

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, December 13, 2009

Passage: Jude 17-23

Memory Passage: Jude 20-21

TODAY: *From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?*

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Jude 17-19.** In verse 5, Jude reminds the reader and us of things that we already should know, namely, that those who rebel against God will be judged. Here in verse 17, he calls us to remember. What is it that he calls us to remember? How is it that we should know this?

(b) Have you ever been taught that there will be such people as described here? Why would it be important for us to know this fact? Read Acts 20:29-31. What does Paul say about the importance of being aware that such people will come?

(c) Why is it that there will always be a threat of such people within our midst (Matthew 13:24-30)? What are the key characteristics of these individuals? Verse 18 identifies them as “following *their own* ungodly passions.” Why is it that when we are totally self-focused on our own desires that we become all those things listed in verse 19?

(d) It doesn't take much for us to be focused on our own ungodly passions. Do you see any of the actions (v19) of these scoffers in your own life? Are you divisive or argumentative with other people? Are you more focused on this world and the things you have or want? Is the Holy Spirit's work evident in your life?

(e) *Family:* Read Jude 17-19. What are the key characteristics of these scoffers? What does it mean “to scoff”? Verse 18 identifies them as “following *their own* ungodly passions.” Why is it that when we are totally self-focused on our own desires that we become all those things listed in verse 19? If following our own passions lead us to be like the scoffers, then what do we need to follow to be godly (Romans 12:1-2)? Pray that you would live following after the passions of God and not yourself.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Jude 20-21.** In Greek there is a special tense used for commands or instruction, it is the imperative. In verses 20-21 there is only one such verb, it is the command “keep”. How does this command to keep ourselves and the statement that Jude has already made that we are kept (v. 1) fit together?

(b) Read John 15:9-10 and Romans 8:39. Describe the tension that exists here between God's promise and the call for us to take action.

(c) Does this passage say anything about the need for earning God's love? What do these scriptures say about God's love (Psalm 36:5; Romans 5:8; Ephesians 2:4-5; 3:19)?

(d) What are things that people do to earn God's love? Is there anything that you do that tries to earn God's love? What does trying to earn God's love say about how you view yourself? What character trait does it take to just receive love and grace without merit?

(e) *Family:* Read Jude 20-21. Is there anything we can do to earn God's love (Ephesians 2:4-5)? Why is it that we are not ever instructed to earn God's love? Read John 15:9-10. How can we experience God's love according to Jesus? Note: Jesus does not say “keep my commandments” then “I will love you.” He is saying my love is experienced and found in my commandments. Pray that you would be free from earning God's love and rest in His love.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Jude 20-21.** Jude uses here other supporting phrases to explain how we are to keep ourselves in the love of God. What are the different ways we are to keep ourselves? Which one is most surprising to you?

(b) The idea of building here is not one where we seek to build ourselves up on our own, but where we build each other up. What are some ways that we as a church can build each other up in faith? What are things that prohibit this? How would increasing the faith of each other keep us in the love of God?

(c) Read Ephesians 6:18. Is praying in the Spirit something that can only be done at certain times, under special circumstances? What does it mean to pray “in the Spirit” (John 4:23; Romans 8:9-17)? How does praying in the Spirit keep us in the love of God?

(d) Waiting is not something that we like to do as Americans and especially when we have a lot to do. What is it that we are to wait for? How should this waiting affect our lives? How should it affect the way in which we relate to suffering, evil, frustrations, poverty (our own or others)? How is it that this keeps us in the love of God?

(e) *Family*: Read Jude 20-21. What are the different ways we are to keep ourselves? Which one is most surprising to you? What do each of them mean? What are some ways that we as a church can build each other up in faith? What is it that we are to wait for? How might each of these keep us in the love of God? Ask God to help you to be faithful to build up each other's faith in Him.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Jude 22-23.** Jude has summarily denounced these men who are living these immoral lives. The question remains: what should we do about these men and the people that they are influencing? What are the three verbs that he uses to call us to action? How many different groups of people are mentioned in these two verses?

(b) How do we normally want to respond to such people and the people that they are influencing? Why does Jude's actions seem counterintuitive? Jude has mentioned mercy already in verses 2 and 21. Why is mercy so important (Romans 5:6-10; 1 Timothy 1:16)?

(c) The first group that Jude mentions is "those who doubt." Have you ever had an experience where you were told that doubting was evil or wrong? Explain. How is verse 22 helpful for us with our own doubts?

(d) Read the story of Thomas and Jesus in John 20:24-29. How did Jesus respond to his doubt? How does Jesus answer the disbelief of Thomas? What are common doubts and questions that people have about Jesus and Christianity? In what ways could we answer doubts and questions that people have?

(e) *Family*: Read Jude 22-23. See letter (d). Do you have any doubts that need answers? Share them with one another and as a family explore the answers together. Remember mercy is an attitude we must have through this process.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Jude 22-23.** In verse 23, Jude mentions two other groups of people. What kinds of people are being described in the first part of the verse? What are our attitude and actions to be toward these people (James 5:19-20)?

(b) What is it that makes it difficult to be willing to help such people who are "in the fire" (Romans 12:3)?

(c) The third group that is addressed might be the same as the previous or a different group. Regardless, this verse is addressing how we are to show mercy. What kind of fear is Jude talking about? How does this fear help us to show mercy rightly?

(d) The "garment" that Jude uses in this metaphor describes an inner garment such as an undershirt. Who is it that would see such a garment? What kind of stains/sins is he talking about? Why is it so easy to not hate such sins? How does a proper fear of God give us a right understanding of such sin?

(e) *Family*: Read Jude 22-23. What are our attitude and actions to be toward these people who are in the fire (James 5:19-20)? Why is it easy to judge such people and not to love them and show them mercy (Romans 12:3)? Pray that you would be filled with the mercy of the Lord.

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

Think back through what you have learned each day this week. Read Jude 17-23. What is your attitude toward people who are less spiritual or who are struggling in the faith? Do you have a heart of mercy toward them? What kind of attitudes do you need to address? How does a fuller understanding of your place before God help this? Ask God to help you address any areas of arrogance or superiority that you might have in your heart.

DATE: December 13, 2009

PASSAGE: Jude 17-24

Contending for Love
"keep yourselves in the Love of God"