

# Jude 1-3

## Introductory Greeting and Occasion

### Jude 1-2

- The author identifies as Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James (vs. 1). As a reminder from last week, Ιουδας can be translated in multiple ways (both Judas and Jude are acceptable) and Mark 6:3 lists both Judas and James as brothers of Jesus by name.
- A more accurate reading of the word δουλος would be “slave” (Jude, a *slave* of Jesus Christ). Many translations prefer “servant,” but Green suggests that this misses the context of the 1<sup>st</sup> century where chattel slavery would be understood. Jude first identifies himself as having no ownership of himself but the possession of Jesus.
- This identification is more striking when he moves to his second identification as the brother of James. Both being brothers of Jesus, Jude identifies only as the brother of James but rather as the *slave* of Jesus.
- His connection to the blood family of Jesus certainly lent authority to speak to a Palestinian Christian audience, with James as the head of the Jerusalem church and Jesus the head of *the* church. But Jude wants his readers to know that his relationship to Jesus is the same as theirs - Jesus is his Lord and Master.
- The audience is described as being “called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ.” Their calling is grounded and rooted in the love of God and points towards the end point of being kept for Jesus Christ.
- The “wish-prayer” was a standard greeting to a letter. Here the prayer is for mercy, peace, and love to be multiplied to the audience. It is interesting that unlike many NT letters, grace is not mentioned in the wish-prayer of the salutation. This may be deliberate as the opponents of the letter seem to be taking the grace of God for granted. The wishing of peace recalls the Aaronic blessing of Numbers 6:23-26.

### Jude 3

- Verses 3 and 4 introduce the purpose of the letter. We will look more at verse 4 and its connection to 2 Peter next week.
- Note in verse 3 that the audience is not just beloved of God as in vs. 1, but also beloved by Jude as well.
- Jude had intended to write a very different letter to the same audience, but changed course. He originally desired to write about their “common salvation.” Green argues that while the translation of σωτηριας (salvation) certainly carries the biblical theme and understanding of God’s redemptive acts of salvation, usage in the 1<sup>st</sup> century also carried connotation of “security.” Common security=national security. Thus, the false teaching to be addressed must be considered as a grave threat to the church.
- This is made clear by Jude stating that he felt it necessary to write an appeal to contend for the faith that was delivered to the saints. What was handed down was to be passed on, *not changed to novel invention*. What implications does this have for the modern church?