

Jude 1:22 Commentary

Jude 1:21 Commentary <> Jude 1:23 Commentary

Compiled by Bruce Hurt

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JUDE:
CONTEND EARNESTLY FOR THE FAITH
KEEP YOURSELF IN THE LOVE OF GOD

Jude 1:1-4	Jude 1:5-16	Jude 1:17-23	Jude 1:24-25
Salutation & Purpose	Exposure & Examples of the False Teachers	Exhortation to the Beloved in God	Exaltation of God
Contend for The Faith	Their Doom (Jude 1:5-7) Their Denunciation (Jude 1:8-10) Their Description (Jude 1:11-16)	Believer's Defense Against False Teachers	Doxology
Exhortation	Warning	Exhortation	Benediction

Date: A.D. 70-80 (difficult to date)

- [Booklet - Jude: Recognizing the Danger Among Us - 33 pages](#)
- Click for Verse by Verse Commentary on the Book of Jude

- [Jude Introduction](#) -John MacArthur
- [Jude Introduction](#) -Charles R Swindoll
- [NIV Study Bible Introduction](#)
- [Jude: International Standard Bible Encyclopedia](#)
- [Jude Introduction](#) - Wil Pounds
- [Jude: Author, Date, Audience, Occasion, Detailed Outline](#) - James Van Dine
- [Jude: Introduction, Argument, and Outline](#) -Daniel Wallace
- [Jude, Theology of - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)
- [Jude Notes and Outline](#) - J Vernon McGee

Jude's Purpose: Expose the false teachers who had crept into the fellowship unnoticed and encourage the saints to stand firm in the faith and rescue the perishing.

Key Verses: Jude 1:4, Jude 1:20, Jude 1:24, 25

Key Words: **Lord** (Jude 1:4, 5, 9, 14, 17, 21, 25), **Faith** (Jude 1:3, 20) **Keep/Kept** (Jude 1:1, 6, 21, 24), **Ungodly** (Jude 1:4, 15, 18), **Beloved** (Jude 1:1, 3, 17, 20), **Judgment** (Jude 1:6, 9, 15), **Remember** (Jude 1:17), **Angel/Archangel** (Jude 1:6, 8, 9), **Holy Spirit** (Jude 1:19, 20). See discussion of **key words**, a vital component of **inductive Bible study**.

The following outline is adapted from J Sidlow Baxter's Outline entitled "Contend for the Faith"

GREETING, Jude 1:1,2.

WHY CONTEND EARNESTLY - APOSTATE TEACHERS (Jude 1:3-16).

- Their subtle perversions: Two basic denials (Jude 1:3-4).
- Their certain doom: Three historic examples (Jude 1:5-7).
- Their impious ways: Three historic examples (Jude 1:8-11).
- Their utter falsity: six awful metaphors (Jude 1:12-13).
- Enoch's prophecy: Coming destruction (Jude 1:14-16).

HOW TO CONTEND EARNESTLY - OUR RESOURCES (Jude 1:17-23).

- Realize that the apostasy has been foretold (Jude 1:17-19).
- "Build," "pray in the Spirit," "keep," "look" (Jude 1:20,21).
- Show compassion towards certain who contend (Jude 1:22).
- Others seek urgently to rescue: but keep pure (Jude 1:23).

JUDE'S DOXOLOGY: Coming consummation. (Jude 1:24, 25)

In all contending for the faith we must "keep ourselves in the love of God," the counterpart of which is that the love of God must be in us. We must love, even while we contend against the errors of apostatisers (Contend without being contentious!). We must love their souls even while we oppose their words and deplore their ways. Sometimes it is delicately difficult to keep these separate, but the love of Christ in our hearts (cf Ro 5:5,) will put wisdom on our lips....There are some who "contend" against us. Endless counter-contention with them is useless. But there are others who need "snatching out of the fire"; they have been deceived, and in one sense or another, i.e. by bewilderment, remorse, doubt or danger, are in the fire. And there are still others on whom we are to "have mercy with fear," i.e. being cautious lest in seeking to bring them back we should defile our own garments. (J Sidlow Baxter)

Jude is the only NT book devoted exclusively to confronting "apostasy," meaning defection from the true, biblical faith. Jude does not quote the OT directly, but there are at least 9 obvious allusions to it. Contextually, this "epistolary sermon" could be called "The Acts of the Apostates." - John MacArthur

Application: Fight for the truth! Stand up against error! The book of Jude is the very definition of punchy and pithy proclamations—with its short commands and statements popping off the page like machine-gun fire. But in our day and age, punchy has become rude or unacceptable. In many circles the forcefulness of Jude will not be tolerated, the crowds preferring a softer and gentler side of the Christian faith. But Jude reminds us that there is a time and a place for the aggressive protection of the truth from those who would seek to tear it down. How can you participate in defending the truth from error? - C R Swindoll

OVERVIEW CHART OF EPISTLE OF JUDE

Click chart to enlarge

Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission

Jude 1:22 And **have mercy** on some, who are doubting; kai ous men eleate (2PPAM) diakrinomenous (PAPMPA):

- Ezek 34:17; Gal 4:20; 6:1; Heb 6:4, 5, 6, 7, 8; Jas 5:19,20; 1Jn 5:16, 17, 18)

[Click for over 60 versions of this verse.](#)

Amplified - And *refute [so as to] convict some who dispute with you*, and on some have mercy who waver and doubt. (Text in parenthesis not in Greek but added).

Barclay - Some of them you must argue out of their error, while they are still **wavering**.

New English Bible - There are some **doubting** souls who need your pity.

NET - And have mercy on those who **waver**;

TLB - Try to help those who argue against you. Be merciful to those who **doubt**.

Wuest - And some indeed on the one hand be convicting when **contending** with you;

KJV - And of some have compassion, making a **difference**:

CSB - Have mercy on some who **doubt**;

ESV - And have mercy on those who **doubt**;

NLT - And you must show mercy to those whose faith is **wavering**.

NIV - Be merciful to those who **doubt**;

NJB - To some you must be compassionate because they are **wavering**;

RSV - And convince some, who **doubt**;

BBE - And have pity on those who are in **doubt**;

YLT - and to some be kind, **judging** thoroughly, (Idea = making distinctions)

FIRST OF THREE GROUPS - DOUBTERS

It should be understood that Jude 1:22-23 are very difficult verses to interpret dogmatically primarily because of which of two major Greek manuscripts one chooses to translate. One manuscript (which is used for NAS, ESV, NIV) translation results in 3 groups in these two verses, whereas the other (NET, KJV) results in two groups. Since I use the NAS, I have chosen to base comments on that translation. The technical discussion of these two verses is beyond the scope of these notes and you are referred to other sources that go into more detail (e.g., Michael Green has a good and not too lengthy or too technical analysis - [Jude Commentary - Tyndale](#)).

Technical note by Wuest - There is some question among textual critics regarding the Greek text here. Both Nestle and Westcott and Hort agree on the Greek which requires the rendering, "And upon some, on the one hand, be having mercy, (those) who are in doubt; be saving (them), snatching (them) out of the fire. Upon others, on the other hand, be showing mercy in fear, hating even the undergarment completely defiled by the flesh." However, Alford and Mayor read **elegcho**, "to bring to a confession and conviction of sin," rather than **eleeo**, "to have mercy on." Mayor then translates, "*reprove* them because of their doubts," or "convince them when they dispute with you." Alford translates, "And some indeed *convict* when contending with you."

Douglas Moo alluding to the technical difficulties of Jude 1:22-23 says "Exactly what Jude is urging them to do is not clear, primarily because we are not completely certain what he wrote in verses 22–23. The manuscripts containing the letter of Jude offer a

bewildering variety of different readings; **at least six different forms of text exist**. The difficulty of deciding which of these Jude himself wrote is indicated by the fact that four of these can be found in the text of major English translations, and a fifth commands support from some influential commentaries. We list these textual options below, dividing them into those that have two separate injunctions and those that have three. A quick glance at these options reveals a preference among recent translations for the first of the three-clause options. Note, for instance, that three of the major translations have changed from a two-clause text to this three-clause text in their latest editions (NRSV/RSV; NJB/JB; REB/NEB). I think his preference is justified. While the situation is so complicated that we cannot be sure about the original text, this text seems a bit superior to the others. We cannot enter here into the details of the arguments pro and con. But two factors tilt the scales slightly in favor of this text: It follows Jude's well-established pattern of using triads, and it seems to be the reading that best explains all the other readings. ([NIV Application Commentary](#))

THE TWO CLAUSE OPTION

Snatch some from the fire; but on those And of some have compassion, making a Show mercy toward those who have who dispute have mercy with fear. difference: and others save with fear, doubts; save them, by snatching them out

pulling them out of the fire. (KJV)

of the fire. Show mercy also, mixed with fear, to others as well. (TEV; cf. also NEB)

[The translation is from Bauckham, Jude, 2

Peter, 108, who adopts this reading; cf. [The text for this translation is found in

also Neyrey, 2 Peter, Jude, 85–86. The some of the later uncial manuscripts, K, L, [The underlying text is found in the Greek text on which this translation is P, S.] important uncial Vaticanus (B); it is

based in found in the Papyrus manuscript,

supported by, e.g., Kelly, The Epistles of Peter and of Jude, 287–88.]

p72.]

THE THREE-CLAUSE OPTION

Be merciful to those who doubt; snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy. (NIV; cf. also NRSV; NASB; REB; NJB)

And convince some, who doubt; save some, by snatching them out of the fire; on some have mercy with fear. (RSV; cf. also JB)

[The significant uncial Sinaiticus (Ⲱ) attests this text. It is the text adopted in the two most widely used Greek New Testaments (the Nestle-Aland Novum Testamentum Graece [27th ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993] and the United Bible Societies' The Greek New Testament [4th ed.; New York: United Bible Societies, 1993]). It receives solid defense in two articles: Sakae Kubo, "Jude 22–23: Two Division Form or Three?" in New Testament Criticism: Its Significance for Exegesis. Essays in Honour of Bruce M. Metzger, ed. E. J. Epp and Gordon D. Fee (Oxford: Clarendon, 1981), 239–53; Carroll D. Osburn, "Discourse Analysis and Jewish Apocalyptic in the Epistle of Jude," in Linguistics and New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Discourse Analysis, ed. David Alan Black (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 292 (he reverses here his earlier preference for the two-clause text).]

[The textual basis for this rendering is the uncial Alexandrinus (A); cf. Green, The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude,]

With the firm foundation that should result by practicing Jude's exhortations (commands) in Jude 1:17-21 (Remember the Word - Jude 1:17, Read the Word - Jude 1:20, Pray the Word - Jude 1:20b, Obey the Word - Jude 1:21a, Watch for the Living Word - Jude 1:21b) Jude now calls the church to reach out to those who are influenced by the false teachers. In short now they are to actively contend for the faith to those who do not have a firm foundation for their faith.

MacArthur introduces these next two passages with several questions - As Jude's letter draws to its conclusion, one crucial question arises: **How can we as believers practically contend for the truth so that we will be victorious in a day of rampant falsehood? In other words, how can we personally apply Jude's cautions regarding apostasy to our own lives and ministries?** To be sure, Jude's warning is unmistakable, and it clearly demands a response. But what does that response look like? And where does it begin? Jude, of course, recognized that his readers needed more than just a warning; they also needed a plan of attack. Instead of being merely defensive, they had to be proactive in their fight for the faith. And this meant taking action—not only in reinforcing their own spiritual armor (cf. Eph. 6:10-17), but also in coming to the aid of others in the church. In order to do this, Jude's readers desperately needed to develop discernment. They had to be able to recognize the difference between truth and error. Otherwise, they would not know what to embrace and what to shun. They could not "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints" (v. 3) unless they were able to discern true faith from its counterfeits. Thus if they were to heed Jude's warnings, they had to begin by actively pursuing spiritual discernment. The importance of discernment is underscored

throughout the whole of Scripture (Prov. 2:3; 23:23; 1 Cor. 16:13; Phil. 1:9; Heb. 5:14; Rev. 2:2). ([2 Peter and Jude MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

And have mercy on some, who are doubting - Hiebert - The coordinating "and" (kai) lays these further duties upon the same people who are **building themselves up on their most holy faith** (Jude 1:20-21-note). Let them be occupied not only with thoughts of their own security and maturity, but let them also stretch out saving hands toward those affected by the apostates. As themselves the recipients of God's **mercy** (Jude 1:2, Jude 1:21-note), let them diligently seek to be His **agents of mercy** toward those who are weak (**Ed**: Notice that Hiebert avoids classifying them as believers or unbelievers) and who are deceived by the apostates (cp 2Cor 5:18-19-note). ([Second Peter-Jude: An Expositional Commentary](#))

There seem to be three "spiritually needy" groups identified in Jude 1:22-23 = "**some...others...some**." There is not a clear consensus regarding who composes each group - i.e., whether they are believers or unbelievers (or a mixture). Perhaps the text is purposely somewhat ambiguous, which would make the three actions (**have mercy...save...have mercy with fear**) applicable to all who are being ensnared by apostate doctrines, whether they are believers or unbelievers. Certainly we have all known folks that we at least thought were believers and who began to be entangled in seductive teaching of a silver-tongued orator or an overt counterfeit cult. However (in my opinion) Jude does not give us sufficient information to dogmatically discern whether they are believers or unbelievers, so we should be careful not to be too dogmatic. Notice also that these three groups seem to describe a progressively greater degree of involvement with the apostates (**doubting...fire...polluted**).

I like the way **Thomas Schreiner** identifies these three groups without making a distinction between believers or unbelievers.

First, those who were wavering under the influence of the false teachers should not be rejected or ignored. By showing mercy to them, as they struggle with doubts, such people could be reclaimed.

Second, others were close to being captured by the teaching and behavior of the opponents. Believers must not give up on them. Their lives could still be salvaged, and they could be snatched from the fire that threatened to destroy them.

Third, others had already been defiled by the false teachers. ([The New American Commentary- 1, 2 Peter, Jude](#))

And have mercy on some, who are doubting. As noted in the versions listed above, others translate it "Some who are contentious rebuke." In sum, the idea is either that this first group is either **doubting** or **disputing** (maybe both!)

Vincent favors the NAS rendering and feels it better suits the following context, but the reader is referred to more academic works for discussion of the textual variants in Jude 1:22-23.

To be sure we who have in the past received "**multiplied mercy**" (Jude 1:2-note) and have a sure hope of future mercy (Jude 1:21-note), should of all people be willing to "have mercy" on others who are in need. This reminds us of Jesus declaration "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy." (Mt 5:7-note)

Moo - It would be easy for the faithful to shun such people or lambaste them for their doubts. But Jude wants the faithful to show mercy to them. Christians themselves have received God's unmerited mercy (see Jude 1:2-note); they should display a similar mercy to people who are wavering. For mercy is far more likely than harsh rebuke to keep them within the fold of the orthodox faith. (Ibid)

And so Jude begins with the first group that seems least affected by those who sought to turn the **grace of our God into licentiousness**. (Jude 1:4-note)

To highlight the difficulty of (and caution against) being too dogmatic about who is in each group, I have taken quotes from two conservative, well respected expositors with different interpretations.

ALL UNBELIEVERS - **John MacArthur** sees all 3 groups as unbelievers, writing "In these two verses Jude identifies three categories of unbelieving people who, from the church's perspective, are both a *menace* and a *mission* field. They are the *confused*, the *convinced*, and the *committed* (Jude Commentary)...**(1)** sincere doubters who deserve compassion (Jude 1:22); **(2)** those who are deeper in unbelief and urgently need to be pulled from the fire (Jude 1:23); and **(3)** those declared disciples of apostasy who still deserve mercy, but are to be handled with much fear (Jude 1:23), lest the would-be-rescuer also be spiritually sullied (MacArthur Study Bible) ([2Peter and Jude MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#)) (**Ed**: **Arnold Fruchtenbaum** a respected Messianic Jewish expositor believes all three groups are believers exactly the opposite of MacArthur!)

FIRST GROUP BELIEVERS - **Warren Wiersbe** sees this first group as believers writing they are "converted, but they are not grounded in the faith. Our responsibility is to have mercy on them, or show compassion toward them, by seeking to lead them away from the influences of the apostates. This kind of ministry demands a great deal of love and patience, and we must keep in mind

that immature believers are like little children who think they know right from wrong. If you say no to them, they will only rebel and become more stubborn! ([Be Alert 2 Peter, 2 & 3 John, Jude- Beware of the Religious Impostors](#))

I like how Warren Wiersbe summarizes the three groups - The Doubting (Jude 1:22), The Burning (Jude 1:23a), The Dangerous (Jude 1:23b).

William Barclay summarizes the three groups of "troublers" addressed by Jude...

Even to the worst heretics, even to those most far gone in error and to those whose beliefs are most dangerous, the Christian has a binding duty **not to destroy but to save**. His aim must be, not to banish them from the Christian church, but to win them back into the Christian fellowship. James Denney said that, to put the matter at its simplest, **Jesus came to make bad men good**. Sir John Seeley said: "**When the power of reclaiming the lost dies out of the church, it ceases to be the church.**" As we have taken this passage, Jude divides the troublers of the church into three classes, to each of whom a different approach is necessary.

(i) There are those who are flirting with falsehood. They are obviously attracted by the wrong way and are on the brink of committing themselves to error, but are still hesitating before taking the final step. They must be argued out of their error while there is time. From this two things emerge as a duty.

(a) We must study to be able to defend the faith and to give a reason for the hope that is in us (1Pe 3:15-note). We must know what we believe so that we can meet error with truth (2Ti 1:12-note); and we must make ourselves able to defend the faith in such a way that our graciousness and sincerity may win others to it. To do this we must banish all uncertainty from our minds and all arrogance and intolerance from our approach to others.

(b) We must be ready to speak in time (**Ed**: cf Col 4:5-6-note). Many a person would have been saved from error of thought and of action, if someone else had only spoken in time. Sometimes we hesitate to speak, but there are many times when silence is cowardly and can cause more harm than speech could ever cause. One of the greatest tragedies in life is when someone comes to us and says, "I would never have been in the mess I am now in, if someone--you, perhaps--had only spoken to me." (**Ed comment**: The best way to be prepared to boldly speak the Gospel is to be filled with the Spirit - cf Acts 4:31, see Paul Acts 9:17 and Acts 9:27-28, Acts 13:46, Acts 14:3)

(ii) There are those who have to be snatched from the fire They have actually started out on the wrong way and have to be stopped, as it were, forcibly, and even against their will. It is all very well to say that we must leave a man his freedom and that he has a right to do what he likes. All these things are in one sense true, but there are times when a man must be even forcibly saved from himself.

(iii) There are those whom we must pity and fear at one and the same time. Here Jude is thinking of something which is always true.

There is danger to the sinner; but there is also danger to the rescuer.

He who would cure an infectious disease runs the risk of infection.

(**Ed**: **This warning reminds me of the recent African outbreak of Ebola Virus in 2014 in which several healthcare workers contracted the virus and died.**)

Jude says that we must hate the garment stained by the flesh. Almost certainly he is thinking here of the regulations in Lev 13:47-52-note, where it is laid down that the garment worn by a person discovered to be suffering from leprosy must be burned.

The old saying remains true--

we must love the sinner but hate the sin.

Before a man can rescue others, he must himself be strong in the faith. His own feet must be firm on the dry land before he can throw a lifebelt to the man who is likely to be swept away. The simple fact is that the rescue of those in error is not for everyone to attempt. Those who would win others for Christ must themselves be very sure of Him; and those who would fight the disease of sin must themselves have the strong antiseptic of a healthy faith. Ignorance can never be met with ignorance, nor even with partial knowledge; it can be met only by the affirmation, "I know whom I have believed." (2Ti 1:12-note) ([Jude - Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

Play the great hymn by Fanny Crosby and sung by Cindy Foote = [Rescue The Perishing](#)

Rescue the perishing, care for the dying,
Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave;
Weep o'er the erring one, lift up the fallen,
Tell them of Jesus, the mighty to save.

Refrain

*Rescue the perishing, care for the dying,
Jesus is merciful, Jesus will save.*

Though they are slighting Him, still He is waiting,
Waiting the penitent child to receive;
Plead with them earnestly, plead with them gently;
He will forgive if they only believe.

Down in the human heart, crushed by the tempter,
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore;
Touched by a loving heart, wakened by kindness,
Chords that were broken will vibrate once more.

Rescue the perishing, duty demands it;
Strength for thy labor the Lord will provide;
Back to the narrow way patiently win them;
Tell the poor wand'rer a Savior has died.

See the illustrations related to this great hymn at the bottom of this note.

Notice that **Have mercy** is not a suggestion to the church (verb is in the **plural**!) but is a **present imperative**, which is a command calling for the church to continually dispense mercy -- habitually, daily, as their lifestyle. They (**we**) are to manifest this **Spirit enabled compassionate lifestyle** whenever the need arises. We are God's vessels, God's instruments, God's ambassadors of the soul saving Gospel and are like God not to condemn, criticize or judge them for their wavering faith but are to give them what they need (mercy is not giving us what we deserve but what we need). They need our help, our reassurance, our reminder that they are **"the called, beloved by God the Father, kept for Jesus Christ"** (Jude 1:1) We need to emphasize that the Father loves them and the Son keeps them and guards them with His watchful eye. As the words of the Civilia Martin's great old hymn say **"His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me."** ([Instrumental Version](#) or [Vocal Version](#))

Easy English Commentary suggests "The false teachers have already damaged the faith of some weaker Christians. Now those weaker Christians are not sure about what to believe or how to live. Jude urges his readers to be especially kind to those who have doubts. They need help to understand clearly how God wants them to live. They are to be holy, as God is holy. They are to care for other people, and not be selfish. At all times they are to trust God completely, and not their own thoughts." ([Easy English Commentary](#))

Hiebert rightly says "Mercy prefers to deal with the needy in terms of what is needed rather than what is deserved."

Albert Barnes said "Nowhere do we imitate God more than in showing mercy."

Thomas Manton - Mercy in us is a sign of our interest in God's mercy.

Thomas Watson - Show your piety by your pity.

Vance Havner once said "When people do not mean business with Christ in their hearts they will not do business for Christ with their hands. There is no place in Scripture for the type of church member who sings, "O How I Love Jesus," but feeds no sheep; who sings, "Rescue the Perishing," but does no rescue work himself." (Vance Havner Quotebook)

In his book **Consider Jesus** **Havner** adds "We shrink from personally touching the world's need, we abhor the ceremonial defilement of going down into the mire and muck of the world ourselves. It is one thing to sing, "Rescue the perishing." It is another thing to rescue some of them, snatching them from the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh."

Father, by Your omnipotent Spirit grant grace to Your church to awaken us from soul numbing slumber that we might be empowered to go and share the good news of Your Son's great work on the Cross with those still dead in their trespasses and sins. Amen

Why would Jude command his readers to **have mercy**? One reason is that it might be tempting to some of the saints to harshly judge those who are **doubting** (You don't have enough faith!, etc) or to be *critical* of them rather than *compassionate*. Jude calls us

to be compassionate, not critical or judgmental.

Schreiner - It is tempting to dismiss those struggling with doubts, to lose patience with them and move on to something else. Jude encouraged those who were strong to show mercy and kindness to those wavering with doubts, to reclaim them with gentleness (cf. 2Ti 2:25). (Ibid)

Have mercy (1653)(**eleeo** from **eleos**) means "to feel sympathy with the misery of another, especially such sympathy which manifests itself in action, less frequently in word. **Eleeo** describes the general sense of one who has compassion on one in need. It indicates being moved to pity and compassion by tragedy and includes the fear that this could happen to me. Eleeo means to see someone in dire need (including one who may not deserve the misfortune), to have compassion on them, and to give help to remove the need.

Kistemaker - Jude is alerting the readers to the danger some weak Christians face when they are confronted by the apostates (compare 2Peter 2:18-note). Whenever these people begin to doubt Christian teachings, reassure them by giving them help and understanding. Avoid any form of criticism, but show mercy and love to those who waver. (Exposition of the Epistles of Peter and the Epistle of Jude)

Stephen Grellet says "I expect to pass through this world but once; any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to my fellow-creature, let me do it now; let me not defer or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

Guzik - Using wisdom we approach different people in different manners. By being sensitive to the Holy Spirit, we can know when we should comfort, and when we should rebuke. Christians should not abandon a friend flirting with false teaching. They should help him through it in love. ii. The means we continue to love them. No matter how bad a person is, or how misleading and terrible their doctrine, we are not allowed to hate them - or to be unconcerned for their salvation. **Compassion** often means watching over someone, helping them with accountability. "Meantime watch over others as well as yourselves; and give them such help as their various needs require." (Wesley) ()

Some who are doubting - Jude used the same verb **diakrino** earlier in Jude 1:9-note to describe when "Michael the archangel...disputed with the devil" over Moses' body (cp similar sense of diakrino in Acts 11:2). [Henry Alford](#) and [Lenski](#) support that meaning in the present passage as do some of the translations. If this is the intended meaning **diakrino** would describe some who had been influenced by the apostate's and who now raised questions about the divergent views ("contending with you").

The sense of the verb **diakrino** which is favored by most modern translations (NAS, ESV, NIV, et al) is that this first group were individuals who were **doubting** rather than disputing. The idea is that their faith was wavering because of the proclamation of lies by the apostates, lies which contradicted the truth they had previously heard (cf "the faith" Jude 1:3-note and Jude 1:17 where they were commanded to **remember** the teaching of the true apostles.). The following verses all use **diakrino** in the sense of **doubting** and all allude to **weakness in faith**.

Mt. 21:21 And Jesus answered and said to them, "Truly I say to you, if you have faith, and do not **doubt**, you shall not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' it shall happen.

Comment: Jesus says doubting is the antithesis of having faith

Mark 11:23 "Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and does not **doubt** in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it shall be [granted] him.

Ro 4:20-note ;yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not **waver** in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God,

Ro 14:23-note But he who **doubts** is condemned if he eats, because [his eating is] not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.

Jas 1:6-note But let him ask in faith without any **doubting**, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

Hiebert - This meaning (he favors the sense is that they were *doubting*) depicts these individuals not as openly antagonistic but as beset with inner doubts and questions which must be compassionately dealt with. ([Second Peter and Jude An Expository Commentary](#))

Plummer - They are "earnest doubters, who are unable to make up their minds for or against the truth." ([Jude - Expositor's Bible Commentary](#))

Spurgeon - **Some** of those professors, who are not living consistently with their profession, in whom you can see signs and tokens of sin, yet there may be some trace of repentance, some reason to hope that they will forsake the evil when they see it to be evil

(and so the charge is to) "have compassion" upon them. ([Exposition](#))

ILLUSTRATION - Here is an example of demonstration of compassion to the perishing from Fanny Crosby's autobiography, in the chapter entitled "**Work Among Missions**" (shelters in cities where the destitute would accumulate) - "One evening there was a man in the seat in front of me, and from his singing I judged that he was under conviction (**Ed Comment:** Remember that Fanny was blind and so clearly had a keen sense of hearing to be able to detect a man's "heart conviction" just by his singing! Lord, give us all sensitive ears like Fanny! Amen). Something within prompted me to ask him (**Ed Comment:** Surely this was the Spirit of Jesus within her, another voice to which she clearly had developed exquisite sensitivity! God help us all to have such sensitivity to Your still small voice. Amen) if he would remain and hear the sermon, and he finally consented to do so. Just before the close of the address I whispered, "When the invitation is given, will you go to the altar?" For a moment he hesitated, and then asked, "Will you go with me?" I did go to the altar with him and had the pleasure of seeing him a saved man. I could give more than one instance where men have been reclaimed, after a long struggle and many attempts at reformation, because someone spoke a kind word to them even at what appeared to be the last moment. I have also know many others who turned away from a meeting simply because the cheering word had not been spoken, nor the helping hand extended. Never to chide the erring has always been my policy, for I firmly believe that harsh words only serve to harden hearts that might otherwise be softened into repentance. (see her verses below -- and notice she does not say not to reprove, but to take care how we reprove! Interesting!) " ([Fanny J Crosby: An Autobiography](#))

Speak not harshly when reproofing
Those from duty's path who stray;
if you would reclaim the erring,
Kindness must each action sway.

Speak not harshly to the wayward;
Win their confidence, their love,
They will feel how pure the motive
That has led them to reprove.

Doubting (wavering, hesitating) ([1252](#)) (**diakrino** from **diá** = separation, root meaning = "two" + **krino** = distinguish, decide, judge) literally means to judge between two and has a range of meanings in the NT.

As discussed above, most commentators favor that Jude uses **diakrino** to describe one who is at odds with one's self and thus those who hesitate, waver or doubt. One author says **diakrino** pictures the idea of divided in one's mind. This person is the one who is vacillating between two opinions or decisions, and thus is doubting (the classic passage is Jas 1:6-note). What might they be doubting? In the context of this letter, they might begin to doubt the truth and/or authority of God's Word, specifically "**the faith that was once handed down to the saints**" (Jude 1:3-note). Recall that the faith is not their acts of believing but is the body of doctrine which was believed. The words spoken by the apostates brought uncertainty as to who was telling the truth. These apostates were sons of Satan who was a liar from the beginning (Jn 8:44). One of his oldest, most effective tactics is to create question the Word of God. Recall his first ploy was to confront Eve with the question "**Has God said?**" (Ge 3:1) His tactic was effective then in generating **doubt**, and it is effective now. So Jude may be referring to those who have been "infected" by the lies of the apostates and as a result are doubting "the faith" (the truth they had heard in the church).

Peter Gardner - Almost any minister in any church today will agree that this problem faces their congregations again and again. Often nowadays those doubts are sown by people reading books that lead astray, but sometimes doubts are stirred up by others in a congregation who will not follow the Lord and his Word and who pour scorn on the faithful preaching of that Word. Some begin to doubt when they hear people saying it is unintellectual or naive to believe Scripture, or when they see a leader not living according to what is being preached. Whatever the cause of these doubts, the problem is ever with the church. ([Peter 2 and Jude Focus on the Bible Commentaries](#))

Thomas Constable on showing **mercy** to those who **are doubting** - Jude's readers should tenderly help those of their fellow believers who were struggling and perhaps stumbling under the influence of the false teachers. Those in view are earnest doubters who sincerely cannot decide between truth and error. We should not abandon these brethren but restore them with compassion if possible.

Warren Wiersbe - These are the people who are wavering. They are probably the "unstable souls" Peter wrote about (2Pet 2:14). These people are converted, but they are not grounded in the faith. Our responsibility is to have mercy on them, or show compassion toward them, by seeking to lead them away from the influences of the apostates.

ILLUSTRATION OF "Rescue the Perishing" - One time Fanny Crosby, the blind hymn writer, visited the McAuley Mission in New York. She asked if there was a boy there who had no mother, and "if he would come up and let her lay her hand on his head." A motherless fellow came up, and she put her arms about him and kissed him. She went from that meeting and wrote: "*Rescue the*

perishing, care for the dying, Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave, Weep o'er the erring one, lift up the fallen, Tell them of Jesus the mighty to save." Some time later, when Mr. Sankey Was about to sing this song in St. Louis, he related the incident. A man sprang to his feet in the audience and said, "I am the boy she kissed that night. I was never able to get away from the impression made by that touching act, I have become a Christian." (Knight's Master Book of New Illustrations)

Cyberhymnal has another version of the preceding story - (Apparently this was written by Fanny Crosby) As I was addressing a large company of working men one hot August evening, the thought kept forcing itself upon my mind that some mother's boy must be rescued that very night or perhaps not at all. So I requested that, if there was any boy present, who had wandered away from mother's teaching, he would come to the platform at the conclusion of the service. A young man of eighteen came forward and said, "Did you mean me? I have promised my mother to meet her in heaven; but as I am now living that will be impossible." We prayed for him; he finally arose with a new light in his eyes; and exclaimed triumphantly, "Now, I can meet mother in heaven; for I have found her God."

A few days before, Mr. Doane had sent me the subject "Rescue the Perishing," and while I sat there that evening the line came to me, "Rescue the perishing, care for the dying." I could think of nothing else that night. When I arrived at my home I went to work on it at once; and before I retired the entire hymn was ready for a melody. The next day my words were written and forwarded to Mr. Doane, who wrote the beautiful and touch-ing music as it now stands.

In November, 1903, I went to Lynn, Massachusetts, to speak before the Young Men's Christian Association. I told them the incident that led me to write "Rescue the Perishing," as I have just related it. After the meeting a large number of men shook hands with me, and among them was a man, who seemed to be deeply moved. You may imagine my surprise when he said, "Miss Crosby, I was the boy, who told you more than thirty-five years ago that I had wandered from my mother's God. The evening that you spoke at the mission I sought and found peace, and I have tried to live a consistent Christian life ever since. If we never meet again on earth, we will meet up yonder." As he said this, he raised my hand to his lips; and before I had recovered from my surprise he had gone; and remains to this day a nameless friend, who touched a deep chord of sympathy in my heart. It is these notes of sympathy that vibrate when a voice calls them forth from the dim memories of the past, and the music is celestial. ([See Fanny J Crosby: An Autobiography](#))

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Here are some of Ira Sankey's (D L Moody's song leader) stories related to Fanny Crosby's hymn **Rescue the Perishing** (From Sankey's book [STORY OF GOSPEL HYMNS by Ira Sankey - 1907](#))

RESCUE THE PERISHING

Words by Fanny J. Crosby

Music by W. H. Doane

"Rescue the perishing,
Care for the dying."

On a stormy night a middle-aged man staggered into the Bowery Mission. He was intoxicated, his face unwashed and unshaven, and his clothes soiled and torn. He sank into a seat, and, gazing around, seemed to wonder what kind of a place he had come into. "**Rescue the perishing**" and other gospel hymns were sung and seemed to interest him, and to recall some memory of his youth long since forgotten. As the leader of the meeting told the simple story of the Gospel, and how the Lord had come to seek and save sinners, the man listened eagerly. The leader in his younger days had been a soldier and had seen hard and active service. In the course of his remarks he mentioned several incidents which had occurred in his experience during the war, and he gave the name of the company in which he served. At the close of the meeting the man eagerly staggered up to the leader and in a broken voice said:

"When were you in that company you spoke of?"

"Why, all through the war," said the leader.

"Do you remember the battle of —?"

"Perfectly."

"Do you remember the name of the captain of your company at that time?"

"Yes, his name was —."

"You are right! I am that man. I was your captain. Look at me today, and see what a wreck I am. Can you save your old captain? I have lost everything I had in the world through drink, and I don't know where to go."

He was saved that night, and was soon helped by some of his former friends to get back his old position. He often told the story of

how a soldier saved his captain, and how much he loved the words of “**Rescue the perishing.**”

* * *

A man in Sussex, England, gives this testimony:

“I believe I can attribute my conversion, through the grace of God, to one verse of that precious hymn, **Rescue the perishing.**’ I was far away from my Saviour, and living without a hope in Jesus. I was very fond of singing hymns, and one day I came across this beautiful piece, and when I had sung the words,

**‘Touched by a loving heart, wakened by kindness,
Chords that were broken will vibrate once more,’**

I fell upon my knees and gave my heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. From that hour I have followed him who, through this verse, touched my heart and made it vibrate with his praises ever since.”

* * *

Fanny Crosby returned, one day, from a visit to a mission in one of the worst districts in New York City, where she had heard about the needs of the lost and perishing. Her sympathies were aroused to help the lowly and neglected, and the cry of her heart went forth in this hymn, **which has become a battle-cry for the great army of Christian workers throughout the world** It has been used very extensively in temperance work, and has been blessed to thousands of souls. Mr. Moody was very fond of it, and has borne testimony to its power to reach the hearts of wanderers. It was also a favorite of the two great temperance workers, Frances E. Willard and Francis Murphy.

Jude 21 Commentary <> Jude 23 Commentary