

Jude: Confronting a Culture of Compromise

#battlecry #lastdays #goodfight #boldness

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[0 : 00] The book of Jude is a book that is one of the shortest letters of the New Testament! Yet it is important, isn't it? And we'll find it there just back of Revelation, the second! is the last book. What lessons can we learn from Jude? Really it's a classic book about! Apostasy, about counterfeit Christianity, how to counter that, about false teachers and false doctrine and that's abounding in our world today, isn't it? And we need this message today, don't we? Because we're living in a world where there's truth decay, if you like. Truth decay. We need to fight truth decay with the Word of God, don't we? With biblical convictions. And Jude gives us such a call, a call for a strong, courageous defence of the faith. And Jude sounds forth a wake-up call to a sleeping church, really, to contend, to contend for the faith, to fight truth decay. So we're going to pick it up and work through each verse one by one. Verse 1. Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ and called. Notice it addresses the ones here, you, you that are sanctified, you that are called, you that are preserved, preserved, in other words, kept, protected by God's hand. And it goes on, verse 2, you have mercy from God. God's mercy, peace and love. He says, mercy unto you and peace and love be multiplied. So you that are the called, the sanctified, the preserved, he says, mercy is for you. Peace, love. And God wants us to stand firm in the faith, as we see as Jude unpacks the account here of really of false teachers and of standing firm. And notice verse 3, there's a tone of urgency here. This is something needful. It's something that's needful.

And again, as I put to you, we think of the world we're living in today, truth decay is abounding. We need this, we need this truth. And he addresses you, know that you are beloved by God here. You notice that, beloved. Isn't that wonderful? As our brother shared, of the love of God, that he demonstrated his love, that he showed his love so bountifully, so precious a love. And you, people of God, beloved, beloved are you. He says, beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful, needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints. You should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. So Jude says here, contend, contend. Really, it's literally agonized. There's an intensity to it here, a determination. It tells of hard, of diligent work, of challenging work. Contend, contend.

[3 : 04] So there's this kind of fight going on, this contention going on. Now there's bad contentions, which we should avoid, but there's some good contentions. And this is the good one. This is the good contending, right? Contend, it says, and contend, it's in the continuous tense.

It tells of an ongoing struggle, an ongoing fight. It's a long event of fighting. Now there's lots of things we could contend for. We could think of many worthy causes, couldn't we? Of charities, of human rights, of political causes, of all flavour of things. Even within the church, there's lots of things we could count as worth fighting for or making a stand for.

But some people are just plain contentious. And Jude is saying here, no, not that, not that contention, but this is something to contend for. This is something to contend for. And Jude tells us here what it is. What matters is the faith. He says, contend for the faith. In other words, he's saying really contend for the gospel, contend for the truth of the gospel, how to be saved. And the Bible says we're saved by grace through faith. It's by faith, by placing our faith in the finished work of the Lord Jesus on the cross. That's the truth of the gospel. And that's under attack these days. There's the Lordship Salvation crowd. And you kind of say it's faith plus all of these other things that we have to do or keep on doing. But no, salvation is by faith, by faith. We want to contend for that, contend for that. One thing some false teachers were doing in the context here was they were making out grace to be some kind of license for immorality. We don't want to err in that direction either. We're called to live our life unto our Lord, to please him, to honour him, not to please

ourselves. And so it's finding that rightful faith, isn't it? That faith of the word of God, to contend for Bible truth. And look at it these days, the Bible truth, the Bible itself is under attack, isn't it? Constantly. So we must stand up against error. And there's a sense where we have to call error, call it out. We need to contend for, for the faith. When we take that soul-saving gospel message to our world, we want to contend for the faith. As we reach out and minister and support godly works, we contend for the faith. We live for that witness of that uncompromising Christian faith of life, as we give out the gospel to others. And to contend for the faith, I put to you, it means fighting for sound doctrine. Sound doctrine. Now it's interesting, this word sound in sound doctrine, sound in the Greek, it's a medical term. It means that which is healthy or life-giving. That's what we want. We want doctrine that's healthy, that's wholesome, that's good doctrine, sound doctrine, that's life-giving doctrine. And I think the church is sick today because there's a lack of doctrinal preaching. The church is sick today in many quarters. It's sick and sickly and in a woeful condition, I'll put to you sometimes. And that's because there's not sound doctrine being delivered. So we want to stand for that with like-minded churches that do. And the faith is that settled body of doctrinal truth that's delivered to God's people by the apostles. This is the faith. The faith was what they delivered back in Acts. It's once for all, once and for all delivered. And we're in the thick of the present in a spiritual battle, aren't we? We're fighting, and really not against flesh and blood, but against spiritual forces.

[6 : 46] And we need to stand up against the things. We know what's going on in our world, this proneness to secularism, to moral relativism. You know, you're your own authority. There's false teachings that undermine our faith or cloud the simple salvation that we can know by making it complicated. We're in the midst of this spiritual battle. So we must fight for the truth, the truth that was once delivered. In other words, defend those biblical truths in a world of shifting values. Stand firm on that rock-solid foundation. We must courageously speak out for what is right, what is true, and courageously so, zealously so, earnestly so, for what is right and what is true against what is really the flow of our world today. Even though it's unpopular and politically incorrect, we must stand firm. And Jude is talking in this context. He's warning of these dangers of these false teachers. He says, beware of them. Verse 4, we pick it up. For there are certain men crept in unawares who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness and denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ. So Jude's warning of these deceivers. They've infiltrated. They've come in unnoticed. They slipped in under the radar. They've crept in unnoticed. No one had noticed that they were dangerous. They didn't wear a danger false teacher name tag. Now these false teachers, they didn't care. And we see some of the traits of them. They didn't care about righteousness. Jude calls them ungodly. He says they're ungodly men. And they were perverting the grace of God into sensuality. And really, at the heart of it, really, it's an authority problem. They're denying God's authority. False teachers, we see it today. And I was talking about it lately to some. There's some that are out there knocking on doors. And I was staggered to hear again, just Friday night, wasn't it? We talked about there's people knocking on doors in

Craigmore. And they're telling us Christ has returned. Christ has returned. And she lives today in the body of a Chinese woman. I mean, madness, madness. But people are believing this stuff. They believe that Christ is living in an Asian woman in our world today. And there's many thousands of people following such a falsehood. They're denying God's authority. They're saying, no, we won't go with this. We'll go with something else. They're denying God's authority. Friends, it's a sad world, isn't it? When we see such things. And so we must stand against such things. And these false teachers in Jude's day, they were perverting the grace of God into sensuality.

We see a lot of sensuality in some churches where it's all about the senses, about entertaining, about provoking the senses. And that can be a danger when we get onto sensuality and emotionalism and hype rather than actually, what does the steadfast word of God say? Sure, we can get excited about it. We can have some sensuality in the sense that this is good stuff, but it's not about the sensuality. It's about the word. It's about God's authority. That's what must be at the heart and at the foundation. And so for these ones, these false teachers, it was an authority problem.

False teachers, they distort the scriptures. They leave people away from the genuine message of the gospel. And friends, false teaching is abounding. And spiritual deception and confusion is everywhere.

So we must exercise discernment about doctrine, about teachings. These men, it says they were denying the Lord. It's like that today, isn't it? People, they're denying God's authority. That's the word of God, really. God's authority. They're denying that. They don't want it. They disregard it. [10:44] They'd rather have something warm and fuzzy to tickle the senses. And these men of Jude's day, they set up their own standards of authority for what they believe or do. And the word here in Jude 4, chapter 1, verse 4, it talks about the Lord. And it's a word that means the absolute only master.

That's him, isn't it? It's our Lord. And so we want to give him due honour. He is the absolute only master. Verse 5, we read on. Jude says, I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. And verse 6, and the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

And verse 7, even as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. So Jude's giving here three different examples, different examples that show for us the consequences of apostasy. So he tells of these three ones who rebelled. It tells of the unbelieving Israelites, there they were in the wilderness, they'd seen God's hand, they'd seen wonders and signs and miracles from God, yet they still rebelled. What a picture that is, unbelieving Israel. We see the rebellious angels of Genesis 6. They're in heaven's glory and they rebelled and they fell with the devil and his angels. They rebelled against God's authority. And then we see Sodom and Gomorrah.

You know what happened to them, destroyed for their wickedness. So these three examples speak, all of them, of rebellion against God. I'll do it my way. Let's learn from those examples, those failures of those who are turned away from God and his authority. Let's rather seek to honour God with our life.

Verse 8, likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion and speak evil of dignities. So it's saying here these men that he warns of were like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah.

[13:15] They just went for what felt good for their flesh, rejected God's authority and they rejected those who God had put in authority. They wanted to be in authority. It's the way this culture is for us, isn't it? This culture that we're living in, they encourage people to reject authority. Kids are taught that. Question the teacher. You don't have to agree with what the teacher says. Speak up for yourself and you know, it's, there's no law and order. It's all, you're a law unto yourself. And Aussie culture now, really it tells us to recognise yourself as the only real authority in your life. You don't need the Bible.

You don't need God to tell you what to do. Just do what feels good. That's what people think, isn't it? Some people do this with the Bible too. They pick and choose what of the Bible they would believe and they make up their own rules. It's like in Israel's day when it says they did what was right in their own eyes.

Every man. Judges 21, 25. So that's the pattern that we see established through history. It's the pattern that's in our day too. And Jude calls these men, he says they're filthy dreamers. Dreamers. Could it be that they were claiming to have prophetic dreams, which were really deceptions?

There's a lot of talks about dreams and visions now. There's a lot of preachers, a lot of preachers saying, oh, I had a dream. Oh, I had this experience. I had this visitation. I had this visit to heaven. I had this angel come. I had these words that came in my ears and it was God telling me this and God telling me that. There's a lot of talk about dreams and visions. Got to be careful with that stuff, people.

Is it according to the word? If not, there's no light in them. You know, there's need to be wary, to be discerning, to be careful and testing everything about such prophetic dreams, which could be deceptions. It says of these ones that they speak evil of dignities too. Could it be in the time of the apostles or other ministers of the church? They didn't want to be coming under authority. That's a big problem today. People don't want to come under authority.

Now, of course, there's authority that's wielded in a bombastic and arrogant way, but there's godly authority. There's authority that's scriptural authority. That's a godly heart of authority.

[15 : 40] That's an authority that's based on the word of God. That is the authority that we need to come under. Verse 9, it reads on, It's telling us here, Jude's mentioning really two kinds of angelic beings. We see Michael, he's among the angelic beings that are faithful to God, servants of God and men. And then we see the devil among the angelic beings who rebel against God. And it's a reality, as much as we don't always think of it, that there's invisible angelic beings all around us. There's what the Bible tells of ministering spirits sent by God to assist us. Then there's demonic spirits who want to defeat us.

So we've got to be careful of such things and be mindful of that. We can get all caught up about the devil this or the devil that, demons this and demons that. The devil can't unsave a saved person. But through his deceptions, he can corrupt and defile a Christian who's supposed to walk in purity and freedom. It's a spiritual level, isn't it? I'd always reckon on the spiritual aspects that are going on, just to realise there's a spiritual battle going on. And we're in that spiritual warfare.

We read on verse 10, But these speak evil of those things which they know not. But what they know naturally as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Woe unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam, for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Cor.

So Jude gives here some more examples of really what false teaching leads to, and what these false teachers were like. And he's telling us that these dangerous false teachers were corrupt, they were rebels. And he likens them to three examples here of what these false teachers were like.

[17 : 48] Now, firstly he talks about the way of Cain. Now Cain we know speaks of really someone trying to approach God on their own terms. Cain gave a sacrifice which wasn't what God ordered. He gave something of his own self, of a sacrifice on his own terms. And then we see what happened with Cain.

He killed his brother out of envy. It was the first murder in history that was motivated by envy. And we think of the way of Cain, it could picture for us the way of unbelief, an empty religion.

And it leads to jealousy and persecution of the godly, and eventually to murderous anger. The way of Cain, it speaks to us of empty, vain religion. It's a form of godliness, but it's denying the power, isn't it?

It's a form of godliness. And when you think about it really, dead religion is a woeful thing, dead religion. It sends more people to hell than anything else. These certain men were in the way of Cain, which is the way of dead religion. You know, there's churches today where you can join in and sing and hear, but you won't hear the gospel. We heard it already this morning. Amen? There's churches out there where you don't hear the plain gospel articulated. You don't hear the challenge to salvation, to trust Christ.

It's missing. It's not there. It's all stories or falsehoods. It misses the whole point, which is, we must be saved. We must be saved. That's what is absolutely critical. And dead religion doesn't tell you the way to salvation. We see a second thing is Balaam's error. It talks about the error of Balaam.

[19 : 36] What did Balaam do? He was a man who tried to use God for his own gain. He tried to give some false prophecies about God's people for financial gain. He was willing to compromise everything for money.

And covetousness is a dangerous sin. When you think about it, it killed our Lord. Judah sold the savior for 30 pieces of silver. It's about covetousness. There's a lot of that today, where the psalm, faith, prosperity, gospel preachers, that they're fleecing people.

The error of Balaam, it's all about covetousness. And there's false teachers like that all over the place. And then we see, thirdly, we see the rebellion of Korah. Korah was one in number 16.

He tried to serve God on his own terms. As a Levite, Korah had his own God-appointed ministry, but he wasn't content with it. He was arrogant. He wanted the ministry and authority that Moses had.

And we see that he rebelled. And then there was an earthquake. The earth opened and Korah was swallowed up, never to be seen again. So God rebukes all of these kinds of things, the way of Cain, you know, that kind of dead religion, the error of Balaam, like a covetousness, a prosperity gospel, you could say. And then we see the rebellion of Korah, where he just wanted to do his own thing.

He didn't want to come under God's word, under authority. And God rebukes these men for all of these false teachings, these ways that they rebelled. And we read on what they were like as well.

Verse 12, further it says, these are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear. Clouds without water, they are carried about of winds, trees, whose fruit

withereth without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots. It reads on, raging waves of the sea, foaming of their own shame, wandering stars to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. So again, if I could just picture these three types of characteristics about these men who had no fear of the Lord, what were they like? We see what it tells us they were like. We see that the fear of the Lord was missing. It says that they feast with you without fear.

[21 : 48] That's verse 12. And we think of the world today, of preaching today, of preachers, of churches today, where the fear of the Lord is missing. It's important, people, isn't it, that we have the fear of the Lord.

Of course, it's not some trepidation, cowering in some kind of slavish way, but there's that sense where we are in awe of our majestic God, of our almighty God. We're in awe and wonder, in reverence of him who is the almighty. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. But for these ones, these false teachers, they have no fear, no fear of judgment. It's interesting, isn't it, when you see the slogans on some people's bumper stickers, no fear. Well, we should have that fear. We should have a fear of God. That's a good fear to have.

That's a right fear to have. And it tells verse 12 of these ones, they come into the feast of charity. So in other words, the fellowship meeting of God's people, maybe it could even reflect the Lord's table, this feast of charity. When God's people get together, it should be a feast, a charity.

It should be a blessed time of God's love as we walk in love, in brotherly love, in God's love, love towards one another. And yet these ones, it says, they've crept in, they've come in, they've snuck in unnoticed. And now these deceive, as it says, they want to hang out with the saints.

But they have no fear of the Lord or of judgment. So Jude describes their false teachings as dangerous. And he gives us these more analogies of what they were like. We see that these false teachers were like clouds without water. They're going to leave you dry. We think of clouds that come and it's a hot day and it just blows away. It doesn't bring any rain. That's what these false teachers were like.

[23 : 29] They look like there was something promising, but they're like clouds that don't bring the rain. It says that they're like trees that don't bear fruit. They're going to leave you barren. Again, people could sit in and tune into these people and take all of their hype. And they're almost like coaches, aren't they? Like self-help gurus, some of the things that they talk about. But the spiritual fruit's not there. They'll leave you barren. And we see they're like these wild waves. When you see down at St Kilda, when the flotsam and jetsam come in, who's seen that? The foam. And sometimes it's like scum, isn't it? On the seashore. That's what these people are like. They're like these wild waves.

They just have a lot of action, but they're going to leave just dirt and scum. And then we see they're like wandering stars, leaving you really aimless. They shine for a moment like some kind of meteor, but they've got no direction, no orbit. So think of it. We think of such teachers, waterless clouds, promising rain, but not producing any fruitless trees. Looks like there's going to be some fruit, but really they produce nothing. They're dead. Wild waves, like these foaming waves coming in at the beach, bringing in this debris and rubbish and dirt, like wandering stars, like a falling star.

Ever so bright, but it's gone in such a short time. And that's the character of false teachers down through church history. I saw one preacher talking about such kind of things and talking about the movements of our day. And someone was asking this preacher, well, what do you think about this or that?

And some new fad, some new preacher, some new teaching, some new trend, some new bandwagon. And he says, ask me in two years time. Because by then it'll all blown over, won't it? There's just not the longevity to it. That's the character of false teachers, just blowing around like waterless clouds, fruitless trees, wild waves, like wandering stars. And people follow them.

[25 : 26] They follow after them, but it all ends in disaster. So these are things to think about. When we tune into a certain preacher, does that fit the bill for them? Is that what they're like? Verse 14 we see, And Enoch also the seventh from Adam prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

Jude is saying here that the Lord is coming. The Lord cometh. And he says, judgment's coming. Judgment's coming. And many people take the judgment of God lightly. The Lord is coming.

That should be something. Wow. Yeah. Wow. We should think about that. The Lord is coming. And the Bible tells us that every one of us are going to give account to God. We're all accountable. And we're fools really if we do not prepare to face the judgment to come. Think of someone who's arrested for a crime. The date's set for appearing in court, but they make no preparation for that time to appear before the judge. That person would be a fool. We shouldn't be so foolish. Friends, there's a judgment coming. It says it's appointed unto man once to die, but after that, the judgment. We shouldn't be foolish. Rather, let's take advantage. The Bible talks about our court appointed advocate, Jesus Christ.

1 John 2 verse 1, it says we've got an advocate. And that's what he is. He's an advocate. He's going to represent us before the Father. He's going to say that we have trusted him to pay for our sin, and he will speak up for us at judgment such that our sin is already paid. He's already paid it. Our advocate, Christ. And if you don't have that advocate, friends, you better get ready for judgment. Get that advocate.

Go to the Christ. Go to the Lord Jesus Christ. Let him be your advocate. Let him be the one who will plead your case. Let him be the one who pays your fine. That you've trusted him to do that. That you have that advocate before the judgment. If you face judgment without the advocate, then guilty is all that the judge can say. It reads on verse 16 of these false teachers, their murmurs, it says, complainers, walking after their own lusts, and their mouths speak of great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage. So, Jude's telling us here what these false teachers are going on about, what they're speaking about, the types of talk that they talk. Really, it's toxic. And he says, beware of them. He says, beware of murmurers. We know murmuring is a big problem in the Word of God. People murmured, and it was a big problem. It was something that the Bible talks very strongly against, to be a murmurer, a grumbler, a complainer. It says of these ones that they were walking after their own lusts. They were kind of self-centered. It's all about me, me, me. I want to tell you about me, me, me. Walking after their own lusts, self-centered. And it says that they were great, swelling words. They're like boasting and bragging, flattering. Some people are like that too, aren't they? And that's a danger, which is to watch out for these things and avoid them. Verse 17,

[28 : 49] But beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. Notice here he says beloved again. Isn't that a wonderful thought? Friends, you're beloved.

He says, beloved, beloved. But beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. We know elsewhere Paul tells Timothy in the last days people will scoff.

He talks about scoffers. They will only listen to preachers who will tickle their ears. This is really verse 18, how it goes on. People that will be scoffing. I'll just go there, verse 18.

It talks about mockers. There's going to be a time in the last days, says Paul to Timothy, that there's going to be people who will just want to go to preachers or tickle their ears.

People that will just bring novelties that aren't interested in the faith once delivered unto the saints. But we see there back there in verse 17, but, but you beloved, but you beloved, remember. We ought to be different. We have to remember the words of the apostles. In other words, that's the word of God for us today, isn't it? The words of the apostles are in this book now. That's the words of the apostles we should take heed to. The word of God. That's always the answer. That's the answer to any dangers, to any falsehood, to any deception. Go to the words of the apostles. It's right here. They've given it for us. They've written it down. The apostles warned us about these things that would happen. And even more so as the day approaches. And as I say, Paul warned of such a time when they'll not endure sound doctrine, they'll turn away their ears from the truth and they'll be turned aside to fables, stories. And so we see that he says, Jude says, how that they, the apostles told you, there should be mockers in the last time. They should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

[30 : 49] Jude's telling us there's going to be some mockers come. Who's had some dealings with mockers? Yeah, down at the workplace, the school place, the social place, people who mock and scorn. It tells of some, they're going to mock, they're going to be walking according to their own ungodly lusts. It says there's going to be mockers who are going to mock the idea of Christ's return. Some people will mock you because you stand for Christ, because you don't go in the same path of destruction that they're traveling on. And believer, be prepared, expect it, that you will be mocked.

They love to mock those who want to please God. And it's true today as it was in Jude's day. And verse 19, we read on, they be they who separate themselves sensual, having not the spirit. Again, it says these are sensual people. It's all about their senses, about their emotions, about their feelings, about following their own heart. These men were not spiritual. They were sensual. They were carnal and incensual to the Holy Spirit. We think about, well, how could that be true today of preachers today? We see some of the examples of these mockers. It says they're sensual people. It says they separate or isolate themselves. Now, of course, there's good separation, which we absolutely stand for. And there's this kind of divisive separation, this isolation. It says that these ones, these mockers, they separate.

And it means they isolate themselves. And this word's only found once in the Bible, apparently. And someone's described it like this, I quote, denotes those superior people who keep themselves to themselves Christian Pharisees. That's a man called Green wrote that. Of course, there's good and rightful separation. We should separate from evil, from false doctrine. But then there's people who separate because they're just plain divisive because of pride and flesh. That's these ones, these mockers.

It says of them they don't have the spirit. This could be written over many churches, couldn't it? Or church projects, God forbid on our church, Ichabod. You know, the spirit's not there. We don't want that, people. We want to be very much a spiritual church, a Holy Spirit-filled people. And it says of some, they do not have the spirit. They're without the spirit. And that could be written over many church projects, as I say, or even gatherings of God's people. God says in one place that he's against their holy convocations. He says, I don't like smelling your sacrifices. He says, there's something wrong. There's something amiss here. And we want to make sure we get it right, that we're under the spirit's banner. And we need to be genuinely spiritual men and spiritual women today. We can expect, Jude warns us here of these mockers, these false teachers. They're going to be scoffers. They're going to be sensual. They're going to be schismatic. What are we, the people of God, to do?

It's interesting. Jude doesn't say, go and fight them and make a big fuss and defend yourself. He says rather, verse 20, he says, get yourself right. Get yourself right. Don't focus on the false teachers. Don't focus on the mockers. He says, get yourself right. Get your act together. He says, but you beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost. There's an encouragement here for, for we that are God's people. I trust there's an encouragement here for you, for me to stay grounded, stay grounded. Don't let the distractions, don't let the, the false teachers, the mockers, the scorners, don't let them sway you. Stay grounded, keep steadfast in the truth, in the face of opposition, stand firm in the faith, cling to the truth of God's word. [34 : 32] It tells us here what we are to do. It says building up yourselves, building up yourselves on your most holy faith. This one way that we can keep ourselves in the love of God by building up ourselves, keep growing spiritually, take opportunities to fellowship. You know, don't settle for, for the minimum. Say, I'm going to be here as much as I can be to fellowship, to get the word that I need it.

I've not learned at all. I need to learn. I need to grow. I need to keep on growing because we never stop. I can't say to you, I know it all. I can say, I'm learning. And that should be at the heart of all of us, shouldn't that? Disciples, we're learners. We're always learning. Hopefully not the ones who are always learning, but never coming to the knowledge of the truth, but we should be always learning. And so a kind of secular phrase that they use, lifelong learning. That's the Christian life, isn't it? Lifelong learning. So when there's time to fellowship, when there's time to study, be there, be there as much as God helping you can be. Don't miss it. Don't miss it. Keep on building up, keep on building up yourself. Study the word of God at every opportunity. And if you can't make the meeting, tune in on YouTube, but really that's, that should be the, the last resort really. But rather, if you can, be responsible for your own spiritual growth, that it matters. I want to be building up myself. I want to keep on growing and keep building up my faith, whatever else is going on and keep on praying too, praying in the Holy Spirit. Nobody can stop you from praying.

Friends, in the context here of Jude, it says our Lord is coming back. Judgment's about to come. Our Lord is coming back. So let's live in the light of that. Verse 21, we read on, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

Notice it's about the love of God. Jude says there's all these false teachings, there's this mockery, there's, there's these things of opposition to the truth, this abandonment of the authority of the word

of God. He says, keep yourself in the love of God. Really, Christianity is theological, but it's also relational, isn't it? Keep that relationship right with, with your Lord.

Keep that relationship right. Know God's ever present love. Know that nothing can ever separate you from his love. And Jude then causes verse 22 to compassion and fear. He's saying it's not all about you. It's about the mission that we're in. This mission that we're called to, this mission that he calls us to, it calls for compassion. It calls for fear. There's a call for love here. It's a serious business. We're talking about eternity. We're talking about eternal souls. We're talking about hell.

[37 : 16] And of some, it says, have compassion, making a difference. Of some have compassion, making a difference. And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. You know, I'm encouraged today that some of us just come to this church meeting to grab a box of tracks, to grab a box or two of tracks, because they want to get the word of God out. That's good. We'll give tracks away by the box load to whoever wants them to get the word of God out because the message has got to get out. It matters people, doesn't it? We need to invest in that to reach souls. And we know giving out tracks might be just, oh, they're just going to throw it in the bin. It matters just for the one who's going to read it. It matters for the one. One in a thousand, it's worth it, isn't it? If one in a thousand reads that track, it's worth it. Or some have compassion, making a difference. Others save with fear. Friends, we used to be there. As brother Joseph recounted his testimony, I could recount my testimony before I was saved. Where was I going? Hell.

Thank God, through my dad, my family, through preachers and ministries that I've received the gospel from, God saved me. Friends, we can make a difference in the lives of others. In a world where there's falsehood and confusion, false teachings and all kinds of confusing messages out there, we're about the work of rescue. That's our mission. That's your mission. Snatching them, it says. Snatching them out of the fire. What a picture that is. Think of that. Because it is literally so. The fire of hell. Hell is a place of fire, of damnation. It's hell of hating even the garment. Hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

You could reflect how that could mean we hate the sin, but we love the sinner. You know, they're clothed in sin, but it's about the soul there that can be rescued from that fire.

The soul that can be plucked out as a brand from the burning. That soul that needs the gospel message. And you're the one who must deliver it. So let's reach out to such. Those that are in need of the Savior. And that's everybody. Reach out with compassion. Reach out with fear. In other words, have that heart that this is serious. This matters. This is life and death. This is eternal life and eternal damnation. Reach out with compassion, with grace. Show to others that love and mercy to share the gospel. And it's important that we pray, that we depend on the Holy Spirit, that relationship with God through prayer and meditation of his word. And friends, it closes here, verse 24, with the assurance of God's protection. Jude, verse 24, now unto him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. The one who he loved, the one who saved us, it says he is able.

Do you stop and think? You might think, I'm not able. I'm not worthy. I can't make a difference. I can't save others with compassion, with fear. I can't take people out of the burning. He's able. He's able to keep you. He's able to sustain you.

[40 : 43] He's able to prevent you from falling. And what's more, he's able to present you faultless, flawless. You know, one day, Julie Craig's going to be married to a, well, she won't be married then, but, but, but she's going to have a faultless husband.

And one day I'm going to be flawless. There's not going to be, there's going to be no imperfection. And I'm looking forward to that day. Amen. And that's true for you that believe, isn't it? One day he's going to present you faultless. No more faults.

Wow. Won't that be good. There won't be any reason why anyone can pick on you because there won't be any fault that they can find. One day he's going to present you faultless, flawless. No one else is able to present you faultless.

No one else is able to prevent you from falling. Only God can do that. So trust him, trust him, trust him that he's able to save you. He's able to sanctify you. He's able to keep you. What a blessing God is able. He's able to preserve his people and you can have confidence in his promise. Jude is a book full of warning, but it closes with this supreme crescendo of praise, of confidence, of faith, of trust and you can have confidence in your life. Amen.

And that's true for you. Amen. And that's true for you. Amen. And that's true for you. Amen. And that's true for you. Amen. Trust him. Trust him. Trust his power. He's the one who saved you. He'll sustain you. He'll keep you.

[42 : 14] He'll keep you through till you're before his throne. And even then he'll say, you're free. Your debt is paid. There's no guilt because Christ has paid it at the cross.

And he will never leave you nor forsake you. So let's praise him, unto him. He's due our glory and majesty, dominion and power. He's due our praise. He's due your life to glorify him in all that you do.

Notice here the praise of God. Verse 25, unto him, unto him. It's not unto us. It's unto him. The least that we can do, the most that we can do is really inadequate. But in all that we are and have and do, let it be unto him. The praise unto him. He's glorious. He's majestic. He's powerful.

He's authoritative. He's eternal. So think of it, friends, today as we reflect on what Jude tells us, what he teaches us. How can we make it part of our own lives? Such that we'll stand firm in the faith.

When we see false teachers, we'll recognize them. We'll see what stands out. We'll see, oh, they've got some of those signs. They've got some of those characteristics we've talked about. We see that the word of God is not their authority. It's their own thinking, their own dreams and visions, their own delusions and deceptions. But rather, let's be a biblical people that will recognize that that is the truth. And the ones we want to follow, the teachers and teachings, the churches we want to be part of are those that are biblical. They're founded on this truth.

[43 : 51] And they're not going to be veered away from anything. And we're going to stand firm in that. So we can resist the false teachings and we can grow and we can commit our lives to be unto his praise, unto him. In dangerous times, we can trust. We can trust in our mighty God. Let us pray.

And I urge you again, as our first preacher has declared, to get right with God. If you've heard all this and you've said, preacher, I'm not sure that I'm saved. Get that right today. We don't want to see anyone of this number go to hell. We want to see everyone know the Saviour and know his saving.

And it's simple faith. As you give yourself your sin, your unworthiness, you yield yourself and say, Lord, save me, forgive me, be my Saviour. As you trust him to pay for your sin, he will, he can and he wants to. He's not willing that any should perish, but you must trust him.

And then let it be that each one of us can be mindful as believers that grow, that we'll keep prayerful, we'll keep in the word, we'll keep building up ourselves in our most holy faith.

We'll have an eye to the mission that is for every one of us, that we'll have compassion. And we'll see others one, saved from the fire by the grace of God. In Jesus name. Amen.

[45 : 22]