



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

**JAMES, 2 PETER,
& JUDE**

Week 4

Slandering Scumbags

2 Peter 2:11-16

OPENING
up to the Word

Animals such as spiders, birds and tigers often act by instinct, without thinking about the morality of their behavior. Do you know any humans who seem to act like animals, without thinking?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. What leads evil people to slander others (vs. 10-12)? How are they like “brute beasts”?
 2. Does the “idea of pleasure” (v.13) Peter speaks of and illustrates remind you of many sad historical chapters in human history-what about today?
-

LIVING
out the Word

1. How can lack of understanding lead to immoral, animal-like behavior (v. 12)?
 2. How does lust (v. 13) and greed (v. 14) engulf society?
-

WINDOW
on the Word

Balaam, son of Beor, represents false prophets who are condemned because of their teaching and their actions (vs. 15-16). See Numbers 22:1-25:9 and 31:8, 16 for Balaam's corrupt attempt to turn religion into personal gain. Check Jude 11.

“They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness. But he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey—a beast without speech—who spoke with a man’s voice and restrained the prophet’s madness.”

2 Peter 2:15-16



Prevaricating Prophets

2 Peter 2:17-22

OPENING
up to the Word

Imagine how it would feel to be stranded in a barren desert? How would you want to quench your thirst? (a) got milk? (b) coffee break, (c) iced tea plunge, (d) diet cola time, (e) ice cold water.

DIGGING
into the Word

1. How does Peter picture the barrenness of these false teachers (vs. 17-18)? How can their empty words be so destructive?
2. What do they promise (v. 19)? Yet, what do they deliver? What master have they enslaved themselves to?
3. Peter describes false teachers who may have once accepted our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. If this is true, why would their present state be worse than the corruption that preceded their conversion (vs. 20-21)? In such cases, do you feel individuals turned their back on God's grace and now have no hope—or does God's forgiveness know no end?

LIVING
out the Word

1. How do you quench your spiritual thirst? (a) prayer, (b) Bible study, (c) meditation (d) discussion.
2. To what are you enslaved? (a) freedom in Christ, (b) false freedom, (c) righteousness, (d) corruption.

WINDOW
on the Word

*In Peter's world, **travel** was difficult and tiring. Most people had to walk rough roads, carrying their possessions. Springs of water were sought to satisfy thirst and protect life. So false teachers were like empty springs, without anything to satisfy spiritual thirst (2:17). And whereas mists might quench thirst, driving winds made them inaccessible.*

Scoffing Scoundrels

DAY 24

2 Peter 3:1-7

How many times have you heard or read that the world is coming to an end? Has this cast any doubt for you on Christ's promise to return?

1. Why had Peter written to his "dear friends" (vs. 1-2)? How do the holy prophets help his cause? Give three examples.

2. What is Peter's first warning (vs. 3-4)? Would you say scoffing, skeptical scoundrels are a scab on society? What is their message?

3. What have these skeptics forgotten in their evil desires (vs. 3-6)?

1. Have you ever been misled by someone whom you considered to be a spiritual authority? How did it effect your life?

2. Have you written a letter lately to a "dear friend" in order to stimulate them to "wholesome thinking" (v. 1)?

*There are and have been many different kinds of **scoffers** who deny the gospel of Jesus Christ. For example, **legalists**, bwho deny the grace of God, shutting the door of the kingdom of heaven in other's faces and refusing to yield and surrender to God's grace themselves—refusing to open the door to the kingdom of heaven.*

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

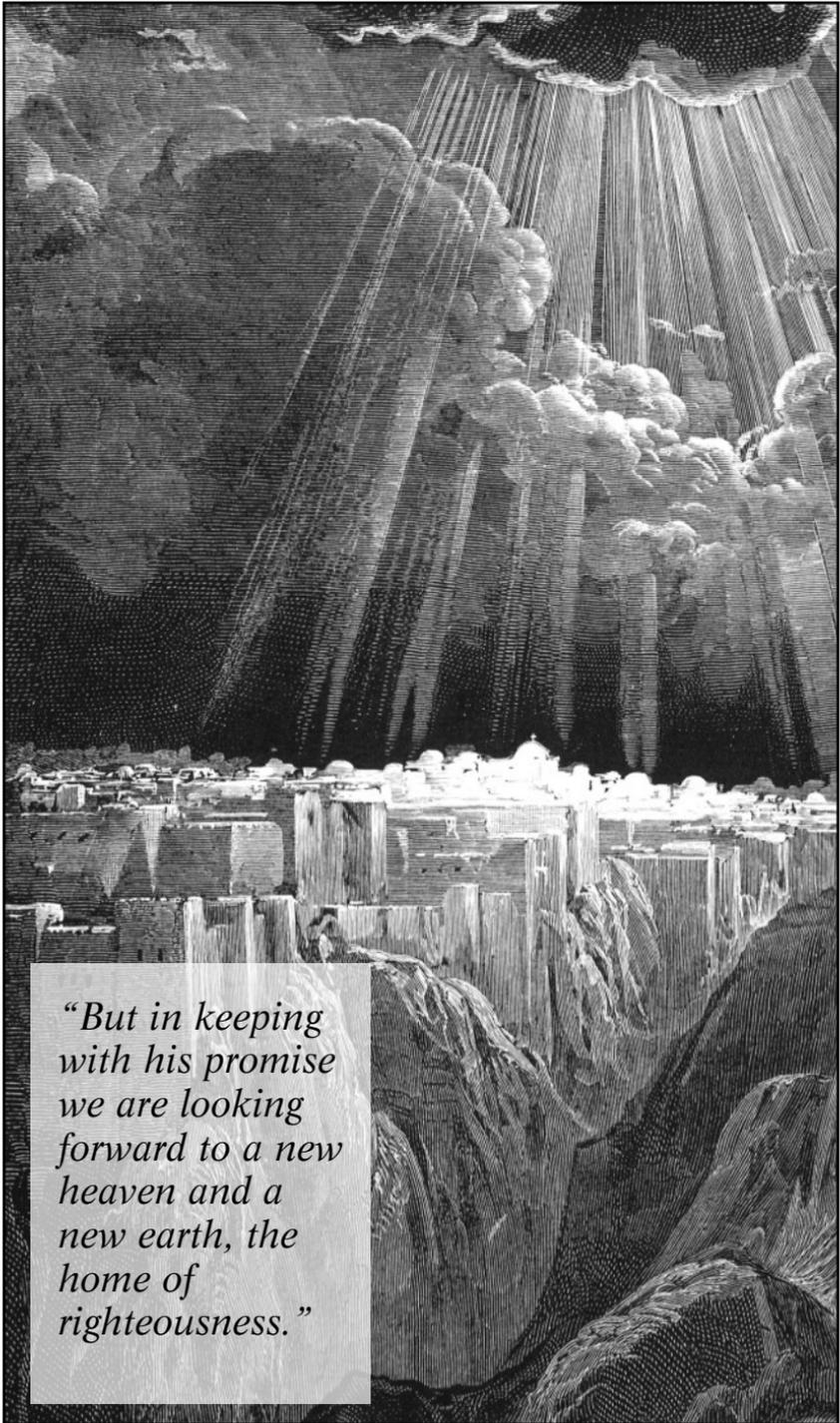
into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word



*“But in keeping
with his promise
we are looking
forward to a new
heaven and a
new earth, the
home of
righteousness.”*

2 Peter 3:8-13

What excuse for being late do you hear the most?

- (a) I slept in, (b) my watch stopped, (c) the traffic, (d) the dog ate my homework.

1. How sure is God's promise (v. 9)? What is God's desire for human beings?

2. How does Peter define the day of the Lord here (vs. 10)? (a) Sunday, (b) Jesus' return, (c) eternal life, (d) new heaven and earth. Is a day precisely "1000 years," or could it be longer? Could it be shorter? What could it entail? Do you feel the reference to 1,000 years is symbolic of a specific period of time, or a reference to a time much longer than any of our lifetimes?

3. How will Christ-followers live their daily lives (vs. 11-13)? Why look to the future?

1. Are you frustrated with your life and do you want Christ to return soon to make things better? Or, can you patiently live your life until Christ comes in his own good time?

2. How do you live a holy and godly life (vs. 11)?

3. How can you stand on the promises of God (vs. 9, 13) as you patiently wait for Jesus' return?

*Christians have always wondered about the **time of the end** when Jesus would return. Peter was among those disciples who asked similar questions of Jesus himself (Lk 21:7; Ac 1:6). Note his answer in those passages.*

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word

Guard and Grow

2 Peter 3:14-18

OPENING
up to the Word

How is patience often misinterpreted? (a) laziness, (b) disinterest, (c) procrastination, (d) forgetfulness.

DIGGING
into the Word

1. How does Peter connect the way we live with how we anticipate the future (vs. 14-15)?
2. Peter refers to Paul (vs. 15-16). What was the message in Paul's letters? Although his letters are difficult to understand, at least at times, who is it that distorts them?
3. Another warning (v. 17)—be on guard! Against what?
4. Christianity is a life of growth. How does Peter summarize this dynamic life (v. 18)?

LIVING
out the Word

1. How do you "make every effort" to be spotless (v. 14)? Blameless? At peace with God? Consider the words of Jesus in Luke 17:1-4.

WINDOW
on the Word

Peter had a serious run-in with Paul much earlier in their ministries (Gal 2:11-14). The confrontation was about how Jews and gentiles should interact in the church. In Acts 15:1-12 we see that Peter and Paul are resolved that salvation for Jews and gentiles is by grace. Showing appreciation for Paul's perspective on salvation, Peter places Paul's epistles parallel to "the other Scriptures" (3:15-16).

Introduction to Jude

Authorship: The author identifies himself as “Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James” (v. 1). Early church fathers placed this short epistle in the canon based on the belief that it was written by Jude, the half brother of Jesus. Matthew records that Jude (Judas) was brother to James, half brother to Jesus (Mt 13:55).

Date: This book is difficult to date. Many scholars place it between A.D. 60 and 80.

Setting and purpose: This epistle has many parallels to 2 Peter. Both letters address problems brought by false prophets who were *antinomian*, meaning that they taught there is no law to be lived by Christians.

The book of Jude is an exhortation to maintain and contend for the truth of the gospel. He colorfully describes the message of the false teachers and their own doom by referring to past examples of God’s judgment.

Outline:

Day	Text	Theme
27	Jude 1-4	Dear Friends...
28	Jude 5-10	Battle in Heaven
29	Jude 11-16	The Way of Cain
30	Jude 17-25	Snatch ‘Em From the Fire

Dear Friends...

Jude 1-4

OPENING
up to the Word

If God would give you an abundance of any one thing, what would you ask for? (a) money, (b) knowledge, (c) family, (d) fame, (e) grace.

DIGGING
into the Word

1. How does Jude describe himself (v. 1)? To whom does he write? How are they “kept by Jesus Christ”?

2. What does Jude wish for these believers (v. 2)? Compare with Micah 6:6-8, Matthew 23:23 and Galatians 6:16.

3. Jude is eager to write about their shared salvation (Jude 3). But what does he feel an urge to confront them about (vs. 3-4)?

4. What were godless men teaching about the grace of God (v. 4)?

LIVING
out the Word

1. How has God given the attitudes of mercy, peace and love to you?

2. Do you “contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints” (v. 3)? Does Peter’s introduction (1Pe 1:1-4) give an explanation of that faith?

WINDOW
on the Word

*Jude calls for Christians to contend for the faith of God against **godless men** (Jude 4). The heresy of these false teachers revolved around denial of the deity and centrality of Christ as Lord. The grace of God was interpreted to mean that immoral actions were permissible. Theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer was also concerned with this attitude, calling it “cheap grace.” Paul reminded Christians that our freedom is not an excuse “to indulge the sinful nature” (Gal 4:13). Those who accuse Christians who accept God’s grace as being licentious, have little, if any, understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ.*



“For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.”

Jude 1:4

Battle in Heaven

Jude 5-10

OPENING
up to the Word

Do you believe angels are real? Do you think any might have intervened in your life? Do they deserve respect?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. How does Jude describe the possibility of falling away from Christ (v. 5)? Consider the case against unbelieving Israelites in Numbers 14:26-30.

2. What did some of the angels give up—and for what (Jude 6)? And the evil inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah (v. 7)?

3. How did rejection of God's authority lead to sin against their own bodies (vs. 8-10)? Did they feel free to make judgments based on their own opinions? Compare with 2 Peter 2:10-12.

LIVING
out the Word

1. Review Exodus 12 and God's delivery of the Israelites. How has the Lamb redeemed you as one of his own—a Christ-follower (1Co 5:7)?

WINDOW
on the Word

*Peter states that these godless men **slander celestial beings** (Jude 8). It appears that these slanderers not only denied Jesus but also denied the reality of faithful angels. The archangel Michael (v. 9) is a leader of the angels in heaven (See Rev 12:7; Da 10:13, 21; 12:1).*

“Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe.”

Jude 1:5



Artwork by Mike Wimmer

The Way of Cain

Jude 11-16

OPENING
up to the Word

Who exemplifies the most devilish movie villain to you? (a) Darth Vader, (b) Lex Luthor, (c) The Penguin, (d) The Joker. How would you counter their villainy? Has there been a villain in your life?

DIGGING
into the Word

1. How have the “godless men” (v. 4) gone the way of Cain (v. 11)? And the way of Balaam (see notes on 2Pe 2:15)? And emulated the rebellion of Korah?

2. How does Jude’s imagery of these false teachers picture selfish greed (v. 12)? As blemishes? As wild seas? And wandering stars?

LIVING
out the Word

1. How much does profit count when you make your business decisions (Jude 11)? (a) bottom-line at all times, (b) moral virtue first, (c) mutual benefit is the highest priority.

2. In contrast with “grumblers and faultfinders” (v16) how does God express his love in Christ-follower?

WINDOW
on the Word

Enoch (v. 14) is noted for having walked with God (Ge 5:18-24) and for having pleased God (Heb 11:5-6).

Snatch 'Em From the Fire

DAY 30

Jude 17-25

Have you been snatched from the fire, and are you now keeping your distance from destructive behaviors, or do you see how close you can get?

1. Which apostle is Jude quoting here (vs. 17-18)? Look at 1 Timothy 4:1, 2 Timothy 3:1, and 2 Peter 3:3.

2. What are the results that come from the teachings of “the men who divide you” (Jude 19)?

3. Now Jude follows his denunciation of these destroyers with encouragement for Christians to build themselves up (vs. 20-23). List the spiritual disciplines that help us in this important goal.

4. Who is able to secure your salvation in glory and great joy (vs. 24-25)?

1. Consider the major decisions you have made in your life. Have they been based on “natural instinct” or God’s precious grace he has given you?

2. Look at Jude’s call to “build yourselves up” (vs. 20-24). How can you do this?

3. How can you put Jude’s advice to use to keep your own life from destruction?

4. Praise be the glory, majesty, power and authority of God our Savior and Jesus Christ our Lord!

God is our Savior (v. 25). *His glory radiates the light of heaven (Rev 21:23; 22:5). His majesty and glory proclaim his harmonious unity as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. His grace, mercy, love and forgiveness are endless and forever.*

OPENING

up to the Word

DIGGING

into the Word

LIVING

out the Word

WINDOW

on the Word