

As we begin our two-week study of Jude, we see a church being influenced away from the truth of God's Word. The challenge is to filter out all the things that would pollute the truth and "contend for the faith" that was given to us by God, not man. We still face struggles like this today when authorities or influences in our life conflict with God's Word. How do we respond to these common tensions? In this study we will look at Jude and some other scriptures to gain insight into a healthy response.

What Do You Think?

- Society is built on authority and everyone seems to have his or her own version of truth. Are there any particular authority issues you struggle with?
- What have you found to be the key elements of healthy influence relationships?

“Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.”

Jude 1:3 (ESV)

What Does God Say?

- **Read Jude 1:3-4, 8-11.** It would be nice if life were free of difficult authority issues: where those leading and those being led were always on the right track and walking together. However, we know this is not always the case. What do these verses show us about how and why authority issues arise?
- **Read Jude 1:12-13.** Discuss the imagery in these verses. What are the common characteristics of a person like this, and how have you seen it play out in your life?

“Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.”

Romans 13:1 (ESV)

- **Read Romans 13:1-2.** It is clear that we are to follow those placed in authority over us, but what do we do when that authority and God’s truth conflict? **Acts 3:14-20** is a good example.
- **Read Acts 16:16-24.** When we choose not to follow instruction (for good or bad reasons), there are consequences we must be prepared to face. Each authority structure has consequences for non-compliance. What are some of the consequences? Consider God, home, church, work, school, government, and any others.

What Will You Do?

- Do you have “clouds without rain” hovering over your life? What can you do to “contend for the faith” you know to be true?
- Are there currently authorities in your life that are in conflict with God’s Word? How can you follow God but still show due respect to the other?
- How do we keep our church and Life Group from winding up like these Christians in Jude? How do we protect the truth and follow the authorities God has established in the church?