as our churches and preachers have become more and more *“politically correct.”* But hell is real, eternal, and was preached often by Jesus (Mat 10:28, Mat 23:33; Luk 16:23; Mar 9:43–48). In dealing with hardened souls, we must learn to *“[hate] even the garment defiled by the flesh,”* another way of saying, *“hate the sin, but love the sinner.”*

B. The Winning Strategy, Jud 1:24–25

In the closing two verses, Jude gives one of the most beautiful and comforting doxologies found in the Bible. Others may be found in Rom 11:33–36, Rom 16:25–27; 2Co 12:9; Eph 3:20; 1Ti 1:17; 1Ti 3:16 and 1Tim 6:15–16. None are more all-encompassing than this—or more comforting. Here Jude provides the weak and weary believer with enough themes to fill a thousand songs of praise. It is critical that in our spiritual battle we not forget that ultimately our victory is due to His matchless grace to us through Jesus Christ. Here are five eternal realities to keep in mind:

1. The preeminent power of God

He is “*able to keep you from stumbling.*” Though we all fall, He is ever lifting us up and dusting us off, to press on to the high calling we have in Christ (Phi 3:14–15). No failure is ever final!

2. The holy purpose of God

He will ultimately “*present you faultless before the presence of His glory.*” This is the assurance of each and every believer. We will eternally be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom 8:29–30).

3. The good pleasure of God

The “*exceeding joy*” will be both His and ours. The heavenly Father will be rejoicing with and for us, as His work in us reaches its ultimate and eternal climax. Christ will rejoice in “*bringing many sons to glory*” (Heb 2:9–10). Then the saints will break out in songs of joyful praise, in honor of our Savior (Rev 6:9–10, Rev 6:12–13).

4. The prismatic work of God

A prism is defined by Webster’s as “*a crystal form having (at least) three faces parallel to one axis ...*” We all know that a prism refracts light into its seven colors (i.e., the rainbow). We are told that “*God is light*” (1Jo 1:5) and through the three members of the Godhead, this light is refracted to men to reveal the perfections of His nature. The phrase “*God our Savior*” includes the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in their united work for our redemption. While their work is one, their roles are separate and unique. Thus, the *Shema* of the Hebrew, “*Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one*” (Deu 6:4), and the claim of Christ, “*I and my Father are One*” (Joh 10:30) meet together in the prayer of Christ for us, “*That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us ...*” (Joh 17:21) resulting in “*one body and one Spirit ... one Lord ... one God and Father of all ...*” (Eph 4:4–6). By this, God has created an eternal university/*e pluribus unum*, out of many, one!

5. Eternal praise of God

His wisdom, glory, dominion, and power are eternal. How can we not join with the Apostle Paul in saying, “*Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become His counselor? Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him? For of*

Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.” (Rom 11:33–36).

Summary 1: God is For Us!

1. In Psa 56:9, while he was under great attack, David wrote, *“This I know ... God is for me.”* Do you have the same confidence?
2. God was for us before the world began, for He wrote our names in His book as those who belong to Him through the blood of the Lamb (Luk 10:20; Rev 13:8, Rev 17:8).
3. God was for us at the fall of Adam, for He immediately promised us a Redeemer (Gen 3:15).
4. God was for us in the writing of the Old Testament, for in it He gave us both promises and examples to follow (Rom 15:4–6; 1Co 10:1–13).
5. God was acting for us when He judged His own Son in our place, that we might be forgiven and made alive in Christ (2Co 5:21; Eph 2:1–8; Rev 13:8).
6. God was for us in the writing of the New Testament, providing us all we need for faith and life (2Ti 3:16–17; 2Pe 1:2–4; Jud 1:17).
7. God is for us from the day of our birth to the day of our death, watching over our every breath and step (Psa 139:1–24; Heb 13:5–6).
8. God will be for us when we stand before His glorious presence *“faultless ... with exceeding joy”* (Jud 1:24).
9. *“What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”* (Rom 8:31–32).

Summary 2: The Five Paragraph Field Order of Jude

1. **Situation**—the historical existence of spiritual warfare
2. **Mission**—the urgent necessity of effective spiritual combat
3. **Execution**—need to identify and resist the enemies of the cross
4. **Administration**—God’s divine supply for every spiritual need is provided for us in His Word, and is administered by His indwelling Holy Spirit.
5. **Command/Communication**—the Son of God working through the Spirit of God using the Word of God to achieve the plan of God in the life of the child of God. This format is given in 1Co 11:1–3.

And now—contend earnestly for the faith!