



Jude – The Realist

Adapted from “12 Disciples” series by Dennis Marquardt.

If only God would listen to me, I could win the world for Jesus. My world-saving evangelistic plan would go something like this:

1. Jesus will rid the world of all the terrorists with a wave of his hand and then he will come to rule as king over the whole planet.
2. Jesus will supernaturally multiply the food resources in the world so that hunger is a thing of the past.
3. The Lord’s words and teachings will be broadcast 24-7 on all TV sets, and at his word, every sick or disabled person will be permanently healed.

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4. Every human being will be made wealthy beyond measure with a generous “universal income.”
5. To top it all off, everyone will miraculously receive from God a brand new vehicle of their dreams.

This was pretty much the plan the disciples had for Jesus. But Jude (also called Thaddaeus), was the realist of the group.

When Jesus talked about going away, leaving them behind, and only having revealed himself to them—not the entire world—Judas (not Iscariot) protested Jesus' plan, saying:

"Get real Jesus, why only to us? We already believe in you. How about all those unbelievers? Do a great miracle for them so they will believe! This is no plan to build your kingdom, we need to do something dramatic!"

The Bible teaches that miracles alone are not sufficient to make disciples of Jesus Christ. It takes something more than that.

Faith and obedience to God's Word are required to be a true follower of Jesus Christ. This is the greatest reality. Like most realists, Jude did not understand why Jesus did not just publicly show Himself when He was resurrected.

This would have proved to the world who He is, the Son of God. Jesus' answer to him is still true today. **Jesus has revealed Himself through His Word.** Miracles do not make converts, faith in Christ and obedience to God's Word does.

“COURAGE” Level Questions

Exercise #1: Read and answer or discuss the following.

John 14:15–24 (ESV) “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”

Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not

love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.”

Luke 16:19–31 (ESV) “There was a rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. And at his gate was laid a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who desired to be fed with what fell from the rich man's table. Moreover, even the dogs came and licked his sores. The poor man died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried, and in Hades, being in torment, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus at his side. And he called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.’

But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.’ And he said, ‘Then I

beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house—for I have five brothers—so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.’ But Abraham said, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.’ And he said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.’ He said to him, ‘If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.’”

C1: In John 14, Jesus speaks of the Helper, the Spirit of Truth. Describe in your own words who you think Jesus is referring to?

C2: Why do you feel that Jude is concerned with the whole world in John 14:22?

C3: Realists must see to believe. Jesus tells us that we need to love Him, put our faith in Him, and obey His Word to truly be His followers. After a little reflection, would you consider yourself more of a realist when it comes to the things of God? Why?

C4: How much courage does it take to believe in Christ by faith rather than seeing a miracle? Why?

C5: Are you more concerned with Jesus in your life or with sharing Jesus with the world?

“STRENGTH” Level Questions

Exercise #1: Read and answer or discuss the following.

John 14:15–24 (ESV)

Luke 16:19–31 (ESV)

S1: In John 14, Jesus promises his disciples He would not leave them alone without leadership, much like orphans. He would send the Holy Spirit to empower them and help them. Have you received the baptism of the Holy Spirit to be empowered and help in your walk? How has this experience made a difference in your life?

If not, STOP?

If you have not received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, take a moment to pray and simply ask Jesus, “Lord, fill me with your Spirit and power to be your witness.” Spend time in worship and let the Spirit work in you!

S2: Jude was looking for some great revelation to the world about the power of God, but the reality is that miracles do not make converts. How can you best share the salvation message to those who do not know Christ?

S2: Jude is a realist and wants his own plan for saving the world to unfold. Have you ever thought your plan is better than God's plan? Describe it.

Exercise #2: How would you convince a “Jude” you know that faith in God is more *blessed* (read the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7) than belief by seeing miracles, signs, or wonders? Write out your plan.

S3: Faith and obedience to God’s Word are linked together in being a true follower of Jesus Christ. How have you witnessed this in the lives of others; or in your own life?

Exercise #3: Look at Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Create a 60-day plan to read these three books of the Bible. Write down your observations from each day’s reading.

“ENDURANCE” Level Questions

Exercise #1: Read and answer or discuss the following.

John 14:15–24 (ESV)

Luke 16:19–31 (ESV)

E1: Jude is considered a realist. He wanted to see Jesus perform a miracle or sign so powerful that it would certainly cause all humankind to believe in Jesus as the Messiah. Have you ever felt that way? Describe.

E2: As Jesus spoke of leaving earth, He promised to send the Helper, the Spirit of Truth. Have you been baptized in the Holy Spirit? Describe your experience.

If not, will you have the courage to begin earnestly seeking Him for that powerful infilling of the Spirit?

E3: What are some ways the Holy Spirit can help you in your walk with Christ as you share the gospel with others?

Exercise #2: Describe your thoughts about Luke 16:20.

E4: A realist struggles with faith and would rather see than believe. How can we share that faith in Christ is not only seeing Christ but believing in Him, too?

E5: How can you become the best example of faith in sharing with a realist?

Exercise #3: Rate your walk with Christ based upon 1 being a *realist* (needing to see to believe) and 4 being *faith-filled* (believing without seeing). Why did you rate yourself as you did?